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324

An Exposition of the Old Testament

BY

John Gill D.D.

IN SIX VOLUMES

Vol. VI.

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AN

EXPOSITION

OF

The Books of the Prophets

OF THE

OLD TESTAMENT:

324

IN WHICH IT IS ATTEMPTED TO GIVE

AN ACCOUNT OF THE SEVERAL BOOKS,

AND THE WRITERS OF THEM;

A SUMMARY OF EACH CHAPTER;

AND

The genuine Sense of every Verse;

AND, THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE,

THE ORIGINAL TEXT AND VARIOUS VERSIONS ARE INSPECTED AND COMPARED;

INTERPRETERS OF THE BEST NOTE, BOTH JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN, CONSULTED;

AND

THE PROPHECIES

SHEWN CHIEFLY TO BELONG TO THE TIMES OF THE GOSPEL,

AND A GREAT NUMBER OF THEM TO TIMES YET TO COME.

BY JOHN GILL, D.D.

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AN EXPOSITION

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The Prophets

OF

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE BOOK

OF

THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.

THIS book is rightly placed after Jeremiah; since Ezekiel was among the captives in Chaldea, when he prophesied; whereas Jeremiah began to prophesy long before that captivity, and concerning it. The name of this prophet signifies, as it is commonly interpreted, *the strength of God: or strengthened by God;* as he was, and as he needed to be, having great work to do, and a perverse people to deal with; see ch. iii. 8. but the learned Hillerus [a] chooses to render it, *God shall prevail:* with which compare Jer. xx. 7. There was a Levite of this name, of whom mention is made in 1 Chron. xxiv. 16. whose name is there read *Jehezekel;* and this prophet was a priest, ch. i. 3. and both Clemens Alexandrinus [b] and Eusebius [c] cite a Jewish writer of tragedies, of the same name; which some have very wrongly thought to be the same with our prophet: but whether Ezekiel is not the same with Nazaratus or Zabratus, the master of Pythagoras, mentioned by Clemens as such, according to the opinion of some, is a matter of question; and which the learned Selden [d] seems to think probable. According to the judgment and opinion of Jerom [e], his style is neither very eloquent, nor very rustic; but between both, and has a mixture of each. The visions he saw are very abstruse and difficult of interpretation, especially the vision of the living creatures and wheels; wherefore the Jews [f] forbad the reading of it, as well as the end of this prophecy, until persons were thirty years of age. The divine visions in this book, the whole subject-matter of it, its agreement with the prophecy of Jeremiah, and the accomplishment of events predicted in it, prove the authority of it; and its divine authority has always been allowed, both by the Jewish synagogue and the Christian church. There were indeed some ancient Jewish Rabbins, who were perplexed about some things in it, and consulted about laying it aside, because of some words in it, which seemed to them to be contrary to the law of Moses; but R. Chananiah ben Goron, a very famous doctor in those times, withdrew to his chamber, and wrote a commentary, in order to remove those difficulties to satisfaction [g]. This book, in general, contains various

[a] Onomast. Sacr. p. 224, 320, 845.
[b] Stromat. l. 2. p. 344.
[c] Præpar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 28. p. 436. & c. 29. p. 439.
[d] De Dis Syris, Syntag. 2. c. 1. p. 210, 211.

[e] Præfat. in Ezek. tom. 3. fol. 9. p.
[f] Præfat. in ib. ad Eustochium, tom. 5. fol. 174. G.
[g] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 13. 2. & Taanith, fol. 17. 1. 2. & Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Sabbat, c. 1. sect. 4.

visions the prophet saw; several threatenings against the people of the Jews; and prophecies against other nations; and an abundance of comfortable promises of the Messiah, and of blessings of grace by him; and of the state and condition of the Gospel church, and the worship of it. Josephus [h] says Ezekiel left two books written by him; one of which Athanasius [i], or the author of the Synopsis under his name, thinks is lost; but the learned Huetius [k] is of opinion that the prophecy of Ezekiel, in the times of Josephus, was divided into two parts; the first containing the first thirty-nine chapters, and the other the nine last chapters; which is not improbable. If the authorities of Epiphanius [l], or the writer of the lives of the prophets that goes by his name, and of Isidorus [m], are of any weight, Ezekiel was born in the land of Sarera; killed by the governor in Babylon; and buried by the people in the field of Maur or Mahurim, in the sepulchre of Shem and Arphaxad. The account R. Benjamin Tudelensis [n] gives is, that there is a synagogue of the Prophet Ezekiel by the river Euphrates; and over-against the synagogue sixty towers; and between every tower a synagogue. In the court of the synagogue is a library; and behind it the grave of Ezekiel the son of Buzi the priest; and over it a large vault, of a beautiful building, erected by Jeconiah king of Judah, and thirty-five thousand Jews, who came with him, when Evil-merodach brought him out of prison; and over the grave a lamp burns night and day. The Cippi Hebraici say [o] he was buried by the river Hiddekel; and Menasseh ben Israel [p] affirms that he died in Babylon, and was buried there; and so Kimchi [q] says the tradition is.

C H A P. I.

THIS chapter contains a vision, which is the introduction to the prophet's call and commission to perform his office; in the account of which may be observed the time when it was seen, ver. 1, 2. and the place both where the prophet was when he saw it, and the object or things that were beheld by him; and the original, form, and manner of the vision, ver. 3, 4. next follow the particulars of it; and first, four living creatures appear, described by their general likeness, as human, ver. 5. and, in particular, by their faces, feet, hands, and wings, ver. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. by their motion and progress, and the spirit by which they were influenced, ver. 12. and by their forms of light, brightness, and heat, in which they appeared and moved, ver. 13, 14. and next the wheels, described by their number; for, though they seemed to be as one, they were four; and by their situation on the earth, and by the side of the living creatures, ver. 15. by their appearance, which was alike in them all, and as the colour of beryl, and as a wheel within a wheel, ver. 16. by their motion, which was on their sides, and not retrograde, ver. 17. by their rings or circumferences, which were high, dreadful, and full of eyes, ver. 18. by their dependence on the living creatures, moving as they, having the same spirit they had, ver. 19, 20, 21. and then a firmament is seen, described by its situation, over the heads of the living creatures; and by its colour, as the terrible crystal, ver. 22. by what were under it, the wings of the living creatures; of which a more particular account is given, ver. 23, 24. by what was heard from it, a voice, ver. 25. and by what was above it, a throne; described by its colour, as a sapphire-stone; and by a person on it, who had the appearance of a man, ver. 26. who, in general, looked like the colour of amber; within which was the appearance of fire from his loins upwards, and from his loins downwards; the fire had a brightness round about it; and that brightness was like a rainbow in a cloud, on a rainy day; and this appearance was no other than that of a divine and glorious Person; which, when seen by the prophet, caused him, through reverence, to fall upon his face; when he heard a voice speaking to him what is recorded in the following chapter, ver. 27, 28.

Ver. 1. *Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year,* &c.] Either from the last jubilee, as R. Joseph Kimchi [r], Jarchi, and Abendana; or from the time that the book of the law was found by Hilkiah the priest [s]; so the Targum, which paraphrases the words thus, "and it "was in the thirtieth year after Hilkiah the high-priest "found the book of the law, in the house of the sanc-"tuary, in the court under the porch, in the middle "of the night, after the moon was down, in the days of "Josiah son of Amon king of Judah;" or, according to Jerom [t], from the time of the prophet's birth, who was now thirty years of age, and was just entered into his priestly office; or rather it was the thirtieth year of Nabopolassar, or the father of Nebuchadnezzar: this was the twelfth year of the captivity, reckoning from the third of Jehoiakim, which was the first captivity, and from whence the seventy years are to be reckoned, and also the twelfth of Nebuchadnezzar's reign; and if two years are taken, as Vitringa [u] observes, from the twenty-one years, which are given to Nabopolassar in Ptolemy's canon, in which Nebuchadnezzar his son reigned with him, there will be found thirty years from the beginning of Nabopolassar's reign to the fifth of Jeconiah's captivity, when Ezekiel began his prophecy, and which, as Bishop Usher [w], Mr. Bedford [x], Mr. Whiston [y], and the authors of the Uni-

[h] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 5. sect. 1.
[i] Synops. Sacr. Script. p. 134, 136. tom. 2.
[k] Demonstr. Evang. Prop. 4. p. 272.
[l] De Prophet. Vit. c. 9.
[m] De Vit. & Mort. Sanct. c. 39.
[n] Massaot, p. 78, 79.
[o] P. 74.
[p] De Resurrect. Mort. l. 1. c. 2. sect. 5.
[q] In Ezek. xliii. 19.

[r] Apud R. D. Kimchi in loc.
[s] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 26.
[t] Præfat. in Ezek. tom. 3. fol. 9. D.
[u] Typus Doctrin. Prophetic. sect. 7. p. 41. Vid. Witsii Miscel. Sacr. tom. 1. l. 1. c. 19.
[w] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3409. p. 127.
[x] Scripture Chronology, p. 681.
[y] Chronological Tables, cent. 10.

versal History [z], place in the year 593, before the birth of Christ: *in the fourth* month; the month Tammuz, as the Targum expresses it; which answers to part of June, and part of July: *in the fifth* day *of the month*; which some take to be on a sabbath-day; because, seven days after, the word of the Lord came to him again, ch. iii. 16. just as John was in the spirit on the Lord's day, Rev. i. 10. between one of whose visions and this there is a very great likeness, as will be seen hereafter: *(as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar.)* which is another agreement in circumstance between Ezekiel and John, when they had their visions: John was an exile in Patmos, and Ezekiel among the captives by the river Chebar in Chaldea. Some think this is the same river which is called by Ptolemy [a] Chaboras; and is said by him to pass through Mesopotamia: others say it was a river that was drawn off from the river Euphrates, by the order of one Cobaris, or Gobaris, a governor, from whence it had its name; that the river Euphrates might not, by its rapid course, hurt the city of Babylon; and by the Assyrians it was called Armalchar, or Narmalcha [b], the king's river; though it seems to be no other than Euphrates itself; and Kimchi observes, that in some copies of the Targum on this place it is interpreted of the river Euphrates; and he says their Rabbins of blessed memory say, that Chebar is Euphrates; and so Abarbinel; see Psal. cxxxvii. 1. Monsieur Thevenot [c] speaks of a river called Chabur, which is less than Alchabour, another mentioned by him; and has its source below Mosul, and on the left hand to those that go down the Tigris, and at Bagdat loses itself in the Tigris, which he takes to be the same as here: *that the heavens were opened*: as at our Lord's baptism, and at the stoning of Stephen; and so when John had his vision, which corresponds with the following, a door was opened in heaven, Rev. iv. 1: *and I saw the visions of God*; which God shewed unto him, and which were great and excellent; as excellent things are called things of God, as mountains of God, and cedars of God, Psal. xxxvi. 6. and lxxx. 10. and indeed he had a vision of a divine Person, in a human form; to which agrees the Targum, "and I saw in "the vision of prophecy, which abode on me, the "vision of the glory of the majesty of the Lord." The Arabic and Syriac versions read, *the vision of God*.

Ver. 2. *In the fifth* day *of the month*, &c.] The month Tammuz, as before: *(which* was *the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity:)* the same with Jeconiah and Coniah, as he is sometimes called; he was taken by the king of Babylon, when he had reigned but three months, and his captivity held seven-and-thirty years, 2 Kings xxiv. 8, 12. and xxv. 27.

Ver. 3. *The word of the Lord came expressly*, &c.] Or, *in being was* [d]; which phrase denotes the reality, certainty, substantiality and evidence of the word of the Lord to him: *unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi*; which Buzi, some say, was Jeremiah. Kimchi observes, that, in the Jerusalem Targum, the Prophet Ezekiel is called the son of Jeremiah the prophet; and Jeremiah was called Buzi because they despised him; this is rejected by Abarbinel; nor is there any reason to believe it, any more than what Nazianzen [e] says, that Ezekiel was a servant of Jeremiah: *in the land of the Chaldeans, by the river Chebar*; see the note on ver. 1. The Chaldee paraphrase makes the word of the Lord to come to him at two distinct times and places; "the word of prophecy from before the Lord "was with Ezekiel the son of Buzi the priest, in the "land of Israel: it returned a second time, and spake "with him in the province, the land of the Chaldeans, "by the river Chebar:" *and the hand of the Lord was there upon him*: by which is meant the gift and word of prophecy, which came with power and efficacy, clearness and evidence; so the Targum, "and the "spirit of prophecy from before the Lord there abode "by him;" by which he saw all after-visions, and delivered out the following prophecies; see 2 Pet. i. 21.

Ver. 4. *And I looked*, &c.] Being under the influence of the spirit and power of God: *and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north*; which some understand of Nebuchadnezzar and his army coming from Babylon, which lay north of Judea; see Jer. i. 14. but it seems to me to be, with what follows, only an apparatus to the following vision; and is designed to awaken the mind of the prophet, and to fix his attention to what should proceed from hence, and be seen by him; just as the Lord appeared in, and answered Job out of, the whirlwind, Job xxxviii. 1: *a great cloud*; as is usual when there is much thunder and lightning; though some understand this also of Nebuchadnezzar's army, which came in great numbers, swiftly and powerfully, as a cloud: *and a fire infolding itself*, in the cloud; rolling within it, when it burst out in thunder and lightning. The Targum renders it, *fire inflamed*; the same phrase is used of the storm of thunder, lightning, and hail, in Exod. ix. 24. Some understand this of the wrath of the Babylonian monarch; or of the wrath of God by him; or of the sins of men, the cause thereof: *and a brightness* was *about it*; that is, the cloud. This brightness was an emblem of the glory of the divine Being; who was now present, and enlightened the mind of the prophet to see the following things, and which all proceeded from him: *and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber out of the midst of the fire*; that is, out of the midst of the fire, and out of the midst of the brightness about it, there was something which was *as the colour of amber*; or, *like the chasmal* [f]; which, the Jews [g] say, is the name of an angel. It is asked [h], what is *chasmal*? R. Judah says, חיות אש ממללות, *fiery animals speaking*; who, when God speaks, are silent; and when he does not speak, they speak; but Christ is meant; for the

[z] Vol. 21. p. 61.
[a] Geograph. l. 5. c. 18.
[b] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 26.
[c] Travels, par. 2. B. 1. ch. 10. p. 46.
[d] היה היה essendo fuit, Pagninus, Montanus, Heb.; existendo extitit, Polanus.
[e] Orat. 47. vol. 1. p. 724.

[f] כעין החשמל tanquam species hasmal, vel chasmal, Calvin, Tigurine version, Starckius; angeli, Munster; flammæ crepitantis, Montanus; prunarum ardentissimarum, Polanus; purissimi æris, Piscator; ἠλέκτρου Sept.; electri, V. L. Pagninus.
[g] Baal Aruch, Philip. Aquinas. Vid. Jarchi & Kimchi in loc.
[h] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 13. 1. 2.

appearance of the man upon the throne is said to be as the colour of *chasmal*, ver. 27. The word, read the contrary way, is the Messiah, or the anointed, or to be anointed. Jarchi thinks it is the name of a colour, nearest to the colour of fire. Junius and Tremellius render it, *a most lively colour*; and perhaps may mean the colour of a burning coal; and Buxtorf translates it, *a coal exceedingly fired*; a clear, burning, red-hot coal; which may denote the pure light of Christ, who is the brightness of his Father's glory; his flaming love for his people; his burning zeal for the glory of God, and the good of his church; and his fiery indignation against his enemies. We render the word *amber*, as do others; by which must be meant, not that which is the juice of certain trees, which is hardened by the air, and is of a yellowish colour; nor that liquid substance which comes from sea-shores and rocks, and, being hardened in the same way, is of the colour of wax; but a sort of mixed metal, compounded of gold and silver; the fifth part of it is silver, as Pliny[i] says, and four parts gold; though Bochart is of opinion that the *aurichalcum*, a metal made of gold and brass, is meant; which is the most fine brass; to which the feet of Christ are compared in Rev. i. 15. and so this *chasmal* may denote the two natures in Christ; the preciousness of his person; his brightness and glory; and his great strength and power. R. Abendana[k] conjectures, that the colour of *chasmal* means the colour of some precious stone, as the colour of *tarshish*, or *beryl*, ver. 16. and so he that sat upon the throne, in Rev. iv. 3, was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine-stone.

Ver. 5. *Also out of the midst thereof*, &c.] The fire; or out of the whole that was seen; the whirlwind, cloud, fire, and the brightness about it: came *the likeness of four living creatures*; not really four living creatures; they appeared like to such; they were in the form of such; by which we are to understand, not the four monarchies; nor the four Gospels; nor the angels; but ministers of the Gospel; the true key for the opening of this vision is that which John saw, Rev. iv. 6, 7, 8. the four beasts there, or living creatures, as it should be rendered, are the same with these here, and these the same with them; and who manifestly appear to be not only worshippers of the true God, but to be men redeemed by the blood of Christ; and are distinguished from angels, and also from the four-and-twenty elders, the representatives of the Gospel churches; and so can design no other than the ministers of the word, with whom all the characters of them agree, as in that vision, so in this; see Rev. iv. 8, 9. and v. 8, 9, 10, 11. *Creatures* they are; not gods, but men; they are indeed in God's stead, and represent him, being ambassadors of his; but they are frail, mortal, sinful men, of like passions with others; and therefore great allowances must be made for their infirmities and weaknesses: yea, as ministers, they are the creatures of God; he, and not men, has made them able ministers of the New Testament: and they are *living* creatures; they have spiritual life in themselves, and are the means of quickening others; and have need to be, and should be, lively and fervent in their ministrations. Their number, *four*, respects the four parts of the world, to which their commission to preach the Gospel reaches; and whither they are sent, whensoever it is the will and pleasure of God they should go, and he has work for them to do. *And this was their appearance, they had the likeness of a man*; their general likeness was the human form, except in some particulars after mentioned, because they represented men; men humane, tender, kind, and pitiful; knowing, and understanding, and acting like men.

Ver. 6. *And* or *but every one had four faces*, &c.] Which are described, ver. 10. see the note there. The Targum multiplies the faces in a strange monstrous manner, paraphrasing the words thus, "each had four "faces, and there were four faces to every one *of them*, "and every creature had sixteen faces; the number "of the faces of the four creatures was sixty and four." *And every one had four wings*; the seraphim in Isa. vi. 2, and the four beasts or living creatures in Rev. iv. 8, had six wings; and so it seems that these had also, from ver. 11, 23. as will be seen there; nor is this any contradiction to the account here given, since it is not said they had *only* four wings. The Targum gives the same monstrous account of their wings as of their faces, saying, "each had four wings, and there were four "wings for every one of them, sixteen wings to every face, "and sixty-four to every creature; and the number of "the wings of the four living creatures were two hun- "dred and fifty-six." Jarchi is of the same opinion, and confirms it in his note on the text, which is this, "*four* "*faces to one*; that is, to the face of a man only were "four faces, and so to the lion, to the eagle, and to the "ox, lo, sixteen to a living creature, and so to every "living creature; and four wings to every one of the "faces, lo, sixty and four wings to a living creature; "and which, according to the Targum of Jonathan, "amounts to two hundred and fifty-six wings;" what these wings signified, see the note on ver. 11.

Ver. 7. *And their feet* were *straight feet*, &c.] And they went straight forward, as in ver. 12. they made straight paths for their feet, and walked uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel; did not go into crooked paths, or turn to the right hand, or the left; and having put their hand to the plough of the Gospel, neither looked back, nor turned back. *And* or *for the sole of their feet* was *like the sole of a calf's foot*; round, and the hoof divided, and fit for treading out the corn, in which oxen were employed; denoting the firmness and constancy of ministers in their work, treading out the corn of the word for the nourishment of souls, to whom they minister. The Septuagint render it, *their feet were winged*; or *flying*, as the Arabic version; in like manner as Mercury, the Heathen god, is painted: this may denote the readiness and swiftness of Gospel ministers to do their master's work; their feet being shod with the preparation of the Gospel, and so very beautiful, Ephes. vi. 15. Isa. lii. 7. The Targum is, "the sole of their feet as the sole of "feet that are round[l], and they moved the world

[i] Nat. Hist. l. 33. c. 4.
[k] Not. in Miclol Yophi in loc.

[l] So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 60. 2.

"where they went." *And they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass*; that is, their feet; being burning and shining lights in their conversation, as well as in their doctrine; see Rev. i. 15.

Ver. 8. *And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides*, &c.] *Hands of a man* denote action, according to knowledge; ministers of the Gospel are men of practice and business, as well as have the theory and knowledge of things; and they act like men in a rational way, according to the will of God revealed in the word: and these being *on their four sides*, shew that they have much work to do all around, on every side; in ministering the word, administering ordinances; visiting their people; giving counsel, caution, comfort, exhortation, instruction, &c.: and that they have many hands to do it with, much grace and strength from above; and they have need of all the hands they have; and what they have they constantly employ, and are steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Briareus, a man of business, is represented by the poets as having a hundred hands. These being *under their wings*, shew that, besides their public ministrations, they do much work secretly and privately, in their closet and studies, where no eye sees them but the eye of God, as well as in private houses, by their visits and conversation: and is also expressive of their modesty and humility, not doing what they do to be seen of men, nor boasting of their works; but ascribing all to the grace of God, and strength of Christ, by which they perform them, and which give them success. The Jews, in the Talmud[m], interpret this of the hand of God himself, which is stretched out under the wings of the living creatures, to receive penitent persons; because it is written ידו, *his hand*, but read ידי, *hands*. *And they four* had *their faces and their wings*; that is, on their four sides; a face and a wing before, and a face and a wing behind, and a face and a wing on each side; and under each wing a man's hand and arm. The Targum of the whole is, "and hands, as "the hands of a man, were made for them under their "wings on their four sides; to take in them coals of "fire from between the cherubim under the firma- "ment, which was over their seats, to put them into "the hands of the seraphim, to scatter upon the place "of the ungodly, to destroy the wicked that transgress "his word: and their faces and their wings were equal "to them four;" see ch. x. 2, 6, 7, 8.

Ver. 9. *Their wings* were *joined one to another*, &c.] *A woman to her sister*[n], in the Hebrew; denoting the concord, harmony, and agreement of Gospel ministers, and their affection to one another; they preach the same Gospel; administer the same ordinances; do the same work of the Lord; have the same zeal for the glory of God; the same love for Christ, and affection for the souls of men; are of the same mind and judgment, and help each other in the service of the Lord; and especially so it will be in the latter-day glory, when the watchmen shall see eye to eye, Isa. lii. 8. *They turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward*; they go not into the path of error and immorality; they don't become apostates from the truth; they are not of them that draw back unto perdition; they go on in the course of their ministry straight forward; let what will be in their way, nothing diverts them from it; notwithstanding all difficulties and discouragements in themselves; reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions from men; and the temptations of Satan; see the note on ver. 7.

Ver. 10. *As for the likeness of their faces, they four* had *the face of a man*, &c.] For these living creatures are men, redeemed from among men by the blood of Christ; their business lies with men, to preach the Gospel to them: and they should be humane, kind, and tender in their behaviour towards them; wounded consciences, weak believers, distressed and disconsolate souls, requiring such usage; and they should be men in understanding, have a large knowledge of the Scriptures, of the truths of the Gospel, and of Jesus Christ, since their work is to feed men with knowledge and understanding; and should act the manly part, quit themselves like men in defence of the Gospel, and the truths of it. *And the face of a lion on the right side*; denoting the strength of Gospel ministers, the lion being the strongest among beasts, Prov. xxx. 30, and they have need to be strong in the grace of Christ, and in the power of his might, to do the several parts of their work; to endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ; to wrestle with principalities and powers, and to bear the infirmities of the weak: and also their courage and fortitude of mind; their boldness in preaching the Gospel of Christ, not fearing the faces of men, nor their revilings; see Prov. xxviii. 1. *They four had the face of an ox on the left side*; expressive of the patience of Gospel ministers in bearing the yoke that is upon them, not only of the ministry, but of the weaknesses of saints, and the reproaches and indignities of the wicked; and in instructing those that oppose themselves, and in waiting the issue of their ministry: and also of their laboriousness in their ministrations; particularly in treading out the corn of the word, for the subsistence of the saints: see 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10. *They four also* had *the face of an eagle*: shewing their strong and clear sight of the Gospel, and the mysteries of it; the eagle having so strong an eye, that it is able to look full and steadfastly upon the sun; and their diligence in searching into the deep things of God, and particularly to find out where the carcass is, a crucified Christ, to feed upon themselves, and to direct others to it likewise. It seems as if these four living creatures had four distinct heads, as well as faces, and that the position of them was in this manner; the face of a man before; the face of a lion on the right side; the face of an ox on the left; and the face of an eagle behind. These four are the most excellent of creatures. The Talmudists have a saying, "there are four that are "proud (or excel) in the world; the lion among beasts; "the ox among cattle; the eagle among birds; and "man, whom God has exalted above all, for he rules "over all[o]."

Ver. 11. *Thus were their faces: and their wings were stretched upward*, &c.] The former clause, *thus* were

[m] T. Bab. Pesachim. fol. 119. 1.

[n] אשה אל אחותה foemina ad sororem suam, Montanus, Polanus; vira, nec mulier ad sociam suam, so some in Vatablus.

[o] Apud Schindler. Lex. Pentaglott, p. 267.

their faces, either belongs to the preceding verse; and the meaning is, this, as now represented, was the likeness of their faces, and this the position of them: or it may be read in connexion with the following clause, and be rendered, *and their faces and their wings were stretched upwards*; as they are in the Chaldee paraphrase, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions: *their faces were stretched upwards*, shewing that the ministers of the Gospel look up to Christ for fresh supplies of gifts and grace, of light, knowledge, wisdom, and strength, to enable them to perform their work: *and their wings were stretched upwards*, that is, two of them; not four, as the Arabic version has it; for two covered their bodies, as is after said. Those that were stretched upwards answer to the two with which Isaiah's seraphim flew; for these were, as in the original text, *parted upwards*[y]; though they were joined together at the bottom of them, as in ver. 9. yet being spread in flying, they opened wider and wider, and were at a greater distance from each other in their extreme points. This may design the agility, swiftness, and readiness of ministers in the performance of their work. *Two wings of every one were joined one to another*; with which they covered their heads and faces, as did Isaiah's seraphim, as conscious of their unworthiness and infirmities; looking upon themselves to be less than the least of all saints, unfit to be ministers of the Gospel; acknowledging they have nothing but what they have received, and therefore would not glory as though they had not received, and as ashamed of their poor performances and ministrations. *And two covered their bodies*; their lower and secret parts, called *their feet* in Isaiah; which however to others beautiful upon the mountains, running and bringing the good news of peace, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; yet sensible of their deficiences, they cover them, and confess, when they have done all they can, they are but unprofitable servants: from hence it appears that these living creatures had six wings, as the seraphim in Isaiah, and the four beasts in John's vision.

Ver. 12. *And they went every one straight forward*, &c.] Or, *over against his face*[z]; for, which way soever they went, whether forward or backward, or on either side, they had a face to go before them, to direct the way, and steer their course; so the ministers of the Gospel have a face to go by and follow after, the word of God, to look to and direct them, which way soever they go, or whatsoever service they are called unto. *Whither the spirit was to go they went*: which may be meant of their own spirit, will, and inclination; so the Targum, "to the place where it was their good pleasure to go they went;" so Jarchi and Kimchi; but this is not always the case, see Acts xvi. 6, 7, 8, 9. rather the Holy Spirit of God is intended, by whom holy men of God were moved, and spoke formerly; and by whom Gospel ministers are led into the truth, as it is in Jesus; and by whom they are directed where to go, and what to do; and they are sent, and go where the spirit of God is designed to go, in order to work upon the hearts of men, and effectually call them by his grace, which is usually done by the ministry of the word; and therefore Gospel ministers must go, and they do go, where the spirit of God has work to do by them; see Acts xvi. 6, 7. *And they turned not when they went*; they had no occasion to turn their bodies, because, which way soever they went, they had a face to go before them, and direct the way; see the note on ver. 9.

Ver. 13. *As for the likeness of the living creatures*, &c.] That is, of their bodies; for their faces, feet, hands, and wings, are described before: *their appearance was like burning coals of fire*; because of their ministerial gifts; the gifts of the spirit are compared to fire, and like coals of fire are to be stirred up, and not covered or quenched, Acts ii. 3. 2 Tim. i. 6. 1 Thes. v. 19. and because of their clear shining light in the truths of the Gospel; and because of their ardent love to Christ, and the souls of men; the coals whereof give a most vehement flame, which all the waters of reproach and persecution cannot quench, Cant. viii. 6, 7. and because of their burning zeal for the glory of God, and the interest of the Redeemer; hence they are called *seraphim*, fiery or burning, Isa. vi. 2: *and like the appearance of lamps*: so the ministers of the Gospel are compared to lamps, which hold forth the light of the Gospel to the sons of men; they are the lights or lamps of the world, and some of them are bright burning and shining ones, as John was, Matt. v. 14. John v. 35: *it went up and down among the living creatures*; that is, fire went up and down among them; so the Targum, "and fire inflamed was among the creatures;" by which may be meant the word of God, comparable to fire, Jer. xx. 9. and xxiii. 29. common to all the ministers of the Gospel, by which their minds are enlightened, and their hearts are warmed and filled with zeal, and by which they are the means of enlightening and warming others: *and the fire was bright*; and clear, as the word of God is: *and out of the fire went forth lightning*; by means of the ministry of the word, the kingdom and interest of Christ spread like lightning in the world, from east to west; so the coming of the son of man in his kingdom and power is compared to lightning, Matt. xxiv. 27. it denotes the quick, penetrating, and enlightening power and efficacy of the word.

Ver. 14. *And the living creatures ran*, &c.] Did their work with great readiness and swiftness; so, especially in the latter day, ministers of the Gospel shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased, Dan. xii. 4: *and returned*: for though before it is said, *they turned not when they went*, they kept straight on till they had done their work; but when they have done it, then they return, and give an account of it to him that has sent them: and their running and returning are said to be, *as the appearance of a flash of lightning*: very sudden and swift.

Ver. 15. *Now as I beheld the living creatures*, &c.] Whilst he had the vision of them, and when he was considering their form and likeness, and what should be the meaning of them: *behold, one wheel upon the earth*: the Jews[a] understand this of an angel, who stood upon the earth, and his head reached to the living creatures, and his name is Sandalphon; and so many

[y] פרודות disjunctæ, Montanus; divisæ, Calvin, Starckius. So Ben Melech.

[z] אל עבר פניו coram facie sua, V. L.; in tractum faciei suæ objectam, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; ante faciem suam, Starckius.

[a] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 13. 2.

expositors interpret the wheels of angels: but the more common interpretation of them is, that they design the visible world, and all things in it, which are movable and uncertain; though the true interpretation of them, as of the living creatures, is to be fetched from the vision in Rev. iv. and as the four living creatures here are the same with the four beasts there; so the wheels are the same with the four-and-twenty elders, the representatives of Gospel churches, as appears by both being in the same situation; as there is a throne, and next to that the four beasts, and next to them the four-and-twenty elders, Rev. iv. 3, 4, 6. and v. 6, 11. so here also is a throne, and next to the throne the four living creatures or cherubim, and next the living creatures, and by the side of them the wheels, ch. x. 1, 2, 6, 7, 9. and this is further manifest by their being both under the same influence and motion; as the four beasts were the first agents and movers, and the four-and-twenty elders were directed by them, who went before them in their devotion, Rev. iv. 9, 10. and v. 14. so the wheels moved as the living creatures did; when the living creatures went, they went; when they stood, the wheels stood; and when the creatures were lifted up, the wheels were also, ver. 19, 21. and x. 16, 17, 19. and the wheels are a very proper emblem of churches under the Gospel dispensation; partly for their round form, a symbol of perfection; the churches of Christ being more perfect under the gospel-dispensation than the church was under the legal one: and partly for their movableness from place to place; churches are not always in the same place; they have been removed from Judea into the Gentile world; and they have wheeled about there, sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another: as also for their changeable state and situation; being sometimes in prosperity, and sometimes in adversity: likewise for the work done by them; many things are done by the help and with the use of wheels; much work is done in and by the churches of Christ; here the Gospel is preached, ordinances administered, divine worship in all its parts performed, sinners are converted, and saints are edified and comforted; and as, when wheels are in motion, they make a great noise and rattling; so when there is any great work going on in the churches of Christ, it makes a great noise in the world; as at the first preaching and spread of the Gospel, both in Judea, and among the Gentiles; and at the time of the Reformation; and as there will be when antichrist shall be destroyed, and the Gospel shall be spread all the world over, Rev. xix. 1—6. to which may be added, that these wheels, together with the cherubim or living creatures, make a chariot; and as the cherubim in the temple are called the chariot of the cherubim, 1 Chron. xxviii. 18. so the author of Ecclesiasticus, ch. xlix. 8, says, that Ezekiel was shewn the glorious vision upon the chariot of the cherubim; and nothing is more common with the Jews than to call this vision of Ezekiel מרכבה, *mercavah*, or chariot. So in the Targum on 1 Kings vii. 33, it is said, "the work of the wheels was as the work "of the wheels of the glorious chariot;" meaning this in Ezekiel; and a chariot is a fit emblem of the churches of Christ, in which he rides about the world, and does his work; see Cant. iii. 9; and though but *one* wheel is here mentioned, yet it appears that there were *four*, as in ver. 16. and ch. x. 9. a wheel by every living creature; so though there is but one general assembly and church of the first-born written in heaven, of which Christ is the head, and for which he gave himself; yet there are many particular congregated churches, which may be signified by the number *four*; partly with respect to the four parts of the world, where Christ has an interest, and which will more manifestly appear in the latter-day; and partly with respect to the four living creatures, a wheel to every cherub, a church to every minister and pastor; for though sometimes there have been more pastors than one to a church, when large, yet never more than one church under the care of one pastor: moreover, this wheel or wheels were seen *upon the earth*; which is observed, to distinguish the church militant from the church triumphant in heaven; and to point out the place where the churches are; which though they consist of men that are not of the world, yet they are in the world: as also to denote the firmness of them; they are on the earth, not in the air or sea, where wheels can't move and roll; but upon *terra firma*, and that to the churches is Christ Jesus; and may also signify, that the mutability and movableness of churches are only whilst they are on earth, in the present state of things: it follows, *by the living creatures*; that is, the wheel or wheels were seen by the side of the living creatures; which is more fully expressed in ch. x. 9. churches are placed by the ministers of the Gospel, to direct them in matters of faith and worship; to put them in motion; to stir them up to the exercise of grace, and the discharge of duty; to watch over them in the Lord; and to feed them with spiritual knowledge and understanding: *with his four faces*; either the living creatures; and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it, *having four faces*; and the meaning is, that the wheel or wheels were on the four sides of the living creatures: or rather, as Jarchi, the wheel's four faces; for upon every wheel there were the same four faces as were in the living creatures, as is clear from ch. x. 13, 14. there being a great likeness between Gospel churches and Gospel ministers: the *first* was the face of a *cherub* or *ox*; which may denote the patience of Gospel churches, and the members thereof, in bearing afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions, for the sake of Christ; their meditation on the word of God continually, the ox being a creature that chews the cud; and their constancy and laboriousness in the work of the Lord: the *second* was the face of a *man*; which may be expressive of their knowledge and understanding of divine and spiritual things; and of their tender-heartedness, sympathy, and compassion, one towards another, in distressed circumstances: the *third* was the face of a *lion*; signifying their boldness and intrepidity in the cause of Christ, and the profession of his name: and the *fourth* was the face of an *eagle*; shewing that they mount up on the wings of faith and love, as on eagles' wings; that they soar aloft, and dwell on high, and have their affections set on things in heaven, and not on earth. Cocceius interprets the wheel or wheels of the word of God, and the course of the ministry of it, under the influence of the spirit; and so Starckius of late.

Ver. 16. *The appearance of the wheels, and their work,*

was *like unto the colour of a beryl*, &c.] Which is a precious stone; see Exod. xxviii. 20. Rev. xxi. 20. the Syriac version renders it a chrysolite; the Arabic, a jasper; and so may denote the preciousness, glory, and excellency of the churches, and the true members of them, which are as jewels and pearls of great price in the esteem of Christ; and the colour of this stone being a sea-green, from whence it has here the name of *tarshish*, a word sometimes used for the sea, may signify the fluctuating and uncertain state of the churches in this world, and in their present circumstances: *and they four* had *one likeness;* this shews that there were four wheels, and that they were all alike, as the true churches of Christ are; they are alike gathered out of the world, and consist of the same sort of persons, true believers in Christ; they profess the same faith; they have the same officers and ordinances; keep up the same discipline, and are under the same form of government, and have all the same power and authority: *and their work* was *as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel;* not as if one wheel was comprehended and included in another; for then one must be lesser than another; whereas all the wheels were alike, as for form, so for bigness; but the work or make of them was in a transverse way, or cross way; just as two hoops may be put together cross-ways, and so form four semicircles, and these a globe or sphere; hence this wheel is called גלגל, *an orb* or *globe*, in ch. x. 13. and it was on those four semicircles that the four faces of the ox, the man, the lion, and eagle, were engraved; the reason of their being wrought in this form was, for the motion of them; as follows:

Ver. 17. *When they went, they went upon their four sides*, &c.] On either of their crossing rings, as they were directed by the living creatures, at whose side they stood: and *they returned not when they went:* they had no need to turn about when they were to go east, west, north, or south, as wheels usually do; but they turned upon the crossing ring, which was towards either of the four points. This denotes the perseverance of the churches, and the true members thereof, in faith and practice; they don't turn back, nor look back, but go right on, walking in the fear of the Lord, and in all his ways and ordinances.

Ver. 18. *As for their rings, they were so high, that they were dreadful*, &c.] The circles and circumferences of them were *high;* which may denote the visibility and extensiveness of the churches of Christ, especially in the latter day; when they shall be exalted above the mountains and hills, the kingdoms and states of this world; and there shall be such numerous additions to them, that the place will be too strait for the members of them to dwell in, Isa. ii. 2. and xlix. 20. and *they were dreadful:* terrible, as the churches of Christ will be to their enemies to look at, when they shall be in their exalted state, Rev. xi. 12, 13. or the words may be rendered, *and they had fear**; there was fear and reverence in them; the fear of God, and a reverential affection for him; they were waiting on him, and attending his worship with great reverence and godly fear: *and their rings were full of eyes round about them four;* every one of the four wheels, and each of their four semicircles, were full of eyes; expressive of the knowledge of the Gospel, and the truths of it, in church-members; their continual looking to Christ for fresh supplies of grace and strength; and their constant watchfulness over each other.

Ver. 19. *And when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them*, &c.] When the ministers of the Gospel begin the worship of God, and move in acts of devotion, the churches join with them; see Rev. iv. 9, 10. and v. 14. and in their lives and conversations they are examples to them; and churches and members ought to walk as they have them, for an example in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity: *and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up:* when the ministers of the word have their affections raised, and are in lively frames of soul in preaching the Gospel, generally speaking, so it is with the churches and the members thereof, that sit under their ministrations; their hearts burn within them; their affections are raised, and their souls are lifted up heavenwards, while the Scriptures of truth are opened unto them.

Ver. 20. *Whithersoever the spirit* was *to go they went*, &c.] That is, the spirit of God; wherever that leads and directs, whether in the paths of faith or duty, they follow; they walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit; he guides their feet in the way of peace, and into all truth; and leads them in a right way to the land of uprightness: *thither* was their *spirit to go:* their spirits or souls being regenerated by the spirit of God, are moved and actuated by him, and readily go where that directs: *and the wheels were lifted up over-against them;* that is, over-against the living creatures; being by their sides going where they go, and being lifted up when they are: *for the spirit of the living creature* was *in the wheels:* the same spirit of God, which is a spirit of life, a quickening spirit, and a free spirit; which gives motion and liberty in religious exercises; that which is in the ministers of the Gospel is in the churches of God; there is but one spirit, and ministers and members are actuated and influenced by it; see Ephes. iv. 4, 5.

Ver. 21. *When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood*, &c.] When ministers are active and lively, then the churches are; but when they are indolent, dull, and inactive, then the churches are so likewise: *and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels* were *lifted up over-against them:* see the note on ver. 19: *for the spirit of the living creature* was *in the wheels;* or, *the spirit of life*, as in ver. 20. see Rev. xi. 11.

Ver. 22. *And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature*, &c.] This was not a real firmament, but the likeness of one; it was like the firmament which God created on the second day, which divided between the waters above and below, and which he called Heaven; and is no other than the airy and starry heavens. Its name is in Hebrew רקיע, *an expanse;* from its being stretched out as a curtain,

* ויראה להם et timor illis erat, Cocceius; et timor ipsis, Starckius; *and they were reverent*, so Dr. Lightfoot, Prospect of the Temple, &c. c. 38. p. 2035.

and a tent to dwell in; and a *firmament*, from its firmness and continuance; and therefore called the firmament of his power, Gen. i. 8. Isa. xl. 22. Psal. cl. 1. and this visionary one was *over the heads of the living creatures;* which shews that they could not be angels, for those have their habitation in the third heaven, above the firmament; much less in hieroglyphic of the trinity of Persons, who are the three that bear record in heaven, and are not under the firmament; but ministers of the Gospel, who are on earth, and are subject to Christ, whose throne is above the firmament, ver. 26. and who receive their commission and gifts from him, and are accountable to him. This firmament was *as the colour of the terrible crystal:* crystal is a very white, transparent, precious stone, resembling ice, from whence it has its name; hence Pliny[t] thought it was no other than ice vehemently frozen; and here it is called *terrible*, because exceeding clear and bright, so that there was no looking upon it, without the eyes being dazzled with the glory of it. The sky is called a molten looking-glass, in which the glory of God, and his handy-work, may be seen, Job xxxvii. 18. Psal. xix. 1. and as the throne of Christ was over this crystal firmament, it shews that, though he is in heaven, he sees all that is done on earth, and in his churches, and by his ministers; and the saints also see him by faith, and through the glass of the Gospel: it is only a crystal firmament that is between them, *stretched forth over their heads above:* that is, over the heads of the living creatures, as before; said to be stretched out, in allusion to its name, an expanse, as before observed.

Ver. 23. *And under the firmament were their wings straight, the one toward the other,* &c.] A further account is here given of the wings of the living creatures, which were under the firmament: two of their wings were stretched straight upwards towards the firmament, and joined each other; see the note on ver. 9: *every one had two, which covered on this side;* besides the two that were carried straight upright towards heaven, they had other two, which covered their back and belly: *and every one had two, which covered on that side, their bodies;* that is, on each side of their bodies; so that there were in all six wings, as in Isaiah's vision, and in that of the Revelation of John: as their wings in general denote the swiftness and readiness of Gospel ministers to do the work of Christ, for which they expect help and assistance from above, signified by two being stretched straight upwards; see ver. 11. so covering the several parts of their bodies with the rest shews their modesty and humility, as being ashamed of themselves and their services, when performed in the best manner; it being altogether owing to the grace of God they are what they are, have and do; they themselves being the chief of sinners, and the least of saints, in their own account.

Ver. 24. *And when they went,* &c.] In their ministrations, preaching the Gospel, and administering ordinances: *I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters;* so the voice of Christ, which is no other than his Gospel preached by his ministers, is said to be as the sound of many waters, Rev. i. 15. which is heard a great way off, as the Gospel ministry is, even to the ends of the earth; thither the sound of the apostles' words reached, Rom. x. 18. and which, as they move with great force, yield a pleasant sound; and may denote both the energy of the word, and the delightfulness of it: *as the voice of the Almighty:* the Gospel being the word of God, and not of man; which is quick and powerful, and full of majesty, and works effectually in them that believe: *the voice of speech;* an articulate voice, a human one, pronounced by men, whom God employs to deliver out his mind and will: *as the noise of an host;* the church being militant, to whom they minister; so that their voice, in their ministry, is sometimes reproving, convincing, confuting, contending and disputing, as well as teaching and instructing. The Targum is, "and the voice "of their words, when they confess and bless the "Lord, the living everlasting King, is as the voice of "the host of angels on high:" *when they stood, they let down their wings;* those two with which they flew, and with them covered their faces, or some part of their bodies, as ashamed of their own unworthiness and imperfections; or this may denote their having done their work, and finished their course.

Ver. 25. *And there was a voice from the firmament that was over their heads,* &c.] Which was the voice of Christ upon the throne, above the firmament, over the heads of the living creatures; which directed them when and where to go, and what to do, and when and where to stop: *when they stood,* and had *let down their wings;* either encouraging them to lift them up, and go on in their work, notwithstanding the sense they had of their own weakness and unworthiness; or, having done their work, calling them to himself in heaven.

Ver. 26. *And above the firmament that was over their heads,* &c.] The heads of the living creatures: was *the likeness of a throne;* a symbol of Christ's kingly power and authority, who is the person that sat upon it; as he is God, he is on the same throne with his Father; as Mediator, he is King of saints, and was so from eternity; he exercised his office before his incarnation; and as he was prophesied of as a King, he came as one, though little known, and his kingdom was not with observation; upon his ascension he was declared Lord and Christ; and will appear on a throne, when he shall come to judge the world, and particularly in the New-Jerusalem church-state: and this throne was *as the appearance of a sapphire-stone:* which is a stone very clear and transparent; very hard, solid, and durable; very precious and excellent; and of an azure sky-colour; denoting the clear manifestation of Christ's righteous judgments, in the ministration of his kingly office; the duration of his government; the excellency of it; and its heavenly nature and original: *and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness of the appearance of a man above upon it;* this was no other than Christ; who, though he was not really man before his incarnation, yet often appeared in the form of a man; and, through his incarnation, he was found in fashion as a man; and was really man, though not a mere man; nor was the person here designed; for this was the appearance and likeness of the glory of the

[t] Nat. Hist. l. 37. c. 2.

Lord, ver. 28. and this shews, that when Christ, as man, had done his work, he should sit down *upon* his throne *above* the firmament, being made higher than the heavens.

Ver. 27. *And I saw as the colour of amber*, &c.] That is, the man upon the throne looked like the colour of amber; of which see the note on ver. 4: *as the appearance of fire round about within it*; which may denote the deity of Christ, or Christ as God, who is a consuming fire to his enemies; a fire enlightening and warming to his people; as a wall of fire protecting them; and as a pillar of fire guiding and directing them, as he did the Israelites in the wilderness; and who has such light and glory in him, as is incomprehensible to us; and therefore this fire appeared round about within, the colour of amber, and under his human nature, through which it broke forth: *from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire*; it reached upwards and downwards, as well as all around him: *and it had brightness round about*; the fire; which shone through the human nature, and was upon it, in virtue of its union to the son of God; and through the Gospel, in which, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord is seen; and which will be brighter and brighter in the latter day; which may be signified by the appearance of his loins downward.

Ver. 28. *As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain*, &c.] The rainbow, which is no other than the reflection of the rays of the sun in a thin watery cloud on a rainy day: *so was the appearance of the brightness round about it*; so Christ is represented as clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow about his head, Rev. x. 1. which is a token of the covenant of grace, in which Christ is concerned; it is round about him; he is the head, mediator, surety, and messenger of it; all the blessings and promises of it are in him; and he is that itself, which is only a reverberation of him, the sun of righteousness; and it is also about the throne on which he sits, which is upheld by mercy and truth; and it is ever in his view, and he is always mindful of it: this part of the vision agrees with Rev. iv. 3: *this was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of God*; of the divine Shechinah; the Word of God that was made flesh, and dwelt among us; whose glory is as the only-begotten of the Father; and who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person: *and when I saw it, I fell upon my face*; through fear and reverence of the glorious Person that appeared to him; see Rev. i. 17: *and I heard a voice of one that spake*, what is delivered in the following chapter; which contains Ezekiel's commission from Christ, who is the person that spake unto him.

CHAP. II.

THIS chapter contains the prophet's call, commission, and instruction to prophesy. The preparation to it is in ver. 1, 2. being fallen upon his face, he is bid to stand upon his feet, with a promise to speak to him; and the spirit entering into him, he is set by him on his feet, and he hears what is spoken to him; then follows his mission to the children of Israel, who are described as rebellious, impudent, and stiff-hearted; and to whom he is sent, to render them inexcusable, ver. 3, 4, 5. and he is exhorted not to be afraid of their words, nor dismayed at their looks, however fierce and furious they might be; but faithfully declare his message, and not be discouraged, should it be without success, ver. 6, 7. and he is instructed not to be rebellious, as they were; but open his mouth and eat what should be given him, ver. 8. when, in a visionary way, a hand was seen, and a roll in it, and this spread before him, written within and without, full of lamentation, mourning, and woes, as a symbol of the substance of his prophecy, ver. 9, 10.

Ver. 1. *And he said unto me*, &c.] The glorious Person who sat upon the throne, whose appearance is described in the latter part of the preceding chapter: *son of man*: as he was to be that spake unto him; and so it may denote relation, affection, and familiarity; or otherwise it is expressive of humiliation; of the frail, mean, and low estate of man, through the fall, Psal. viii. 4. wherefore some think Ezekiel is thus addressed, lest he should be lifted up, and think himself as one of the angels, because he had seen so great a vision; just as the Apostle Paul was humbled, lest he should be exalted above measure, through the visions and revelations he had, 2 Cor. xii. 7. Kimchi mentions this, but assigns another reason; that because he saw the face of a man in the above vision, he let him know that he was right and good in the eye of God; and was the son of man, and not the son of a lion, *&c.* which is exceeding weak and trifling. Abendana, besides these, mentions some other reasons given; as that because he saw the *mercavah* or chariot, and ascended to the dignity of the angels on high, it is as if it was said, there is none born of a woman, as this; or because he was carried out of the holy land, as Adam was drove out of Eden; and therefore called the son of the first Adam, being drove out of Jerusalem, and out of the temple, where he was a priest. It may be observed, that this is a name which our Lord frequently took to himself in his state of humiliation; and that none but Ezekiel, excepting once the Prophet Daniel, is called by this name; and no doubt the reason of it is, because he was an eminent type of Christ; and particularly in his mission and commission, as a prophet, to the rebellious house of Israel: *stand upon thy feet*; for he was fallen upon his face, at the sight of the vision, ch. i. 28. when a divine Person speaks, men ought to stand and hear, and be in a readiness to do his pleasure: *and I will speak unto thee*; which is said for his encouragement, being spoken by him who has the words of truth and grace, and of eternal life.

Ver. 2. *And the spirit entered into me*, &c.] Not his own spirit or soul; for it does not appear that that went out of him upon the sight of the vision; nor any of the ministering spirits, the angels, who are never said to enter into the prophets or people of God; but the Holy

Spirit of God; the same spirit that was in the living creatures, and in the wheels; in the ministers, and in the churches; who entered with his gifts to qualify him for his office as a prophet; and who enters with his graces into the hearts of all the saints, to quicken, renew, comfort, and sanctify them: *when he spake unto me;* at the same time the spirit went along with the word; and when the word of Christ is attended with the demonstration of the spirit and of power, it is effectual: *and he set me upon my feet;* not he that spake with him, and bid him stand on his feet; but the spirit; for the word, though it is the word of God, and of Christ, yet is ineffectual without the Spirit; when he enters, he gives the word a place, and it works effectually; when he enters, as the spirit of life from Christ, the soul is quickened and strengthened; and such that are fallen down stand up; yea, such as are dead arise and stand upon their feet: *that I heard him that spake unto me;* so as to understand; for the Spirit, who searches the deep things of God, reveals them to his ministers, and causes them to understand the word of Christ, that they may be able to instruct others in it.

Ver. 3. *And he said unto me, son of man,* &c.] Now follow his mission and commission, and an account of the persons to whom he was sent: *I send thee to the children of Israel;* that were captives in Babylon, in Jehoiakin's captivity; so Christ was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, Matt. xv. 24: *to a rebellious nation, that hath rebelled against me;* or, *rebellious Gentiles*[u]; not the nations of the earth, though Ezekiel did prophesy many things concerning them; but the Jews, the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; or the twelve tribes of Israel, called Gentiles, because they joined with them in their idolatries; and, as Kimchi says, were divided in their evil works; some worshipping the gods of the Ammonites; and some the gods of the Moabites; and all guilty of rebellion and treason in so doing against the God of heaven: *they and their fathers have transgressed against me, unto this very day;* which is an aggravation of their rebellion; their fathers had sinned, and they had followed their ill examples, and had continued therein to that day; and as they did to the times of Christ, when they were about to fill up the measure of their iniquity, Matt. xxiii. 31, 32.

Ver. 4. *For they are impudent children,* &c.] *Hard of face*[w]; as is commonly said of impudent persons, that they are brasen-faced; they had a whore's forehead, and refused to be ashamed, and made their faces harder than a rock, Jer. iii. 3. and v. 3. they declared their sin as Sodom, and hid it not; they sinned openly, and could not blush at it: *and stiff-hearted;* or, *strong of heart*[x]; whose hearts were like an adamant stone, and harder than the nether millstone; impenitent, obdurate, and inflexible; they were not only stiff-necked, as Stephen says they were in his time, and always had been; but stiff-hearted; they were not subject to the law of God now, nor would they submit to the Gospel and ordinances of Christ in his time, and in the times of his apostles, nor to his righteousness, Rom. x. 3: *I do send thee unto them;* even to such as they are: this is a repetition, and a confirmation, of his mission; and suggests, that though they were such, he should not refuse to go to them, since he had sent him: *and thou shalt say unto them, thus saith the Lord God:* that what he said came from the Lord, and was spoken in his name.

Ver. 5. *And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear,* &c.] Or *cease*[y]; that is, from hearing, as Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it; or from sinning, as the Targum. The sense is, whether they would hear the word of the Lord, as spoken by the prophet, attend unto it, receive it, and obey it; or whether they would reject it, turn their backs on it, and discontinue hearing it; or whether they would so hear as to leave their sinful course of life, or not: this the prophet could not know before-hand, nor should he be concerned about it, or be discouraged if his ministry should be fruitless; since he could not expect much from them: *(for they are a rebellious house:)* or, *a house of rebellion*[z]; a most rebellious one; hard of heart, face, and neck: *yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them;* so that they were left without excuse, which was the end of the prophet's being sent unto them; there was little or no hope of reclaiming them; but, however, by such a step taken, they could not say that they had no prophet sent to reprove them for their sins, and warn them of their danger; had they, they would have listened to him, and so have escaped the evils that came upon them.

Ver. 6. *And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them,* &c.] Of any of them, the greatest among them, their princes and nobles; who, by their grandeur and authority, their stern looks, and big words, might awe and terrify him; wherefore it follows: *neither be afraid of their words;* of their calumnies, revilings, and reproaches, their scoffs and jeers, their menaces and threatenings: *though briers and thorns be with thee;* that is, men comparable to such; wicked men are like to briers and thorns, 2 Sam. xxiii. 6. Isa. xxvii. 4. are grieving, pricking, and distressing to good men, and are of no worth and value; are useless and unprofitable, and fit fuel for everlasting burnings. The Targum is, "for they are rebellious, and hard against "thee;" so Jarchi and Kimchi explain the first word, סרבים, translated *briers,* as signifying rebellious and disobedient; though the former observes, that R. Donesh interprets it of a kind of thorns, of which there are twenty names, and this is one: *and thou dost dwell among scorpions;* that is, as the Targum paraphrases it, "thou dwellest in the midst of a people "whose works are like to scorpions." Some interpret it, as Kimchi observes, of sharp thorns, of a thorny plant that grows in the form of a scorpion[a]; but scorpions here are a kind of serpents, subtle, venemous, and mischievous, which have stings in their tails; which, as Pliny says, they are continually thrusting out, and striking with, that they may lose no opportunity of

[u] אל גוים המורדים ad gentes rebelles, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Starckius.

[w] קשי פנים duri facie, Pagninus, Vatablus, Calvin, Cocceius, Starckius.

[x] חזקי לב duri corde, Pagninus, Montanus; fortes corde, Vatablus, Polanus.

[y] יחדלו cessaverint, Pagninus, Montanus, Starckius; desistent, Calvin, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[z] בית מרי domus rebellionis, Montanus, Calvin, Piscator, Junius & Tremellius, Starckius.

[a] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 21. c. 15. and l. 22. c. 15.

doing hurt [b]; and fitly describe wicked men, their subtlety, and mischievous nature: *be not afraid of their words*: as before; with which they are like briers, thorns, and scorpions, being very grievous, defamatory, and mischievous: *nor be dismayed at their looks*: their frowning, furious, and angry countenances; forbidding with which, as well as with their words, the prophet from prophesying unto them: *though*, or *for*, *they be a rebellious house*: see ver. 5.

Ver. 7. *And thou shalt speak my words unto them*, &c.] Not his own words, but those the Lord should put into his mouth. The Targum is, "and thou shalt "prophesy the words of my prophecy unto them:" *whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear*: see the note on ver. 5: *for they are most rebellious*: or *rebellion* [c] itself; as the carnal mind is said to be *enmity* itself against God, Rom. viii. 7. which aggravates their character and state.

Ver. 8. *But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee*, &c.] Which was necessary, because he was to speak not his own words, but the Lord's, and therefore ought to hear before he spoke: and indeed those that speak in a public way, for the instruction of others, ought to hear and learn of Christ first: *be not thou rebellious, like that rebellious house*: who would not hear what was said unto them; but they were not to be imitated, no, not in a lesser degree: the prophet was to avoid every thing that looked like rebellion; as inattention to what was said to him, hesitation about it, or backwardness to publish it: *open thy mouth*; be ready to receive what should be given, as a symbol of the prophecy he was to deliver. The Targum is, "incline thy soul, and receive what I give thee." Jarchi's note is, incline thine ear and hear, and let it be sweet to thee, as if thou didst eat food for hunger; and Kimchi observes, the intention of the figurative expression is to learn the words of the prophecy, and to remember them: *and eat that I give thee*; which may be safely done; for Christ gives his ministers and people nothing but what is wholesome; his doctrines are wholesome words, and may be eaten without fear, 1 Tim. vi. 3.

Ver. 9. *And when I looked, behold, an hand was sent unto me*, &c.] Not of an angel, but of Christ himself, in a visionary way; for this was not a real hand, but the likeness of one, as in ch. viii. 3. and so the Targum here, "and I saw, and, behold, "the likeness of a hand stretched out on the side to "me." This symbol was to shew that his prophecy, that he was sent to deliver, was from heaven, and came from Christ; and that hand that delivered it to him would protect and defend him: *and, lo, a roll of a book was therein*; held in it, and held forth by it, to the prophet. Books were frequently written on parchment or vellum, and rolled about a stick, in form of a cylinder; and hence they were called volumes or rolls, Psal. xl. 7. This roll was a symbol of the prophecy of this book.

Ver. 10. *And he spread it before me*, &c.] Unrolled it, that what was written in it might be seen and read; that so, understanding it, he might deliver the contents of it to the people: thus the Gospel, and the mysteries of it, must be explained by Christ to his ministers; and their understandings must be opened ere they will be capable of making them known to others: *and it was written within and without*; on the back of the vellum or parchment, as well as within-side; and such writings were called *opisthographa*; of this kind was the book John saw, Rev. v. 1. It was usual only to write on the inside; but when they had a great deal to write, then they wrote on the backside also [d]; so that this roll being thus written denotes the largeness and abundance of the prophecies contained in this book; some respecting the Jews, and others the nations of the world. The Targum is, "it was written "before and behind, what was from the beginning, "and what shall be in the end:" *and there were written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe*; afflictions, chastisements, and punishments, that should be inflicted upon the Jews, and other nations of the world; which, when made known to them, and especially when inflicted on them, would occasion sorrow and distress among them. In the Talmud, *lamentations* are interpreted of the punishments of the righteous in this world; *mourning* of the gift of reward to the righteous in the world to come; and *woe* of the punishments of the wicked in the world to come [e]. The Targum is, "if the house of Israel transgress the "law, the people shall rule over them; but, if they "keep the law, lamentation, and mourning, and sor"row, shall cease from them."

C H A P. III.

THIS chapter contains a further account of the prophet's call and mission; of his preparation of him for his work; of the persons to whom he was sent; of what happened to him upon this; of the nature of his office, and the work of it; and of what followed upon the renewal of his call. His further preparation for prophesying is in ver. 1, 2, 3. where he is bid to eat the roll shewed him, which he did, and found it in his mouth as honey for sweetness; and then he receives fresh orders to go to the people of Israel, and prophesy to them, ver. 4. and, that he might not be discouraged, an account is given before-hand of the people to whom he was sent; of their language, behaviour, and disposition; by which he could not expect success, ver. 5, 6, 7. and, for his further encouragement, strength, boldness, resolution, firmness, and presence of mind, are promised him, ver. 8, 9. also a revelation of more things to him; all which he should hear, receive, and

[b] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 25.

[c] מרי המה rebellio ipsi, Montanus, Polanus, Starckius; inobedientia sunt, Cocceius.

[d] ——— Aut summi plena tam margine libri
Scriptus, & in tergo, nec dum finitus Orestes. Juvenal. Satyr. 1.

[e] T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 21. 1.

speak, whether the people would attend to them or no; which ought to be no discouragement to him, since it was not regarded by the Lord, ver. 10, 11. then follows an account of his being lifted up by the spirit from the earth, when he heard a voice, which is described by the manner and matter of it; and a noise, both of the living creature's wings, and of the wheels he had seen in a former vision, ver. 12, 13. and next of his being carried away by the same spirit; and of the condition he was in, in his own spirit, as he went; and of the strength he received from the Lord; and of the place to which he was carried; and his state and circumstances, and time of continuance there, ver. 14, 15. where, after a time mentioned, he has a fresh call to his office, under the character of a watchman, whose business was to hear Christ's words, and warn the house of Israel from him; and who are distinguished into wicked and righteous; and whom the prophet was to warn at his own peril, ver. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. and the chapter is concluded with a narration of various events which befell the prophet; he is bid by the Lord to go into the plain, which he did, and there saw the glory of the Lord, as he had before seen it at the river Chebar; which so affected him, that he fell upon his face, ver. 22, 23. the spirit entered into him, set him on his feet, and spake with him; ordered him what he should do himself, that he should shut himself up in his house, ver. 24. informed him what the people would do to him; bind him with bands, that he should not come forth, ver. 25. and what Christ would do to him; strike him dumb in judgment to the people, that he might not be a reprover of them, ver. 26. but he is told that, when the Lord spoke to him, his mouth should be opened, and he should declare what was said to him, ver. 27.

Ver. 1. *Moreover he said unto me,* &c.] The same glorious Person who had been speaking all along in the preceding chapter; and who was seen by the prophet on a sapphire throne, and described in ch. i. 26, 27, 28. the first fifteen verses of this chapter are by Junius and Tremellius made a part of the second: *son of man, eat that thou findest;* not any thing, but what he found in the hand sent unto him; wherefore the Targum is, " son of man, receive what is given thee;" which was the roll, as follows: *eat this roll;* not literally, but figuratively, as John is bid to eat the little book, Rev. x. 9, 10. that is, read it, meditate upon the things contained therein, and digest them, that he might be able to impart them, and make them known to others: it is explained in ver. 10 by hearing and receiving the words of the prophecy; and so the Targum, " receive what is written in this roll;" this is to eat it; as great readers of books are called *helluones librorum*, eaters of books, gluttons at them; read them greedily, deeply meditate upon what is in them, and thoroughly digest them; so it becomes all good men to eat the word, to mix it with faith, to receive it in the love of it, and constantly meditate on it, Psal. i. 1, 2. and especially ministers of the Gospel, 1 Tim. iv. 15: *and go, speak unto the house of Israel;* or, as the Targum, " go, and prophesy to the house of " Israel;" for by eating the roll, in the sense given, he was fit for it; and when ministers of the word have read, and thought of, and digested the truths of the Gospel themselves, then they are prepared to go and enter upon their work, and feed others with knowledge and understanding.

Ver. 2. *So I opened my mouth,* &c.] To take in the roll, and eat it; he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; he did all that he could towards eating it, but was not sufficient of himself; and therefore it follows: *and he caused me to eat that roll;* he, the Lord, put it into his mouth, caused him to eat it, and filled him with it, according to his promise, Psal. lxxxi. 10. The efficacy and sufficiency to think of good things, to meditate upon them, receive and digest them, are of God; it is he that makes men prophets, and able ministers. The Targum is, " and I " inclined my soul, and he taught me (or made me " wise *with*) what was written in this roll."

Ver. 3. *And he said unto me, son of man, cause thy belly to eat,* &c.] Or *devour* [f], and consume; that is, concoct and digest; don't cast it out of thy mouth, as soon as thou hast tasted of it; but let it go down into the stomach, and there digest it; and from thence into the belly, that so, upon the whole, virtue may be received, and nourishment come by it: *and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee;* eat to satiety; so the Targum, " son of man, thou shalt satiate thy soul, " and fill thy belly, if thou receivest what is written " in this roll, which I give thee:" this was sufficient to qualify the prophet for prophesying, and furnish him with materials enough; and these fit and proper for the discharge of his office; and so such who study the word of God with application become scribes well instructed in the kingdom of heaven; and being filled themselves, are able to bring forth things to the comfort and satisfaction of others: *then did I eat* it, *and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness;* that is, as the roll was spread before him, he looked into it, and read it, and meditated upon it, and laid it up in his memory, in order to deliver it out when commanded; and though it contained things very distressing, and which would occasion lamentation, and mourning, and wo; yet, considering that these were the will of God, and in righteous judgment to men, he could not but acquiesce in and approve of them. All the words that come out of the mouth of God are as sweet as honey, yea, sweeter than that, Psal. xix. 10. and cxix. 103. and so the Targum interprets it of the words of the Lord, " and I took it, and his words were in my " mouth as sweet honey;" and especially the Gospel, and the truths of it, are like honey; they are gathered by laborious ministers, as honey by the industrious bee, out of the various flowers of the Scriptures, with which being laden, they bring into the hive of the church, and dispose of for general usefulness; these are like honey for healthfulness, for nourishment, and for sweetness to the taste; that which makes the Gospel so are the exceeding great and precious promises in it; its doctrines of grace, and those of peace and reconciliation, of pardon, righteousness, eternal life and salvation, by Jesus Christ; and, above all, Christ himself, who is the sum and substance of it; and all

[f] תאכל devoret, consumat, Vatablus.

its truths being quickening, comforting, and refreshing: but then the Gospel is only sweet when it is eaten; not merely heard, assented to, and superficially tasted of, but eaten and fed upon by faith; and so it is sweet, not to unregenerate persons, whose taste is not changed; nor to nominal and notional professors, who have only a superficial taste of it; but to true believers in Christ, spiritual men, who judge and discern all things; see Rev. x. 9, 10.

Ver. 4. *And he said unto me, son of man, go, &c.*] After he had eaten the roll; for then was he qualified to prophesy: *get thee unto the house of Israel*; to whom he was to prophesy: *and speak with my words unto them*: not with his own words; nor with the words of men, the enticing words of man's wisdom; but with the words of Christ; with the taught words of the Holy Ghost; with what is written in the roll; the words of this prophecy are meant. So the Targum, "and thou "shalt prophesy the words of my prophecy unto them;" in like manner John, after he had eaten the little book, is told that he must prophesy before many people, nations, tongues, and kings, Rev. x. 9, 10, 11. though Ezekiel was only sent to one nation, as follows:

Ver. 5. *For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech, &c.*] *Deep of lip*[g], or *speech*; difficult to be got at and understood: *and of a hard language*; or *heavy of tongue*[h]; of a barbarous and unknown language, whom he could not understand, nor they him; and so would have been barbarians to one another; and consequently it could not be thought his prophesying among them could have been of any use. This may be considered, either by way of encouragement to the prophet to go on his errand to such a people; since, as he could understand them, and they him, he might hope to meet with success; or, however, he could deliver his message, so as to be understood: or as an aggravation of the impiety, perverseness, and stupidity of the Israelites; that though the prophet spoke to them in their own language, yet they would not hear, nor receive his words: but *to the house of Israel*; who were a people of the same speech and language with the prophet; all spoke and understood the language of Canaan; nor were the things he delivered such as they were altogether strangers to, being the same, for substance, which Moses, and the other prophets, had ever taught.

Ver. 6. *Not to many people of a strange speech and of an hard language, &c.*] The prophet was sent, not to different nations, of different languages; but to one nation, of the same language; indeed several of his prophecies concern other nations, as the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Tyrians, Philistines, Egyptians, and Assyrians; but then these had a relation to the people of Israel, and were chiefly on their account; and therefore he was not sent to those nations to deliver his prophecies unto them, but to the people of Israel only; and so had no difficulty on his part concerning their language, which he would have had, had he been sent to the barbarous nations; *whose words thou canst not understand*: the prophet being only used to the language of the Jews, and not having the gift of speaking with and understanding divers tongues; as the apostles of Christ had, when they were sent to many people of different languages, and which is here tacitly intimated: *surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee*; which is an aggravation of the obstinacy and disobedience of the people of Israel; that had the barbarous nations been favoured with the same means of instruction they were, they would have been obedient; see Matt. xi. 21, 23. for though they could not understand the prophet's language, nor he theirs; yet, as Kimchi observes, they would have sought for an interpreter to have explained the prophecy to them. The thing is very strongly affirmed, *surely*, verily, באמת, *of a truth*, as the same Jewish writer interprets אם לא; and both he and Jarchi take it to be the form of an oath. Some render the words, *if I had not sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee*[i]; and the sense is, either that if the Lord had not sent him to the Israelites, but to the people of a strange speech, they, the people, would have hearkened to him: or, if the Lord had not sent the prophet, but he had gone of himself, as the false prophets, in their own name, the Israelites would have hearkened to him; such was their perverseness and rebellion: others render the words, *if not*, or had it not been for their strange speech and hard language, *I would have sent thee to them*[k], the barbarous nations, and *they would have hearkened unto thee* but the first sense seems best; which is confirmed by the Targum, Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and the Oriental versions.

Ver. 7. *But the house of Israel would not hearken unto thee, &c.*] *They are not willing*[l]; they have no desire, no inclination, to hear and hearken; but the reverse; though they were capable of hearing and understanding his speech and language, and though he was sent unto them by the Lord; and indeed the reason why they did not hearken to him was not because they rejected him and his words, but because they rejected the Lord and his words; they were the words of the Lord, and his reproofs; and therefore they would not hearken to them, as follows: *for they will not hearken unto me*; and which is an argument why the prophet should bear with patience their disregard to him and his words, and their neglect and contempt of them; for, seeing they would not hear the Lord, how could he expect they should hear him? and therefore he should not be uneasy at it; see John xv. 20: *for all the house of Israel are impudent and heart-hearted*; or, *strong of front, and hard of heart*[m]; they had a whore's forehead, an impudent face, that could not blush and be ashamed; and hearts of stone, like a rock, and harder than the nether mill-stone, on which no impressions could be made by all the admonitions and reproofs given them; see ch. ii. 4. and this was the case of all of them in general, excepting some very few; which shews the sad degeneracy of this people.

Ver. 8. *Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, &c.*] Not that the prophet should have

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[g] עמקי שפה profundi labii, Vatablus; profundorum labio, Polanus, Cocceius; profundi sermonis, Starckius.

[h] כבדי לשון graves linguæ, Montanus; gravium lingua, Polanus.

[i] אם לא אליהם שלחתיך si non ad eos misissem te, Vatablus; si non misero te, Montanus; si non mitterem, Pagninus.

[k] Si non misissem te ad eos, Calvin.

[l] לא יאבו non cupient, Montanus; non volunt, Cocceius; non illi volentes, Starckius.

[m] חזקי מצח וקשי לב obfirmati fronte & duri corde, Polanus, Starckius; obfirmati frontis & duri cordis, Piscator.

the same sort of impudence and confidence they had; but that God would *give*[w] him such a face, as it is in the Hebrew text, such spirit and courage, that he should neither be ashamed of the words of the Lord, nor afraid to speak them to this people; so that he should be a match for them; they should not be able to outface him, or look him out of countenance; he should behave with an undaunted spirit, and with great intrepidity, amidst all opposition made to him: the Lord fits his ministers for the people he sends them to, and gives them courage and strength proportionate to the opposition they meet with; as their day is, their strength is: and all that invincible courage, boldness, and strength, with which they are endowed, it is all from the Lord, and a gift of his: *and thy forehead strong against their foreheads;* which is the same thing in different words.

Ver. 9. *As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead,* &c.] Or, *than a rock*[x]; the *adamant* has its name, in Greek, because it cannot be conquered or subdued, neither by the hammer, nor by fire; the one can't break, nor the other consume it; and it is called *shamir* in Hebrew, from its preserving itself from both; it will cut iron in pieces, which is harder than stone, and therefore must be harder than that. Bochart takes it to be the same with *smiris,* a hard stone, which jewellers use to polish their gems with; see Jer. xvii. 1. and Zech. vii. 12. The design of the simile is to set forth the courage and fortitude of mind the prophet was endowed with, in order to face an impudent and hard-hearted people. *Fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house;* see the note on ch. ii. 6.

Ver. 10. *Moreover he said unto me, son of man,* &c.] The same glorious Person as before continued speaking to him, and added, as follows: *all my words that I shall speak unto thee;* not only what he had spoken to him, but what he should hereafter; for he did not tell all at once what he should say, but gradually, revealing his mind to him by little and little; but then he was to receive all that he should say, and reject nothing, nor shun to declare the whole counsel of God: *receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears;* what the Lord says should not only be diligently attended to, and heard with eagerness, but should be received, in the love of it, into the heart, and laid up in the mind and memory, in order to be delivered out to others at a proper time.

Ver. 11. *And go, get thee to them of the captivity,* &c.] Not in the times of Hoshea king of Israel, by Salmaneser king of Assyria, for these were placed in the cities of the Medes, 2 Kings xvii. 6. but in the times of Jeconiah king of Judah, ch. i. 2: *unto thy people;* the Jews, which were in the land of Chaldea: *and speak unto them, and tell them;* the words the Lord spoke to him: *thus saith the Lord God; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear;* see the note on ch. ii. 7.

Ver. 12. *Then the spirit took me,* &c.] Not the wind, nor an angel, but the spirit of God; who took up the prophet from the ground, from the place where he was, among the captives by the river Chebar, and had seen the glorious vision described in the first chapter; and had had his call and mission, as expressed in the second chapter, and hitherto in this; and was carried by him to another company of captives, who were at another place by the same river, as appears by comparing ch. i. 1, 2, 3, with ch. iii. 15. for this was not done in a visionary way, as Kimchi thinks, but in reality; not in spirit, but in body; just as the spirit caught away Philip from the eunuch, Acts viii. 39: *and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing;* of the living creatures and wheels, as is afterwards explained: saying, *blessed be the glory of the Lord out of his place;* either out of heaven, the place where his glory is manifested; so the Targum, out of the place of his Shechinah or majesty; or out of the temple, from between the cherubim over the mercy-seat, from whence he was about to remove, ch. x. 4. These words may be considered either as a doxology of the church and people of God, ascribing glory, blessing, and praise unto him; not only on account of the perfections of his nature, but because of his works of nature, providence, and grace, and even for his righteous judgments on men. Maimonides[y], by his place, understands the essence of God. Or as a lamentation for the departure of the blessed and glorious majesty of God from the temple, which seemed to be threatened; for the words may be rendered, *the blessed glory of the Lord out of his place*[z]; that is, it is just ready to go out of his place.

Ver. 13. I heard *also the noise of the wings of the living creatures,* &c.] Which they clapped, when they uttered the preceding words; see the note on ch. i. 24: *that touched one another;* or *kissed, a woman her sister*[a]; denoting their affection and agreement in the doxology or ascription of glory to God; see ch. i. 9, 11, 23: *and the noise of the wheels over-against them;* the living creatures; for the wheels were by the living creatures, and went over-against them, as they went, ch. i. 15, 19, 20, 21. ministers and churches join together in this doxology: *and a noise of a great rushing;* which is repeated for the confirmation of the thing, and to express the greatness of the noise made by the living creatures and wheels, like that of thunder or an earthquake; it is said to be like the noise of great waters, ch. i. 24.

Ver. 14. *So the spirit lifted me up, and took me away,* &c.] Lifted him up from the earth, and carried him through the air: *and I went in bitterness;* full of trouble and sorrow, that the Lord was departing from the temple; that his people had been guilty of such crimes they had, and were such an impudent and hard-hearted people they were; and that such judgments were coming upon them he had seen written in the roll, full of lamentations, mourning, and woe: *in the heat of my spirit;* the Targum and Vulgate Latin render it, *in the indignation of my spirit:* his spirit was hot and angry, he was froward and unwilling

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[w] נתתי את פניך dedi faciem tuam, Vulg. Lat. Vatablus, Cocceius, Starckius.

[x] מצור rupe, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator; præ rupe, Cocceius; ex rupe, Starckius; præ petra, Montanus.

[y] Moreh Nevochim, par. 1. c. 8. p. 12.

[z] ברוך כבוד benedictam gloriam *Jehovæ* e loco ipsius, migrantem, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.

[a] משיקות אשה אל אחותה attingentium *more osculantium,* viz. ad sororem suam, Vatablus; osculantium, Polanus, Starckius. So Ben Melech.

to go on the errand, to prophesy sad and dismal things to his people: *but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me;* the spirit of the Lord powerfully wrought upon him, and obliged him to go; and the hand of the Lord strengthened him, and removed his frowardness and perverseness of spirit. The Targum is, "and pro-" phecy from before the Lord was strong upon me;" so Kimchi interprets it of the hand of prophecy: the spirit of the Lord, as a spirit of prophecy, came upon him, with great impulse upon his spirit, and he could not refuse going to his people, to declare it to them.

Ver. 15. *Then I came to them of the captivity at Tel-abib,* &c.] For it seems the captive Jews were disposed of at different places, and there were some at this place; for this was the name of a place, as Jarchi and Kimchi observe; as were Tel-melah, and Tel-harsa, Ezra ii. 59. Neh. vii. 69. it signifies *a heap of new fruit,* and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it: not that there were such at this time here; and the captives were beating out the ripe ears of corn, as *abib* signifies; whence the month Abib has its name, and which was the first month with the Jews; whereas it was in the fourth month when Ezekiel was here, and there could be no ears of new corn, ch. i. 1. according to Junius, this Tel-abib was a tract in Mesopotamia, reaching from Mount Masius to the river Euphrates, and lay between two rivers, Chebar and Saocoras; and he thinks the captive Jews were placed here, partly that they might be secured safe from getting away, or returning from their captivity; and partly that they might secure and defend the place from enemies, it being through inundations uninhabited, and so exposed unto them: *that dwelt by the river of Chebar;* see the note on ch. i. 1: *and I sat where they sat;* there is a double reading here: the Cetib or writing is ואשר, which Junius takes to be the name of a river the prophet calls Haesher, the same with Saocoras, connecting it with the preceding clause, *that dwelt by the river of Chebar and Haesher:* the Keri or marginal reading is ואשב, *and I sat* or *dwelt;* but both signify the same thing, since אשר is from שרה, which in Chaldee signifies to dwell*; and the Keri is confirmed by the Targum, which we follow. The sense is, that he placed himself among the captives, *and remained there astonished among them seven days:* at the change of place and company; at the sad condition his people were in; and, above all, at the dreadful things he had to deliver to them. The Targum renders it, *silent;* through grief and trouble. So many days Job's friends kept silence, when they came to visit him, and saw his distress, Job ii. 13. Or he might be waiting all this time for orders and instructions to prophesy; or to prepare the people to attend with more reverence and earnestness, to hear what he had to say when he should break silence. The Septuagint render it the reverse, *conversing in the midst of them.*

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass at the end of seven days,* &c.] Some think it was on the sabbath-day he had the following declaration made to him, and instructions given him; but this is not certain; nor does it follow, or to be concluded, from such a way of speaking: *that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying;* the Targum is, "the word of prophecy from before the " Lord."

Ver. 17. *Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel,* &c.] Not in a civil sense, a watchman of a town or city, or of the whole country, but in an ecclesiastical sense. So the Targum renders it by מליף, *a teacher;* whose business it was to instruct the people in divine things, to warn them of their evil ways, and of the danger they exposed them to; such were the prophets of old, and such are the ministers of the New Testament; the office is the same with that of bishops or overseers; and lies in watching over the souls of men, as shepherds over their flocks, that they go into right pastures, and not astray, and so preserve them from beasts of prey; and as watchmen of cities, to give the time of night, and notice of approaching danger; to the discharge of which office are necessary quick sight, diligence in looking out, sobriety and vigilance, courage, constancy, and faithfulness: and they are *sons of men* that are put into this office, and not angels; sons of fallen Adam, sinful men; men subject to infirmity, weak, frail, mortal men, and oftentimes of a mean and low extraction, and greatly unworthy of so high an honour; but Christ counts them faithful, and puts them into this office; they are not made and constituted watchmen or ministers by themselves or by others, but by him; and they are given by him as such to the church of God: *son of man, I have given thee a watchman*†, &c.; they become watchmen through gifts bestowed upon them, qualifying them for this office; and they themselves are gifts to the churches over whom they are placed, signified by *the house of Israel;* for a church is a house of Christ's building, and where he dwells, and a family named of him, which he takes care of, and consists of Israelites indeed. *Therefore hear the word at my mouth;* for, as the prophets of old, so the ministers of the Gospel are first to hear what Christ says; and then deliver out his doctrine, called the doctrine of Christ, and the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus. So the Targum, "and thou shalt re-" ceive the word from my Word;" the word of prophecy, or the word of the Gospel, from Christ the essential Word. *And give them warning from me;* in his name and stead, and as from his mouth, to take care of sinning against him, dishonouring his name, and wounding their own souls; that they live soberly, righteously, and godly, and adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour; that they avoid all appearances of evil, and shun the company of wicked men; the house of Israel, or church of God, are to be warned to be careful who they take into their communion, and to exclude such that are bad in principle and practice; to beware of innovations in worship, and of false teachers and false doctrines; and that they do not forsake the word, worship, and ordinances of God's house, but fill up their places, and perform all duties incumbent on them. The Targum is, "and thou shalt warn " them from sinning before me."

Ver. 18. *When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die,* &c.] Not only a corporeal but an eternal death;

* Vid. Hillerum de Arcano Kethib & Keri, l. 2. p. 229.

† צפה נתתיך speculatorem dedi, V. L. Polanus, Cocceius, Starckius. So Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

for this is what the law threatens with, and there the Lord says this; and this is the wages, end, and issue of sin, if grace prevent not: *and thou givest him not warning*: of the evil nature of sin, and of the danger it exposes to: *nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way*: to abstain from it, and live another course of life: *to save his life*: for such warning, caution, exhortation, and doctrine, may be a means of converting a sinner from the evil of his way, and of saving a soul from death, 1 Tim. iv. 16. Jam. v. 20: *the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity*: with the pollution and guilt of sin upon him, and so be punished for it; see John viii. 24: *but his blood will I require at thine hands*: thou shalt be answerable for him; his death shall be laid to thy charge, and thou shalt be chastised for thy negligence; see Acts xx. 26.

Ver. 19. *Yet if thou warn the wicked*, &c.] Of his sin and danger; lay before him his evil, and shew him the sad consequences of going on in a course of sin, and warn him to flee from wrath to come: *and he turn not from his wickedness, and from his wicked way*; does not repent of it, nor abstain from it: *he shall die in his iniquity*; and for it, and that very righteously: *but thou hast delivered thy soul*; thou hast done the duty of thine office; thou art clear from the charge of negligence and sloth, and from being answerable for the death of the sinner; and shalt save thyself, though not the wicked man; see 1 Tim. iv. 16.

Ver. 20. *Again, when a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness*, &c.] This is to be understood not of one that is truly righteous, or is justified by the righteousness of Christ; for such can never turn from that righteousnes, or be in an unjustified state; seeing that is the righteousness of God, and an everlasting one; but of one that is denominated righteous, from his own righteousness, from a righteousness *which he hath done*, as is afterwards expressed; one that is outwardly righteous before men, that is outwardly reformed, that has a righteousness of his own, consisting of a little negative holiness, and a few moral performances; from such righteousness a man may apostatize, and go into a vicious course of life: *and commit iniquity*; live in sin, make a trade of it; lead a life, the whole series and course of which is nothing else but sin; in this sense, one that is born of God, and has the righteousness of Christ revealed from faith to faith unto him, and lives by faith upon it, cannot commit sin, 1 John iii. 9: *and I lay a stumbling-block before him*: the Targum renders it, *the stumbling-block of sins*: which designs either an occasion of sinning, which God permits, leaving him to his own lusts, and suffering him to fall thereby; and by this means he is discovered to be what he is, not a truly righteous man, but only one in appearance; that looked like a righteous person, but secretly a sinner, and now the Lord by such means exposes him openly; so Jarchi and other Jewish Rabbins; but Kimchi's father interprets the stumbling-block of prosperity in this world *: or rather the punishment of sin is meant, as Kimchi himself observes; and the Septuagint render it *torment*; since this follows upon his turning from righteousness, and committing sin; and seems to be explained by the next clause: *he shall die*; the second death: *because thou hast not given him warning*; of the dreadful evil of apostacy, and the sad estate of apostates, and the danger they are in, their last estate being worse than the first: *he shall die in his sin*; of apostacy, and for it, being never to be recovered and brought to repentance: *and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered*; according to the Keri or marginal reading it is, *his righteousnesses*; all his works of righteousness which he hath done; and which reading is followed by the Targum, Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and the eastern versions; these shall not be remembered, neither in this world nor in that to come; no account shall be taken of them, nor shall they be reckoned as a righteousness unto him: *but his blood will I require at thine hand*; see the note on ver. 18.

Ver. 21. *Nevertheless, if thou warn the righteous man*, &c.] Every righteous man, that is so in a judgment of charity, whether truly righteous or no, which the event shews; who should be warned not to trust in their own righteousness, but to depend on the righteousness of Christ; that they be careful to maintain good works, to avoid sin, and live holy lives and conversations, as follows: *that the righteous sin not*; not that there is any just man that does good, and sins not; the best of men are often sinning in thought, word, or deed; but he is to be warned that he does not continue in sin, and lead a sinful course of life; which is contrary to his character, and to his faith in Christ for righteousness, which is attended with good works: *and he doth not sin*; the warning and exhortation given him having so good an effect, through the power of divine grace, as to be a means of preserving him from a vain conversation: *he shall surely live*; spiritually and comfortably now, and eternally hereafter: *because he is warned*; that being a means, and with the divine blessing taking effect: *also thou hast delivered thy soul*; see the note on ver. 19.

Ver. 22. *And the hand of the Lord was there upon me*, &c.] At Tel-abib, ver. 15. The Targum interprets *the hand of the Lord* of the spirit of prophecy, which remained upon him there; but it seems to design a fresh impulse of the spirit, a powerful emotion of the spirit upon his spirit, stirring up to attention to what might be said unto him: *and he said unto me*; the same glorious Person, the Lord Christ, described in ch. i. 26, 27, 28: *arise, go forth into the plain*; or *the valley* *; the Arabic version renders it, *the desert*; a solitary place, free from noise and hurry, and from the company and conversation of men; and so more fit for retirement and contemplation, and for attention to divine orders. What plain this was is not certain; Kimchi thinks it was the plain in which Babel was built, and where the Lord shewed the prophet what he had in his providence done in this place formerly, in confounding the languages of men, and causing their devices to cease. *And I will there talk with thee*; when alone, sedate, and composed; so God sometimes brings his people into a low and humble state and condition, into the valley of humility, and there grants them communion with himself; see Hos. ii. 14. per-

* Vid. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 86. 2.

* אל הבקעה in istum convallem, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, in vallem, Vatablus, Cocceius; in vallem, quasi fossum locum, Starckius.

haps the allusion is to a custom among the Jews, of revealing secrets to others in fields and deserts, and such-like solitary places; see Gen. xxxi. 4, 5 [z].

Ver. 23. *Then I arose and went forth into the plain,* &c.] He was obedient to the heavenly vision, which was owing to the hand of the Lord being upon him; the power of the spirit and grace of God influences and engages to obedience; he went forth where he was ordered, though he knew not what would be said to him, or what he should see there: *and, behold, the glory of the Lord stood there:* the glorious Person described in ch. i. 26, 27, 28: *as the glory which I saw by the river of Chebar;* ch. 1, 2, 3, 28: which vision was repeated for greater certainty, and to confirm the prophecies delivered to him, and to encourage him in the performance of his office: *and I fell on my face:* as he did before, when he first saw this glorious object, ch. i. 28.

Ver. 24. *Then the spirit entered into me,* &c.] Again; the spirit of God, that was in the wheels and living creatures: see ch. ii. 2: *and set me upon my feet;* as he had done before, when in the same prostrate condition, ch. ii. 2: *and spake with me;* either the spirit that entered into him, and set him upright; or rather the Lord Christ, the glory of the Lord that stood where he was, and appeared to him: *and said unto me, go, shut thyself within thine house:* this was not said ironically, but in earnest; and the reason either was, because the people were not fit for reproof and correction, as Jarchi thinks, being a rebellious people; or that the prophet might receive further instructions, and have all the words of his prophecy delivered to him, before he began to prophesy. Some think this shutting up was an emblem of the siege of Jerusalem. It may seem strange that the prophet should be bid to go into the plain, where the Lord promised to talk with him; and this is all that is said to him, to go home, and shut himself up in his house: but it should be observed, that this was not the only thing for which he went into the plain; he was to have, and had, a fresh view of the glory of the Lord, and of the vision he had before, for the further confirmation of him; besides, this moving him from place to place, before he prophesied, might be partly to try his faith, and partly to preserve him from the violence of the people; who, had he delivered his message at once, might have been so provoked, as to have fallen upon him, and destroyed him; as well as to prepare them to receive his prophecies with more respect and reverence, when they saw he did not rashly, and at once, deliver them out to them.

Ver. 25. *But thou, O son of man, behold, they shall put bands upon thee,* &c.] Or, *bands shall be put upon thee:* either visionally, or really; not by angels, but by the Jews, who, taking the prophet for a madman by his motions and gestures, would bind him, and keep him within doors: or figuratively this may be understood of the sins of the people, their rebellion and obstinacy, which hindered the prophet from prophesying among them as yet; and so this is observed to conciliate his mind to the divine order, to shut up himself for a while in his own house, and be silent: or else by these bonds may be meant the divine order itself, which restrained him from doing his office as yet. So the Targum, "behold, I have appointed the words of my "mouth upon thee, as a band of ropes with which "they bind." *And shall bind thee with them:* which some think is emblematical of the Jews being bound by the Chaldeans: *and thou shalt not go out among them;* to converse with them, or prophesy unto them. The Septuagint version renders it, *shalt not go out from the midst of them;* as if he should be taken out of his own house by the Jews, and be bound by them, and kept among them, and not able to get away from them; but it is to be understood of his being bound in his own house, and not able to go out of that to them; and may signify, that in like manner the Jews should not be able to go out of Jerusalem when besieged by the Chaldeans.

Ver. 26. *And I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb,* &c.] Which is to be understood not literally, as if he was really struck dumb, as Zechariah was; see ch. iv. 9, 14. but that such silence should be charged upon him by the Lord, that he should be as if his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth, as Kimchi interprets it, and as if he was a dumb man: and so the Septuagint version renders it, *I will bind thy tongue;* lay an embargo upon it, that is, it shall be silent; and this sense is confirmed by what follows: *and shalt not be to them a reprover;* which was in judgment to them, and a giving them up to their own hearts' lusts; for, though reproofs were disagreeable to them, and they chose to be without them, yet they were necessary for them, and might have been useful to them; but they provoking the Lord, he takes away his word from them, and commands his prophet to be silent, and let them alone, to go on in their sins without control; which was a sore judgment upon them: *for they are a rebellious house;* see ch. ii. 6.

Ver. 27. *But when I speak with thee,* &c.] Either when I have made an end of speaking to thee, when I have told thee all my mind, and have given thee all the instructions and prophecies thou art to deliver out; or when I shall speak to thee again, and give thee orders to speak: *I will open thy mouth;* loose thy tongue, cause thee to break silence, and thou shalt speak freely and fully all that I command thee; fulness of matter, and freedom of speech, are both from the Lord; liberty and opportunity of speaking are at his pleasure; and when he speaks his servants must prophesy, Amos iii. 8. *and thou shalt say unto them, thus saith the Lord;* so and so, whatsoever he is pleased to order to be spoken; not that the following words are what were to be said to the people; but they are said to the prophet for his own use, that he might not be uneasy at the unfruitfulness and unsuccessfulness of his ministry: *he that heareth, let him hear;* if any will hearken to what is sent to them, as few of them will, it is very well: *and he that forbeareth, let him forbear:* or, *he that ceaseth, let him cease* [a]; he that ceaseth from hearing, let him do so, don't mind it, or be discouraged at it: *for they*

[z] Vid. Menasseh Ben Israel, Spes Israelis, p. 110.

[a] והחדל יחדל & qui cessat cesset, Pagninus, Tigurine version, Starckius; qui desistere volet desistat, Piscator; qui desistit *audire*, desistet. So some in Vatablus.

are *a rebellious house;* see the note on ch. ii. 5. The Targum is, "he that receiveth, let him receive instruction; and he that ceaseth, let him cease from sinning, for it is a rebellious people."

CHAP. IV.

THIS chapter contains a prophecy of the siege of Jerusalem, and of the famine that attended it. The siege is described by a portrait of the city of Jerusalem on a tile, laid before the prophet, ver. 1. by several actions, representing a siege of it, as building a fort, casting a mount, and setting a camp and battering-rams against it, and an iron pan for a wall, between the prophet, the besieger, and the city, ver. 2, 3. by his gesture, lying first on his left side for the space of 390 days, and then on his right side for the space of 40 days, pointing at the time when the city should be taken, ver. 4, 5, 6. and by setting his face to the siege, and uncovering his arm, and prophesying, ver. 7. and by bands being laid on him, so that he could not turn from one side to the other, till the siege was ended, ver. 8. the famine is signified by bread the prophet was to make of various sorts of grain and seeds, baked with men's dung, and eaten by weight, with water drank by measure, which is applied unto the people; it is suggested that this would be fulfilled by the children of Israel's eating defiled bread among the Gentiles, ver. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. but upon the prophet's concern about eating any thing forbidden by the law, which he had never done, cow's dung is allowed instead of men's, to prepare the bread with, ver. 14, 15. and the chapter is concluded with a resolution to bring a severe famine on them, to their great astonishment, and with which they should be consumed for their iniquity, ver. 16, 17.

Ver. 1. *Thou also, son of man, take thee a tile,* &c.] Or *brick*[z]. The Targum renders it, a *stone;* but a tile or brick, especially one that is not dried and burned, but green, is more fit to cut in it the figure of a city. Some think that this was ordered because cities are built of brick; or to shew the weakness of the city of Jerusalem, how easily it might be demolished; and Jerom thinks there was some design to lead the Jews to reflect upon their making bricks in Egypt, and their hard service there; though perhaps the truer reason may be, because the Babylonians had been used to write upon tiles. Epigenes[a] says they had celestial observations of a long course of years, written on tiles; hence the prophet is bid to describe Jerusalem on one, which was to be destroyed by the king of Babylon. *And lay it before thee;* as persons do, who are about to draw a picture, make a portrait, or engrave the form of any thing they intend: *and portray upon it the city;* even Jerusalem; or engrave upon it, by making incisions on it, and so describing the form and figure of the city of Jerusalem.

Ver. 2. *And lay siege against it,* &c.] In his own person, as in ver. 3. or draw the form of a siege, or figure of an army besieging a city; or rather of the instruments and means used in a siege, as follows: *and build a fort against it:* Kimchi interprets it a wooden tower, built over-against the city, to subdue it; and Jarchi takes it to be an instrument by which stones were cast into the city; and so the Arabic version renders it, *machines to cast stones;* the Targum, a fortress; so Nebuchadnezzar in reality did what was here only done in type, 2 Kings xxv. 1. where the same word is used as here: *and cast a mount about it:* a heap of earth cast up, in order to look into the city, cast in darts, and mount the walls; what the French call a *bastion*, as Jarchi observes: *set the camp also against it;* place the army in their tents about it: *and set battering-rams against it round about;* a warlike instrument, that had an iron head, and horns like a ram, with which in a siege the walls of a city were battered and beaten down. Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, interpret the word of princes and generals of the army, who watched at the several corners of the city, that none might go in and out; so the Targum seems to understand it[b]. The Arabic version is, *mounts to cast darts;* see the note on ch. xxi. 22.

Ver. 3. *Moreover take thou unto thee an iron pan,* &c.] Which Kimchi thinks, for its metal, represented the hardness of the hearts of the people of Israel; and, for its colour, the blackness of their sins: though others are of opinion, this being a pan in which things are fried, it may signify the miseries of the Jews in captivity; the roasting of Ahab and Zedekiah in the fire, and particularly the burning of the city: others, the wrath of God against them, and his resolution to destroy them: but rather, since the use of it was as follows, *and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city,* it seems to represent all such things as are made use of by besiegers to screen them from the besieged; such as are now used are trenches, parapets, bastions, &c.; for the prophet in this type is the besieger, representing the Chaldean army secure from the annoyance of those within the walls of the city: *and set thy face against it;* with a firm resolution to besiege and take the city; which denotes both the settled wrath of God against this people, and the determined purpose of the king of Babylon not to move from it until he had taken it: *and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it;* as an emblem of the army of the Chaldeans besieging it, which is confirmed by the next clause: *this* shall be *a sign to the house of Israel;* of the city of Jerusalem being besieged by the Babylonians; this was a sign representing it, and giving them assurance of it.

Ver. 4. *Lie thou also upon thy left side,* &c.] Some think this was not in reality, but in vision, as Kimchi observes; and so Maimonides[c]; and in like manner they understand his eating and drinking by measure,

[z] לבנה laterem, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator.
[a] Apud Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 7. c. 56.
[b] So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 50. 2.
[c] Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. c. 46.

and preparing food, as he is directed in a following part of this chapter: but others are of opinion that all this was really done. The reasons given on both sides are not despicable. It is urged against the reality of the fact, that the prophet, without a miracle, could never have lain so long on one side; and besides, this seems to be contradicted by an after-account, of his sitting in his house before the expiration of those days; since from the fifth day of the fourth month of the fifth year, in which he began to prophesy, ch. i. 1, 2, (and this order was seven days after that at least, ch. iii. 15,) to the fifth day of the sixth month of the sixth year, when we find him sitting, ch. viii. 1. were but four hundred and thirteen days; and if seven are taken out from thence, there are but four hundred and six; whereas the whole time of his lying for Israel and Judah were four hundred and thirty; and it is further observed, that it does not seem decent that the prophet should be obliged really to eat such bread as he was ordered to make. On the other hand it is observed, that the order of portraying the siege of Jerusalem on a tile, and setting an iron pan for a wall, seem to direct to the doing of real facts, and to that this order is subjoined, without any mark of distinction; besides, the prophet was to have this portrait in view, whilst he was lying on his side, and uncover his arms, which seem to denote real facts: and was to prophesy, not by words, for he was to be dumb, ch. iii. 26. but by facts; and he was to do all this in the sight of his people; and if the order to make a cake of bread was not to be really performed in the manner directed, there would have been no occasion of deprecating it. The learned Witsius[d], who has collected the arguments on both sides, is inclined to the latter; and observes from others, that some persons have lain longer on one side than the prophet, without a miracle; particularly a certain paralytic nobleman, who lay sixteen years in such a manner: and as for the computation of time, Cocceius is of opinion that the forty days for Judah are included in the three hundred and ninety for Israel; and which indeed seem to be the whole number, ver. 9. and which at once solves the difficulty; and besides, the force of the objection may be taken off by observing, that the fifth year might be intercalated, and consist of thirteen months, which was common with the Jews to have a *Veadar*, or intercalated month: nor is it dishonourable nor unusual for the Lord to call his dear servants sometimes to hard and disagreeable service, as both these cases seem to be, when he has ends of his own glory, and the good of others, to be answered thereby. And the lying on the left side for the sins of the house of Israel was, as Jarchi thinks, because that Samaria, which was the head of the ten tribes, lay to the left of Jerusalem; see ch. xvi. 46. or rather, because the left hand is not so honourable as the right; it may shew that the Lord had not such an esteem for Israel as for Judah. *And lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it*; not to atone for it, but to shew what was the cause of their captivity; for herein the prophet was no type of Christ, but personated the people of Israel; who had been grievously sinning against God, during the term of time hereafter mentioned, and now would be punished for it; for by *iniquity* is meant the punishment of it, which is often the sense of the word used; see Gen. iv. 13. According *to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity*; which are particularly declared in the following verse.

Ver. 5. *For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity*, &c.] Or the iniquity which for so many years they have been guilty of; that is, the punishment of it: *according to the number of the days*, a day for a year, *three hundred and ninety days*, which signify three hundred and ninety years; and so many years there were from the revolt of the ten tribes from Rehoboam, and the setting up the calves at Dan and Beth-el, to the destruction of Jerusalem; which may be reckoned thus: the apostacy was in the fourth year of Rehoboam, so that there remained thirteen years of his reign, for he reigned seventeen years; Abijah his successor reigned three years; Asa forty-one; Jehoshaphat twenty-five; Joram eight; Ahaziah one; Athaliah seven; Joash forty; Amaziah twenty-nine; Uzziah fifty-two; Jotham sixteen; Ahaz sixteen; Hezekiah twenty-nine; Manasseh fifty-five; Amon two; Josiah thirty-one; Jehoahaz three months; Jehoiakim eleven years; Jeconiah three months and ten days; and Zedekiah eleven years; in all three hundred and ninety years. Though Grotius reckons them from the fall of Solomon to the carrying captive of the ten tribes by Salmaneser. According to Jerom, both the three hundred and ninety days, and the forty days, were figurative of the captivities of Israel and Judah. The captivity of Israel, or the ten tribes, began under Pekah king of Israel, 1 Kings xv. 29. when many places in the kingdom were wasted; from whence, to the fortieth year of Ahasuerus, when the Jews were entirely set at liberty, were three hundred and ninety years[e]; and the captivity of Judah began in the first year of Jeconiah, which, to the first of Cyrus, were forty years. The Jewish writers make these years to be the time of the idolatry of these people. In their chronicle[f] they say, from hence we learn that Israel provoked the Lord to anger, from the time they entered into the land until they went out of it, three hundred and ninety years. Which, according to Jarchi and Kimchi, are to be reckoned partly in the times of the judges, and partly in the times of the kings of Israel; in the times of the former, a hundred and eleven years; from Micah, till the ark was carried captive in the days of Eli, forty years; and from the time of Jeroboam to Hoshea, two hundred and forty; which make three hundred and ninety-one: but the last of Hoshea is not of the number, since it was in the ninth year of his reign the city of Samaria was taken. So Jarchi. Kimchi's reckoning is different. Abarbinel is of opinion that these years describe the four hundred and thirty years of Israel's bondage in Egypt; though, he says, they may be understood of the time of the division of the kingdom under Rehoboam, from whence, to the destruction of Jerusalem, were three hundred and ninety years; which sense is best, and is what is

[d] Miscel. Sacr. tom. 1. l. 1. c. 12. sect. 14, 15, &c.
[e] Vid. Lyra in loc.
[f] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 26. p. 73.

first given. *So shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel*: as many days as answer to these years; by *the house of Israel* is meant not merely the ten tribes, who had been carried captive long before this time, but such of them also as were mixed with the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

Ver. 6. *And when thou hast accomplished them*, &c.] The three hundred and ninety days, by lying so long on the left side, bearing the sins of the house of Israel in this way; or, as Cocceius renders the words, *and thou shalt accomplish them, and thou shalt lie*, &c.[g], that is, thou shalt so accomplish these days, that thou mayest lie through forty days on the right hand, and then make bare thine arm, and prophesy against Jerusalem; for he thinks the forty days are part of the three hundred and ninety, as before observed: and so Piscator's note is, *when thou shalt accomplish*, &c.; namely, when there shall remain yet forty days, as appears by comparing ver. 9 with this and the fifth; so Polanus interprets the passage: then *lie again on thy right side*: that is, for Judah; which tribe, as Jarchi observes, lay to the south, and so to the right of Jerusalem; see ch. xvi. 46. or rather the prophet lay on the right side for Judah, because more honourable, and in greater esteem with the Lord; nor were their sins so many, or continued in so long, as those of the ten tribes; and therefore they, and the punishment of them, are borne a less time by the prophet, as follows: *and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days*: which some think answers to the forty years of Manasseh's evil reign; others reckon from the thirteenth of Josiah to the end of Zedekiah, and others from the eighteenth of Josiah to the destruction of Jerusalem, which was five years after the carrying of Zedekiah captive: *I have appointed thee each day for a year*: which is not only the key for the understanding of the forty days, but also the three hundred and ninety.

Ver. 7. *Therefore thou shalt set thy face toward the siege at Jerusalem*, &c.] All the while he was lying either on the left side or the right, his face was to be directed to the siege of Jerusalem, portrayed upon the tile, and to all the preparations made for that purpose, to shew that all had reference to that, and that it would certainly be; for, as the prophet represented the Chaldean army, the directing and setting his face to the siege shews their resolution and inflexibleness, that they were determined upon taking the city, and nothing should divert them from it: *and thine arm shall be uncovered*: which was usual in fighting in those times and countries; for, wearing long garments, they were obliged to turn them up on the arm, or lay them aside, that they might more expeditiously handle their weapons, and engage with the enemy; in this form the soldiers in Trajan's column are figured fighting; and it is related that the Africans used to fight with their arms uncovered[h]; thus Scanderbeg in later times used to fight the Turks. The design of the phrase is to shew how ready, diligent, and expeditious, the Chaldeans would be in carrying on the siege. The Targum renders it, "thou shalt strengthen "thine arm;" and so do the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions: *and thou shalt prophesy against it*: meaning not so much by words, if at all, but by these actions, gestures, and habit; for they all foretold what would certainly come to pass.

Ver. 8. *And, behold, I will lay bands upon thee*, &c.] Representing either the besieged, signifying that they should be taken and bound as he was; or rather the besiegers, the Chaldean army, which should be so held by the power and providence of God, that they should not break up the siege until they had taken the city, and fulfilled the whole will and pleasure of God; for these bands were an emblem of the firm and unalterable decree of God, respecting the siege and taking of Jerusalem; and so the Targum paraphrases it, "and, lo, the decree of my word is upon thee, as "a band of ropes;" and to this sense Jarchi interprets it; and which is confirmed by what follows: *and thou shalt not turn thee from one side to another till thou hast ended the days of thy siege*; shewing that the Chaldean army should not depart from Jerusalem until it was taken; for though, upon the report of the Egyptian army coming against them, they went forth to meet it; yet they returned to Jerusalem, and never left the siege till the city fell into their hands, according to the purpose and appointment of God. Kimchi observes, that the word for *siege* is in the plural number, and signifies both the siege of Samaria and the siege of Jerusalem; but the former was over many years before this time: by this it appears that the siege of Jerusalem should last three hundred and ninety days; indeed, from the beginning to the end of it, were seventeen months, 2 Kings xxv. 1—4. but the siege being raised by the army of the king of Egypt for some time, Jer. xxxvii. 5, may reduce it to thirteen months, or thereabout; for three hundred and ninety days are not only intended to signify the years of Israel's sin and wickedness, but also to shew how long the city would be besieged; and so long the prophet in this symbolical way was besieging it.

Ver. 9. *Take thou also unto thee wheat, and barley, and beans, and lentiles, and millet, and fitches*, &c.] The first of these was commonly used to make bread of; in case of want and poverty, barley was used; but, for the rest, they were for cattle, and never used for the food of men but in a time of great scarcity; wherefore this was designed to denote the famine that should attend the siege of Jerusalem; see 2 Kings xxv. 3: *and put them in one vessel*; that is, the flour of them when ground, in order to be mixed and kneaded together, and make one dough thereof; which mixed bread was a sign of a sore famine: the Septuagint call it an earthen vessel; a kneading-trough seems to be designed: *and make thee bread thereof, according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon thy side*; the left side, on which he was to lie three hundred and ninety days; and so as much bread was to be made as would suffice for that time; or so many loaves were to be made as there were days, a loaf for a day: *three hundred and ninety days shalt thou eat thereof*. no mention is made of the forty days, perhaps they are understood, a part being put for the whole; or they were

[g] וכלית את אלה ושכבת & absolves hos, & decumbes, Cocceius, Starckius; & consummabis hæc, & jacebis, Montanus.

[h] Vid. Lydium de Re Militari, l. 4. c. 3. p. 160.

included in the three hundred and ninety days. The Septuagint and Arabic versions read only a hundred and ninety days.

Ver. 10. *And thy meat which thou shalt eat* shall be *by weight, twenty shekels a day*, &c.] To eat bread by weight was a sign of a grievous famine; see Lev. xxvi. 26. a shekel, according to Josephus[i], weighed four Attic drachms, or half an ounce, wherefore twenty shekels weighed ten ounces; so that the bread the prophet had to eat was but ten ounces a day: *from time to time shalt thou eat it;* at the certain time of eating, or but once a day; from a set time in one day to the same in another; as from morning to morning, or from noon to noon, or from evening to evening; see Jer. xxxvii. 21.

Ver. 11. *Thou shalt drink also water by measure*, &c.] Not wine, but water; and this not as much as he would, but a certain measure; which shews great want of it, and expresses a very distressed condition; see Lam. v. 4: *the sixth part of an hin;* a hin held twelve logs, or seventy-two egg-shells, or about three quarts of our measure; and the sixth part of one were two logs, or twelve egg-shells, and about a pint of our measure; so that it was but a pint of water a day that the prophet was allowed, as a token of the great scarcity of it in the siege of Jerusalem: *from time to time shalt thou drink:* as before.

Ver. 12. *And thou shalt eat* it *as barley cakes*, &c.] That is, the bread made of wheat, barley, beans, lentiles, millet, and fitches, was to be made in the form of barley cakes, and to be baked as they; not in an oven, but under ashes: and these ashes not of wood, or straw, or turf, but as follows: *and thou shalt bake it with dung that cometh out of men, in their sight;* the prophet was to take human dung, and dry it, and then cover the cakes or loaves of his mixed bread with it, and burn it over them, and with it bake it; which must be a very disagreeable task to him, and make the food very nauseous, both to himself and to the Jews, in whose sight it was done; and this shews scarcity of fuel, and the severity of the famine; that they had not fuel to bake with, or could not stay till it was baked in an oven, and therefore took this method; as well as points at what they were to eat when carried captive, as follows:

Ver. 13. *And the Lord said, even thus shall the children of Israel*, &c.] Not the ten tribes only, or those who were among the other two, but all the Jews in captivity: *eat the defiled bread among the Gentiles, whither I will drive them;* so called, not because mixed, but baked in the above manner; which was a symbol of the defilements which they should contract upon various accounts, by dwelling among the Gentiles; so that this foretels their captivity; their pollution among the nations of the world; and that they should not be the holy people to the Lord they had been, and had boasted of. The Jews[k] cite this passage to prove that he that eats bread without drying his hands is as if he ate defiled bread.

Ver. 14. *Then said I, ah, Lord God!* &c.] The interjection *ah* is expressive of sighing and groaning, as Jarchi; or of deprecation, as the Targum, which paraphrases it, "*and I said*, receive my prayer, O Lord "God:" *behold, my soul hath not been polluted:* not meaning that his soul had not been polluted with sin, or with an evil thought, as Kimchi interprets it; but by his *soul* he means the inward part of his body, his stomach and belly; which had not been defiled by taking in meats which were unclean by the law, as follows: *for from my youth up, even till now, have I not eaten of that which dieth of itself, or is torn in pieces;* these were forbidden to be eaten by the law; and such that did were defiled, and obliged to bathing in water, Lev. xvii. 15, 16. and from those the priests more especially were careful to abstain, as Kimchi observes; and such an one was the prophet; see Acts x. 14: *neither came there abominable flesh into my mouth;* corrupt or putrefied, or whatsoever was unclean by law, as swine's flesh, or any other. The argument is, that since he had never eaten of any thing forbidden by the law of God, he could by no means think of eating that which was abhorrent to nature; as bread baked with men's dung was.

Ver. 15. *Then he said to me*, &c.] The Lord hearkened to the prophet's prayer and argument, and makes some abatement and alteration in the charge he gave him: *lo, I have given thee cow's dung for man's dung:* that is, allowed him to make use of the one instead of the other, in baking his mingled bread: *thou shalt prepare thy bread therewith;* having gathered cow's dung, and dried it, he was to burn it, and bake his bread with it, which is meant by preparing it. In some parts of our nation, where fuel is scarce, cow's dung is made use of; it is gathered and plastered on the walls of houses, and, being dried in clots, is taken and burnt.

Ver. 16. *Moreover he said unto me, son of man*, &c.] What follows opens the design, and shews what was intended by the symbol of the miscellany-bread, baked with cow-dung, the prophet was to eat by measure, as well as drink water by measure; namely, the sore famine that should be in Jerusalem at the time of the siege: *behold, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem;* that is, take away bread, which is the staff of life, the support of it, and which strengthens man's heart; and also the nourishing virtue and efficacy from what they had. The sense is, that the Lord would both deprive them of a sufficiency of bread, the nourishment of man; and not suffer the little they had to be nourishing to them; what they ate would not satisfy them, nor do them much good; see Lev. xxvi. 26. Isa. iii. 1: *and they shall eat bread by weight, and with care;* that they might not eat too much at a time, but have something for to-morrow; and to cause their little stock to last the longer, not knowing how long the siege would be: *and they shall drink water by measure, and with astonishment;* that such a judgment should fall upon them, who thought themselves the people of God, and the favourites of heaven.

Ver. 17. *That they may want bread and water*, &c.] Or, *because they shall want*[l], &c.; therefore they shall eat the one, and drink the other, by weight; or they shall do this till there shall be none to eat and drink:

[i] Antiqu. l. 3. c. 8. sect. 2.
[k] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 4. 2.

[l] למען eo quod, Munster, Vatablus; propterea, Tigurine version.

and be astonished one with another: when they shall find they can't relieve one another; and not knowing what method to take for the support of nature: *and consume away for their iniquity*: their flesh upon them black through famine, putrid and noisome; and they wasting, pining, and consuming; reduced to skin and bones; and disagreeable to look upon; and all because of their sins and iniquities.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

CHAP. V.

THIS chapter is of the same argument with the former; and contains a type of Jerusalem's destruction; an explanation of that type; what were the reasons of God's judgments on that city; and the nature, rise, and end of them. The type is in ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. the explanation of that type is in ver. 5. the reasons of the severe judgments threatened are changing the statutes of the Lord, and not walking in them, and defiling the sanctuary with their abominations, ver. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. an account of the judgments of God, answerable to the several parts in the type, ver. 12. the ends of these judgments are, with respect to God, the accomplishment of his anger, and the satisfaction of his justice; with respect to the Jews, bringing them to an acknowledgment that he had spoken in his zeal; and, with respect to the nations, their instruction and astonishment, ver. 13, 14, 15. and the chapter is concluded with an assurance that these judgments would be sent, ver. 16, 17.

Ver. 1. *And thou, son of man, take thee a sharp knife*, &c.] Or, *sword*[m]. The word signifies any sharp instrument, by which any thing is cut off, or cut asunder; what is here meant is explained by the following: *take thee a barber's razor*. The Septuagint and Arabic versions read this in conjunction with the former, thus, *take thee a knife*, or *sword, sharper than a barber's razor*; and so the Syriac version, *take thee a sword sharp as a barber's razor*: this sharp knife, sword, or razor, signifies, as Jarchi interprets it, Nebuchadnezzar; and very rightly; so the king of Assyria is called in Isa. vii. 20: *and cause* it *to pass upon thine head, and upon thy beard*; the *head* was a symbol of the city of Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea; the *beard*, of the cities, towns, and villages about it; and the *hair* of both, of the common people; compared to hair for their numbers, for their levity and unsteadiness, and for their being the beauty and ornament of the places where they lived; and the shaving of them denotes their disgrace and destruction, and mourning on account thereof: *then take thee balances to weigh and divide the* hair. The Syriac version adds, *into three parts*; signifying, that several distinct punishments would be inflicted on them, and these according to the righteous judgment of God; balances being a symbol of justice.

Ver. 2. *Thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of the city*, &c.] Of Jerusalem, as portrayed upon the tile, ch. iv. 1. for the prophet was now in Chaldea. The burning of the third part of the hair with fire denotes such who were destroyed by the pestilence and famine during the siege; see Lam. v. 10. or it denotes the burning of the city itself, when the siege was over; since it follows: *when the days of the siege are fulfilled*: for, when it was taken, it was burnt with fire, Jer. lii. 13: *and thou shalt take a third part, and smite about it with a knife*; which designs those that fled out of the city when it was broken up, and were pursued after, and overtook by the Chaldean army, and cut off by the sword, Jer. lii. 7, 8: *and a third part thou shalt scatter in the wind*; which intends those that fled, and were dispersed into several countries, as Moab, Ammon, and especially Egypt, whither many went along with Johanan the son of Kareah, Jer. xliii. 5, 6, 7: *and I will draw out a sword after them*; and destroy them; which, as it was threatened, Jer. xlii. 16. and xliv. 27. so it was accomplished when Egypt was subdued by Nebuchadnezzar. The Septuagint and Arabic versions, in every clause, read a *fourth part*, instead of a *third*; but wrongly.

Ver. 3. *Thou shalt also take thereof a few in number*, &c.] These are they that were left in the land of Judea by Nebuzaradan, for vine-dressers and husbandmen, and such as returned out of Egypt into the land of Judah, Jer. xliv. 28. and lii. 16: *and bind them in thy skirts*; in the pockets of them; signifying both the very small number of them, and their preservation. Jarchi and Kimchi interpret these of those that were carried captive to Babylon, and lived there, and were preserved, and returned again.

Ver. 4. *Then take of them again*, &c.] Of that small number preserved: *and cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire*: this was fulfilled in Gedaliah and the Jews that were with him, over whom the king of Babylon had made him governor, who were slain by Ishmael, Jer. xli. 1—7: *for thereof shall a fire come forth into all the house of Israel*: from this barbarous murder of Gedaliah and his men, judgment came upon all the house of Israel; a war commenced between Ishmael and Johanan the son of Kareah; and afterwards Nebuzaradan carried captive great numbers of them that were left in the land. The Syriac and Arabic versions render it, *from these shall a fire come forth*, &c. which Jarchi interprets of these intimations given the prophet, from whence judgments should come upon all the house of Israel. It may be understood of those that were left in the land, and of such who returned from the captivity; for whose sins, and those of their posterity, the wrath of God came forth upon all the house of Israel, to the utter destruction of their nation, city, and temple, by Titus Vespasian.

Ver. 5. *Thus saith the Lord God, this is Jerusalem*, &c.] A type or sign of it; it may refer to both the former and latter type. It is the city of Jerusalem that is designed by the city portrayed upon the tile; and the same is signified by the head of the prophet that was to be shaved; that being not only the chief

[m] חרב gladium, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Starckius.

city of Judea, but of the whole world, as follows: *I have set it in the midst of the nations;* as the chief of them; and distinguished it from them by peculiar favours and blessings, natural and spiritual; being seated in a land flowing with milk and honey; and having the house and worship of God in it; and where were the symbols of his presence, and his word and ordinances; and therefore should have excelled them in true religion, devotion, and holiness, and set an example to them. The Jews generally understand this of the natural situation of Jerusalem. Jarchi interprets it of the middle of the world; as if it was mathematically placed in the centre of the earth. Kimchi says it was in the midst of the continent; and so its air was better than others; and these sort of writers[n] often speak of the land of Israel being in the navel or centre of the earth; they say[o] that the sanhedrim sat in the middle of the world; and therefore is compared to the navel, Cant. vii. 1. because it sat in the temple, which was in the middle of the world; but the former sense is best; though Jerom gives in to the latter: *and countries* that are *round about her:* this is a proposition of itself; the former clause being distinguished from it by the accent *athnach;* and should be rendered thus, *and the countries* are, or were, *round about her*[p]; on the east was Asia, on the west Europe, on the south Africa and Libya, and on the north Babylon, Scythia, Armenia, Persia, and Pontus; and was more conspicuous, eminent, and honourable than them all, having greater privileges, prerogatives, and excellencies; and therefore should have exceeded them in its regard to the laws and statutes of God, which she did not; hence this is said, in order to upbraid her for her ingratitude, as appears by the following words.

Ver. 6. *And she hath changed my judgments into wickedness more than the nations,* &c.] So they changed their glory for that which did not profit; and the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man; and the truth of God into a lie, Jer. ii. 11. Rom. i. 23, 25. or, *for wickedness*[q]; for judgments and laws that were not good, and which to observe was wickedness. The word rendered *changed* signifies to *rebel against* or *to transgress;* and the sense may be, she, that is, Jerusalem, has *rebelled* against my judgments, and *transgressed*[r] them in a wicked manner, even to a greater degree than the nations of the world. The Targum and Jarchi interpret it *changed,* as we do: *and my statutes more than the countries that* are *round about her. Judgments* and *statutes* are the same laws and ordinances of worship, being just and righteous, and firm and unalterable; unless it should rather be thought that *judgments* belong to the moral law, being given forth by the Lord as a judge, and founded upon judgment and righteousness; and *statutes* to the ceremonial law, being of positive institution and appointment, and to last so long as it was the pleasure of the lawgiver: *for they have refused my judgments and my statutes;* they refused to comply with them, and to yield an obedience to them, and that with loathing, disdain, and contempt, as the word[s] signifies: *they have not walked in them;* they did not make them the rule of their walk and conversation; they shewed no regard to them; they went out of the way of them, into crooked paths, with the workers of iniquity.

Ver. 7. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Having observed their sins, and which are still enlarged upon, the Lord proceeds to denounce his judgments against them: *because ye multiplied more than the nations that* are *round about you;* not in numbers, nor in wealth and riches, or in blessings and privileges, and therefore grew wanton and forgetful; though this was true; but in sins and wickedness, which abounded among them, and in which they exceeded the nations round about them; and so the Targum paraphrases it, "because that ye have sinned more than the peo-"ple that are round about you:" *and have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments;* which is repeated to shew the certainty of fact, and how much the Lord resented it: *neither have done according to the judgments of the nations that* are *round about you.* The Syriac version leaves out the negative particle לא; and renders the words thus, *but ye have done the judgments of the nations which are round about you;* and it may be observed, that it is omitted in a parallel text, Ezek. xi. 12. and this is what the Jews are often reproved for, that they followed the laws and customs of the Gentiles, and worshipped their gods; and the opposition to the preceding clause seems to require this sense; but the retaining the negative particle is confirmed by the Targum, Masora, and the Septuagint and Arabic versions; and also by the Talmud[t], which reconciles the passage with the parallel text before mentioned, thus, "according to those "things which are right among them (the Gentiles) ye "have not done; *but* according to what are corrupt "among them ye have done;" and the meaning is, either that they did not walk according to the law and light of nature, which the Gentiles had, and attended to, Rom. ii. 14, 15. or that they did not follow them in their conduct and behaviour; they were not so zealous for the true God as the Heathens were for their idols; they were not so tenacious of the laws and worship of the true God of Israel as the Gentiles were of their superstitious rites and ceremonies; the Gentiles did not change their gods, and manner of worship, but retained what they received from their ancestors time immemorial; but the Jews changed their glory for that which did not profit, Jer. ii. 11.

Ver. 8. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, behold, I, even I,* am *against thee,* &c.] Or, *behold, I am against thee, even I*[u]; who am the Lord God omnipotent, a great King, and a dreadful one; and a terrible thing it is for a people to have the mighty God against them; or for any to fall into the hands of the living God: this is repeated to shew that it certainly was so; and that the Lord was set upon it; and determined to come

[n] Kimchi in Ezek. xxxviii. 12.
[o] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 37. 1. & Gloss. in ib.
[p] וסביבותיה ארצות & circa eam erant terræ, Cocceius.
[q] לרשעה ut improbe ageret, Cocceius.
[r] ותמר transgressa est, vel rebellis fuit, Calvin; refractaria fuit, Cocceius.

[s] Verbum מאס significat spernere, reprobare, rejicere, idque ex contemptu & fastidio, Polanus.
[t] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 39. 2.
[u] הנני עליך גם אני ecce ego ad te, etiam ego, Pagninus, Montanus; ecce ego contra te, etiam ego, Starckius.

forth against them in the way of his judgments, as follows: *and will execute judgments in the midst of thee, in the sight of the nations*: that is, inflict punishments upon them for their disregard to his righteous judgments, which should take place in the midst of them, and consume them all around; and should be so manifest as to be seen by all the nations about them.

Ver. 9. *And I will do in thee that which I have not done*, &c.] In any other nation, or to any other people; not in the old world, when the flood was brought upon the world of the ungodly; not in Sodom and Gomorrah, when they were destroyed by fire from heaven; not in Egypt, when he inflicted his plagues on Pharaoh and his people; nor among the Canaanites, when they were drove out of their land for their abominations: *and whereunto I will not do any more the like*: at least not of a long time; and, besides, this may not only refer to the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, but also by the Romans: *because of all thine abominations*; the wickednesses of all sorts that were committed among them, which were abominable to the Lord, and particularly their idolatries; these were the causes why he would do, or suffer to be done, things that were never seen, known, or heard of before; and are as follow:

Ver. 10. *Therefore the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee*, &c.] Which was long ago threatened by the Lord, and prophesied of by Moses, Lev. xxvi. 27. Deut. xxviii. 53, 55, 57. and was fulfilled at several times in the people of Israel, as at the siege of Samaria, 2 Kings vi. 28, 29. at the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, Lam. iv. 10. and at the siege of the same city by Titus Vespasian, as Josephus* relates; for though these instances only shew that mothers ate their children, yet no doubt the fathers took part with them; and if mothers, who are naturally more tender, could do this, it is much more reasonable to suppose that fathers did the same: *and the sons shall eat their fathers*; this, though nowhere recorded, yet doubtless was done; it being as reasonable to think that a son might eat his father as a father his son, though both monstrously shocking: *and I will execute judgments in thee*; punishments, such as pestilence, famine, and sword, after mentioned: *and the whole remnant of thee will I scatter into all the winds*; that is, those that remain, and are not cut off, by the above judgments, shall be carried captive into Babylon, or be dispersed into Egypt, Ammon, Moab, and other places: this had a full accomplishment in the dispersion of the Jews into the several parts of the world, when they were destroyed by the Romans.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord God*, &c.] This is a form of an oath, and shews that what is after said should certainly be done; God would not repent of it, nor revoke it: *surely, because thou hast defiled my sanctuary, with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations*: that is, with their idols and idolatrous worship, which were detestable and abominable to the Lord; so Manasseh not only built altars for Baal in the house of the Lord, but set up in it a graven image of the grove, 2 Kings xxi. 3, 4, 7: *therefore will I also diminish thee*; as they lessened his glory by such abominable actions, so he threatens that he would lessen their privileges and blessings; as they took away from him the worship and honour that were due to him, so he would take away from them their civil and church state, his sanctuary, word, and ordinances, and deprive them of every thing that was valuable and excellent. The Targum paraphrases it, "I will cut off the strength of thine arm;" weaken her power: *neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity*; when in the greatest misery and distress. The Targum is, "my Word shall not spare," &c.

Ver. 12. *A third part of them shall die with the pestilence*, &c.] This, with what follows, explains the division of the hair into the three parts, and what was done with them; and shews that the burning of one third part denotes their being destroyed by the pestilence, mentioned along with burning coals, Hab. iii. 5. and by famine, as follows: *and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee*; and though there is no account of the former, yet there is of the latter; and no doubt but the pestilence raged, as well as the famine, at the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar: *and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee*; signified by the third part of the hair, smitten with a knife; and intends such as perished by the sword of the Chaldeans at the taking of the city, and when they fled out of it; and so are properly said to fall round about it: *and I will scatter a third part into all the winds*; the greatest part of which were carried into Babylon, and others into other parts; see the note on ver. 2: *and I will draw out a sword after them*; particularly after them that went into Egypt. The Septuagint and Arabic versions read a *fourth part* in each clause, as before; and make it out thus, *a fourth part of thee shall be consumed with death* (the pestilence); *and a fourth part of thee shall be consumed with famine in the midst of thee: and a fourth part of thee I will scatter to every wind: and a fourth part of thee shall fall by the sword round about thee; and I will draw out the sword after them.*

Ver. 13. *Thus shall mine anger be accomplished*, &c.] Finished, perfected, consummated, by bringing the above judgments upon them, pestilence, famine, and sword, and by scattering them to every wind: what had been threatened long, and only some drops of it were let fall in times past, now was poured forth to the uttermost: *and I will cause my fury to rest upon them*; to continue and abide upon them, and not move, at least for the space of threescore and ten years; see Zech. i. 12: *and I will be comforted*: by taking vengeance on them; so satisfying his justice, and easing him of his enemies; see Isa. i. 24. a speech after the manner of men; who, when they have been affronted, and have avenged themselves, are easy in their minds, and satisfied: *and they shall know that I the Lord have spoken it in my zeal*: that is, they shall find by experience that what the Lord had spoken by his prophets, and had threatened to bring upon them, was said in earnest, and arose from a jealousy for his own glory; this will be a clear case, and out of

* De Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 3. sect. 4. Ed. Hudson.

question: *when I have accomplished my fury in them*; by the utter destruction of them; as follows:

Ver. 14. *Moreover I will make thee waste*, &c.] That is, their land; which, being without inhabitants, lay untilled; and so became barren and unfruitful: *and a reproach among the nations round about thee, in the sight of all that pass by*: who, seeing it in this desolate condition, shall throw out their taunts and jeers upon it, as in Lam. ii. 15, 16.

Ver. 15. *So it shall be a reproach and a taunt*, &c.] The subject of the reproaches and taunts of the enemy; see Jer. xxiv. 9. this is repeated for the greater confirmation of it: *an instruction*; or *discipline*, *or correction*[x]. The meaning is, that the Gentiles, seeing the judgments of God upon the Jews, would hereby learn righteousness, forsake their sins, amend their ways, and fear the Lord: *and an astonishment unto the nations that are round about thee*; being amazed that such judgments should fall upon a people that had been so highly favoured of God; and at their stupidity, hardness, and incorrigibleness under them: *when I shall execute judgments in thee in anger and in fury, and in furious rebukes*; a heap of words, not only denoting the certainty of divine judgments, but the greatness and fierceness of divine wrath, in the execution of them; that these were not fatherly chastisements, rebukes in love, but the effects of vindictive justice: *I the Lord have spoken it*; or those things, as the Arabic version; and as sure as I have spoken, I will do. The Targum is, "I the Lord have decreed "in my word;" and so in ver. 13. where it is added, and I will confirm or accomplish.

Ver. 16. *When I shall send upon them the evil arrows of famine*, &c.] Either famine itself, which is as an arrow; it is taken out of the quiver of the Lord of hosts, and is shot by him; and moves swiftly when it has a commission; and is very destructive: or arrows which bring on a famine, such as drought, excessive rains, blasting, mildew, locusts, *&c.*; or arrows which the famine brings, as leanness, faintness, blackness, and death; and, in either sense, are evil ones; and are sent of God for the following end: *which shall be for their destruction*, and *which I will send to destroy you*; God's design in sending them was to destroy, and that was answered; and a very destroying arrow famine is, and therefore called evil: *and I will increase the famine upon you*; or *gather*[y] *it upon*, or *against you*; as if it was an army with bows and arrows: *and will break your staff of bread*; take away the virtue from the little they had, that that should not nourish and satisfy; see the note on ch. iv. 16.

Ver. 17. *So will I send upon you famine, and evil beasts*, &c.] Famine is repeated for the further confirmation of it; and *evil beasts* are added, by whom are meant, not the Chaldeans, comparable to such; but literally lions, wolves, bears, *&c.* which are threatened the Jews, in case of disobedience, Lev. xxvi. 22. and which sometimes were sent, 2 Kings xvii. 24: *and they shall bereave thee*; that is, of her children, whom the evil beasts should destroy; they not being able to defend themselves against them, as men can: *and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee, and I will bring the sword upon thee*; the pestilence, famine, sword, which is meant by blood, and evil beasts, are the Lord's four sore judgments; see ch. xiv. 21: *I the Lord have spoken it*: who was able to perform it, and did, both at the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and by Titus.

CHAP. VI.

THIS chapter contains a prophecy of the desolation of the whole land of Israel, and a promise that a remnant should escape, with a lamentation for the sad destruction, signified by some gestures of the prophet. The order to the prophet to deliver out the prophecy is in ver. 1, 2. the several parts of the land of Israel or Judea, to which the prophecy is directed, are signified by mountains, hills, rivers, and valleys, on which the sword should be brought, ver. 3. the desolation is described, and the cause of it suggested, the idolatry of the people, ver. 4, 5, 6, 7. the promise of a remnant that should escape, who should remember the Lord, loath themselves for their sins, acknowledge him, and that his word was not in vain, is in ver. 8, 9, 10. the lamentation, signified by the prophet's smiting with his hand, and stamping with his foot, for the sins of the people, and the judgments that should come upon them, is in ver. 11. a particular enumeration of these judgments follows, and of the places where they should be executed, ver. 12. the end of them was to bring them to the knowledge and acknowledgment of the Lord, against whom they had sinned and offended by their idolatry, as the places where their slain fell would shew, ver. 13. and the chapter is concluded with a resolution to bring this desolation on them, ver. 14.

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] That is, the word of prophecy from the Lord, as the Targum: this, according to Junius, was delivered out by the prophet on a sabbath-day, the twenty-first of the fifth month, and in the sixth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity; and so was more than a year after the vision at Chebar, ch. i. 1, 2.

Ver. 2. *Son of man, set thy face towards the mountains of Israel*, &c.] Or cities of Israel, the inhabitants of them; not the ten tribes, for they had been carried captive long before this time, even in the times of Hezekiah; unless it can be thought that this prophecy is designed to shew the reason of their captivity, which was their idolatry; or that it is directed to those of them which remained in the land, and were mixed with the other tribes; but rather the land of Judea is intended, in which were many mountains, and one part of it was called the hill-country, Luke i. 39, 65. and the mountains are mentioned, against which the prophet is or-

[x] מוסר disciplina, Pagninus; castigatio, Montanus, Vatablus, Starckius.

[y] אסף עליכם famem congregabo, super vos, V. L. Pagninus; famem colligam super vos, Montanus, Polanus, Starckius.

dered to direct his face, and look unto; partly because idolatry was much practised upon them; and partly to shew the stupidity of the Jews, and the unsuccessfulness of prophecy among them: that it was as well, or better, to speak to the mountains, than to them; for since they had so often put away the word of God from them, they were unworthy of it; wherefore such a direction to the prophet carries some degree of indignation and resentment: *and prophesy against them*: as that the sword should be upon them, and the high places built upon them should be destroyed: or *unto them*[a]; direct the prophecy to them; speak to them as if they were capable of hearing: or *concerning them*, as the Syriac version; and so the Targum, concerning their desolation.

Ver. 3. *And say, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord God*, &c.] Since the people of the Jews would not hear the word of the Lord, the mountains are called upon to hear it; unless the inhabitants of the mountains are meant: *thus saith the Lord God to the mountains and to the hills, to the rivers and to the valleys*: these are addressed, because idols were worshipped here; as upon the mountains and hills, so by rivers of water, and also in valleys, as in the valley of Hinnom idols were worshipped; upon mountains and hills, because they thought themselves nearer to heaven; by rivers, because of purity; and in valleys, because shady and obscure, and had something solemn and venerable in them: *behold, I even I, will bring a sword upon you*; that is, upon the idolaters, which worshipped in these places; otherwise different instruments, as pick-axes, &c. would have been more proper. The Targum paraphrases it, "them that kill "with the sword;" meaning the Chaldeans, who doubtless are intended: *and I will destroy your high places*; the temples and altars, built on high places, and devoted to idolatrous worship, as follows:

Ver. 4. *And your altars shall be desolate*, &c.] Being pulled down; or because the priests and worshippers would now be slain, and there would be none to attend them: *and your images shall be broken*; the *images of the sun*[b]. The word for images has its derivation from heat; and were so called, either from the heat of the sun, to whose worship they were devoted, or from the heat of the love and affections of their worshippers: *and I will cast down your slain men before your idols*; before your dung, or *your dunghil-gods*[c]; for the word used has the signification of dung, ch. iv. 12. The Targum renders it, "before the carcass of your "idols;" where they committed idolatry, there they should be slain; which points at the cause of their punishment.

Ver. 5. *And I will lay the dead carcasses of the children of Israel before their idols*, &c.] Which is repeated for the confirmation of it: *and I will scatter your bones round about your altars*; which were reckoned a pollution of them; see 2 Kings xxiii. 14, 16, 20.

Ver. 6. *In all your dwelling-places your cities shall be laid waste*, &c.] Which denotes that the desolation should be general, wherever they had cities and places to dwell in; the idolatry being universal, as is said in Jer. ii. 28: *and the high places shall be desolate*; meaning such as were in cities; as, before, such as were built upon mountains and hills; see 2 Kings xxiii. 5: *that your altars may be laid waste and desolate*; as they must be, the cities being destroyed in which they were set up: *and your idols may be broken and cease, and your images may be cut down*; such as were made of gold and silver, or of wood and stone; the same words are used for them as in ver. 4: *and your works may be abolished*; not only the works of their hands, but of their brain; whatever they had devised, and was contrary to the pure word and worship of God.

Ver. 7. *And the slain shall fall in the midst of you*, &c.] The word for *slain* is in the singular number, which perhaps is put for the plural; and so the Septuagint render it; unless it should design some principal person that should be slain; but, as King Zedekiah was not slain when the city was taken, only his sons and his princes, it seems best to understand it of the multitude that were slain in the midst of the land, not only in Jerusalem, but in all the cities of Judea; and denotes how general and public the destruction would be: *and ye shall know that I am the Lord*; the only true God, and Governor of the world; who only is to be worshipped, feared, and served, and not idols.

Ver. 8. *Yet will I leave a remnant*, &c.] Not in Judea, but in Babylon, and in the countries where they should be dispersed, as follows: *that ye may have* some *that shall escape the sword among the nations*; which was threatened to be drawn, and sent after them, ch. v. 2, 12. but all should not perish by it; some should escape; for this was not the time to make a full end of them: *when ye shall be scattered through the countries*; that is, of Egypt, Ammon, Moab, and Assyria; for this respects their dispersion at the time of the Babylonish captivity, and not their present dispersion.

Ver. 9. *And they that escape of you shall remember me*, &c.] Either my grace and mercy to them, as Jarchi; or the fear of me, as the Targum; and so return by repentance, and worship the Lord their God, being influenced by his kindness and goodness to them: even when *among the nations, whither they shall be carried captive*; so that their afflictions should be sanctified and made useful to them: in prosperity men are apt to forget God; in adversity they are brought to a sense of themselves and duty; and happy it is when chastening dispensations are teaching ones, and bring to God, and not drive from him: *because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me*; by committing spiritual adultery, which is idolatry. The sense is, either that he was grieved at heart with their idolatry, which was the reason of their being carried captive, which, when they were sensible of, wrought repentance in them; or that he was full of compassion towards them; his heart was tender and pitiful towards them, though they departed from him in such a dreadful manner, justly to be resented by him. The Targum is, "I have broken their foolish

[a] אליהם ad eos, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus, Montanus; ad illos, Piscator.

[b] חמניכם simulacra vestra solis, Pagninus; solaria vestra, Vatablus; subdiales statuæ vestræ, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus.

[c] לפני גלוליכם coram stercoreis diis vestris, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; coram stercoribus vestris, Cocceius.

"heart;" and so the Syriac and Vulgate Latin versions, *I have broken their whorish heart;* by afflictive providences humbled them, and brought them to repentance: *and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols;* they committed fornication with their heart and eyes in a spiritual sense, as wicked men do in a natural sense; see 2 Pet. ii. 14: *and they shall loathe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations:* abominable idolatry, 1 Pet. iv. 3. when men remember God, against whom they have sinned, and consider how grieving sin is to him; and when they are broken for it themselves, they then loathe their sins, and themselves for it; and where all this is there is true repentance.

Ver. 10. *And they shall know that I am the Lord,* &c.] As in ver. 7: *and that I have not said in vain:* either within himself, in his own purposes and decrees; so the Targum, "I have not in vain decreed in my word;" or by the mouth of the prophets: *that I would do this evil unto them;* in carrying them captive, and dispersing them in other lands; for this is not the evil of sin, but the evil of punishment, or of affliction.

Ver. 11. *Thus saith the Lord God, smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot,* &c.] These are gestures of persons in distress and agony, who, to shew their trouble and grief, smite one hand against the other; or smite with the hand upon the thigh, as in Jer. xxxi. 19: and *stretch out,* or *make a distension with the foot*[a]; as it is in the Hebrew text; extend their thighs; throw out their feet; stamp with them; beat the earth, and make it shake, as the Syriac version; all expressive of anguish and sorrow: *and say, alas, for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel!* the word *alas,* or *woe,* as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, an interjection of mourning and lamentation, explains the above gestures; and what follows shews the cause of all; namely, the sins and abominations committed by the house of Israel; which they being insensible of, and unconcerned about, the prophet is ordered to take such a method to awaken them out of their stupidity and lethargy; and the rather, since the heaviest of judgments were coming upon them: *for they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence:* which are threatened in ch. v. 12, 16, 17. and the persons on whom they should be separately executed are mentioned in the following verse.

Ver. 12. *He that is far off shall die of the pestilence,* &c.] That flies from the enemy into the wilderness, or into other countries, thinking himself safe there, the plague shall seize him, and he shall die of that: there's no fleeing from God, and escaping his hand; when he resolves to punish for sin, he has various ways to execute his wrath: *and he that is near shall fall by the sword;* that is out of the city, and near it, attempting to get away; but within the reach of the enemy, shall be slain by him: *and he that remaineth, and is besieged, shall die by the famine;* that abides in the city, and does not attempt to go out; but continues in the siege, hoping the enemy will be obliged to depart, shall perish by the grievous famine. The Targum is, "he that remains, and goes into the cities "of siege, shall die with famine:" *thus will I accomplish my fury upon them;* which before had been gradually, by little and little, falling upon them, in order to bring them to repentance; but being incorrigible, wrath is brought upon them to the uttermost; and God fulfils the whole counsel of his will in their destruction.

Ver. 13. *Then shall ye know that I am the Lord,* &c.] Whom they had denied, by serving other gods; but now by those punishments their eyes would be opened to see, and be obliged to acknowledge, that there was no God but the Lord: *when their slain men shall be among their idols round about their altars;* as is threatened, ver. 5. by which it will appear that the idols whom they worshipped could not save them; since they should fall just by them, round about the altars on which they sacrificed unto them; which idols were placed, and altars for their worship built, *upon every high hill, in all the tops of the mountains:* mountains and high hills were usual places of idolatry among the Heathens, in which the Jews imitated them, and particularly Herodotus[e] says of the Persians, that, going up to the highest parts of mountains, they offered sacrifice to Jupiter; so they called the whole circle of the heavens: *and under every green tree, and under every thick oak;* see 1 Kings xiv. 23. 2 Kings xvi. 4. Jer. ii. 20. and iii. 6. here their slain were to fall, where they committed their idolatry: even in *the place where they did offer sweet savour to all their idols;* or dunghil-gods; yet, though they were such, sweet savour or incense was offered to them; wherefore, in righteous judgment, here their carcasses should fall and lie, and rot and stink.

Ver. 14. *So will I stretch out mine hand upon them,* &c.] Not unto them, in a way of mercy; but upon, or against them, in a way of judgment. The Targum paraphrases it, "and I will lift up the stroke of my "power upon them;" his mighty hand of vengeance: *and make the land desolate;* by destroying the inhabitants of it: *yea, more desolate than the wilderness towards Diblath, in all their habitations;* so the Syriac version renders it, *and I will make this land more desolate than the land of Diblath;* but other versions, *I will make the land desolate from the wilderness of Diblath,* to which the Targum agrees; or, *from the wilderness to Diblath;* Kimchi and Ben Melech think this is the same with Riblath; as Deuel is put for Reuel in Numb. i. 14. and ii. 14. which was in the land of Hamath, and which, Jerom says, was in his times called Epiphania in Syria; here it was that Nebuchadnezzar brought Zedekiah, and slew his sons before him, Jer. xxxix. 5, 6. this, though in Hamath in Syria, was on the borders of the land of Israel, Numb. xxxiv. 8, 11, so that *hence from the desert of Diblath,* as the Arabic version renders it, *even to Jerusalem,* as may be supplied, takes in the whole land, and shews that it should be utterly desolate. There is a Beth-diblathaim mentioned in Jer. xlviii. 22. as in Moab; and there is also Almon-diblathaim, which was one of the stations of the Israelites; and seems to be in Moab, or on its borders, Numb. xxxiii. 46, 47. and appears, by the places named with it, to be the same as that in Jeremy; and so was part

[a] רקע ברגלך extende pede tuo, Pagninus, Montanus, Polanus; fac distensionem cum pede tuo, Munster; divarica pedes tuos, Calvin.

[e] Clio, sive l. 1. c. 131.

of that terrible wilderness through which the Israelites passed; and to which the desolation of the land of Israel by the Chaldeans is compared; and which serves to confirm our version, which makes the desolation to be greater than that: *and they shall know that I am the Lord;* the true God; the one and only Lord God; who never changes his purposes; fulfils his promises and threatenings; and there's no escaping his mighty hand.

CHAP. VII.

THIS chapter contains a prophecy of the speedy destruction of the Jews, as being just at hand; of the particular judgments that should come upon them; of the horror that should seize them, and the distress that all ranks of men among them should be in, a few only escaping, who are described as in mournful circumstances. The destruction in general is denounced as being very near; the end being come, which is often repeated; and as it is represented as sudden, so without mercy; which is declared, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. the particular judgments, sword, pestilence, and famine, are mentioned in ver. 15. and the few that should escape are compared to mourning doves, ver. 16. the trembling, horror, and shame that should be upon all, are intimated in ver. 17, 18. the unprofitableness of their gold and silver to deliver them, and the unsatisfying nature of these things, are expressed, ver. 19. the profanation and destruction of their temple are prophesied of, ver. 20, 21, 22. and for their murder, rapine, and oppression, 'tis threatened that their houses should be possessed by the worst of Heathens, and their holy places defiled; and one calamity should come upon another; when their application to prophets, priests, and ancient men for counsel, would be in vain, ver. 23, 24, 25, 26. and king, prince, and people, should be in the most melancholy and distressed circumstances, ver. 27.

Ver. 1. *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] Or *again*, as the Arabic version; for this is a distinct prophecy from the former, though of the same kind with it; and was delivered out, either immediately upon the former; or, however, some time between that and the following in the next chapter, which has a date to it. The Targum calls it the word of prophecy from the Lord.

Ver. 2. *Also, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord God unto the land of Israel,* &c.] The inhabitants of it; not the ten tribes, who were already carried captive; but the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and those that were with them, who dwelt in the land. The mountains, hills, rivers, and valleys, were before addressed; now the land itself: what the Lord by the prophet said unto the land, or the people of it, follows: *an end:* for here a colon is to be placed; that is, the end of God's patience and forbearance; he would bear with them no longer, at least but a very little while; the time of vengeance was coming upon them, and an utter consumption should be made of them; see Lam. iv. 18: *the end is come upon the four corners of the earth,* or *land;* for not the whole world, and the end of that, as in Matt. xxiv. 3, are meant; but the land of Judea, and the destruction of it, which should be general; upon the four wings of it, as in the Hebrew text; that is, in all parts of it, east, west, north, and south. The Targum is, "the punishment of the end, or the punishment determined to come upon the four winds of the earth;" see Rev. vii. 1. and this punishment was just going to be inflicted on them; for this prophecy was in the sixth year of King Zedekiah; and in the ninth year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem; and in the eleventh year took it, 2 Kings xxv. 1, 2.

Ver. 3. *Now is the end come upon thee,* &c.] This is repeated for the confirmation of it, and for the sake of application of it to the people of Israel, of whom he had before spoken in the third person; but now in the second, in order to arouse them, and excite attention: *and I will send mine anger upon thee;* the token of it, the punishment of their sins: *and I will judge thee according to thy ways;* pass sentence, and execute it, as their evil ways and practices deserved: *and I will recompense,* or *put upon thee*[f], *all thine abominations;* cause them to bear as a burden the just punishment of their detestable iniquities; which would be more than they would be able to bear, though not more than they deserved.

Ver. 4. *And mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity,* &c.] Though the punishment will be heavy, and the lamentation will be great; see ch. v. 11: *but I will recompense thy ways upon thee;* the evil of punishment for the evil of sin, the righteous demerit of their actions: *and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee;* not taken away, unatoned for, and indeed unrepented of. The Targum is, "and the punishment of thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee:" *and ye shall know that I am the Lord;* to whom vengeance belongs; who takes notice of sinful actions, and punishes for them; to whom appertain the perfections of omniscience, omnipotence, and punitive justice.

Ver. 5. *Thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Here should be a stop, a colon, requiring attention to what follows, it being something awful and terrible: *an evil, an only evil, behold, it cometh;* meaning the destruction of the city and temple; which, though but one, was such an one as was never known before, nor was there any like it. The Targum is, "evil after evil, lo, it cometh;" one evil after another; when one evil is gone, another comes, as in ver. 26. The Syriac version is, *behold, evil for evil comes;* the evil of punishment for the evil of sin.

Ver. 6. *An end is come, the end is come,* &c.] These words, so often repeated, shew the eagerness and concern of the prophet's mind; the speed and haste destruction was making; and the great stupidity of the

[f] נתתי עליך ponam super te, Pagninus; dabo super te, Montanus; reponam super te, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.

people, which required such a frequent repetition: *it watcheth for thee;* that is, their damnation slumbered not, but was awake, and waited till the time was up, which was just at hand, for it to take place; see 2 Pet. ii. 3: *behold, it is come;* either the end, or rather the evil before mentioned; it was just at the door; it denotes the certainty of it, and its near approach.

Ver. 7. *The morning is come upon thee, O thou that dwellest in the land,* &c.] That is, early ruin was come, or was coming, upon the inhabitants of Judea, which before is said to be awake, and to watch for them; and now the day being broke, the morning come, it hastened to them. Some, because this word[g] is used in Isa. xviii. 5, for a crown or diadem, think a crowned head, a king, is here meant; particularly Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the instrument of the destruction of Jerusalem. So the Targum, "the kingdom is revealed "upon or against thee, O inhabitant of the land." Jarchi interprets it of the morning setting as the sun does, its light and glory disappearing; and so denotes a dark and gloomy day. *The time is come;* the appointed time of Jerusalem's ruin, the time of her visitation: *the day of trouble,* or *noise*[h], is *near;* either of the Chaldean army, its chariots and horses, and of their armour; or of the howling and lamentation of the Jews: *and not the sounding again of the mountains;* not like the echo of a man's voice between the mountains, which is only imaginary, but this is real; so Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it: or this was not like the shoutings of the vintage, which were joyful ones, Isa. xvi. 9, 10. but this the voice of lamentation and sorrow, doleful sounds. Jarchi says the word signifies the cry of the voice, proclaiming or calling on persons to fly to the tops of the mountains, which now should not be; and so the Targum, "and there is no fleeing or escaping "to the tops of the mountains."

Ver. 8. *Now will I shortly pour out my fury upon thee,* &c.] It might be very well said to be shortly, or near at hand, that the Lord would bring down his judgments upon this people; since it was some time in the sixth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity that this prophecy was delivered; and it was in the ninth year that Nebuchadnezzar came up against Jerusalem; so that it was but about three years ere God would begin to pour out his fury on them: *and accomplish mine anger upon thee;* not only send it, and begin to express it, but go on to finish it, till he had spent all his fury upon them he meant and threatened, and their sins deserved: *and I will judge thee according to thy ways, and I will recompence thee for all thine abominations;* which is repeated from ver. 3, for the confirmation of it, and to shew the certainty of it, that nothing would prevent it.

Ver. 9. *And mine eye shall not spare,* &c.] This verse is the same with ver. 4, only instead of *I will recompence thy ways upon thee,* here it is, *I will recompence thee according to thy ways;* which have both the same sense, shewing the equity and justice of the divine proceedings: and to the clause, *and ye shall know that I am the Lord,* 'tis added, *that smiteth;* with the rod of his anger, inflicts punishment for sin. The Syriac version is, *that smiteth them;* the Jews, by suffering them to be carried captive: and so the Targum, "I am "the Lord that bringeth upon you a smiting," or the blow; the sense is, that when it came, they should be sensible that it was the Lord's doing.

Ver. 10. *Behold the day, behold, it is come,* &c.] That is, the day of trouble and distress, said to be near, ver. 3: *the morning is gone forth;* see the note on ver. 7: *the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded;* both these phrases may be understood of Nebuchadnezzar; he was the rod, with which the Lord smote his people, as the Assyrian monarch is called the rod of his anger, Isa. x. v. and was a very proud prince, and had budded and blossomed, and had brought forth much bad fruit of that kind; see Dan. iii. 15. and iv. 30, 37. or these may be separately considered; the *rod* may be interpreted of Nebuchadnezzar, which had been growing up, and preparing for the chastisement of the people of the Jews, and now was just ready to be made use of; and *pride* may respect the sin of that people, which was the cause of their being smitten with this rod, as the following words seem to indicate. The Targum is, "a ruler hath budded, a wicked one hath appeared."

Ver. 11. *Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness,* &c.] Some understand this of the Chaldeans, who came with great violence against the Jews, and were a rod in the hand of the Lord, to scourge them for their wickedness; and this seems to be the sense of the Targum, "spoilers are risen up to visit the wicked;" but rather the violence, oppression, and rapine of the Jews are meant, and mentioned as the cause of their punishment; for this their oppression of the poor and needy, the widow and the fatherless, among them, God suffered the king of Babylon, a wicked prince, to come and chastise them: *none of them* shall remain, *nor of their multitude, nor of any of theirs;* meaning not the Chaldean army, as if they came not of themselves, but of God, and much less were cut off, for they returned to their own land again; but the Jews, who either should die in the siege with the famine and pestilence, or be put to death by the sword, or be carried into captivity: *neither* shall there be *wailing for them;* the destruction should be so general, that there would be but few left to mourn; and those that were left would be struck with such a stupor and amazement at the calamity, that they would not be capable of mourning; or with such a dread of the enemy, that there would be no place for lamentation over their dead friends and relations.

Ver. 12. *The time is come, the day draweth near,* &c.] According to the Targum, the time of the recompense of iniquities, and the day of punishment of sins; of the sins of the Jews, by the Chaldean army, which no doubt is true; but it seems chiefly to refer to what follows: and the sense is, the time was coming on, in which *let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn;* it is usual for the buyer of houses or lands to rejoice, because an addition is made to his estate, and especially when he has made, as he thinks, a good purchase; and the seller, he mourns because he is obliged to part with his estate to pay his debts, and so is reduced in

[g] הצפירה corona, Tigurine version, so some in Vatablus; cidaris matutina, Montanus.

[h] מהומה tumultus, Montanus, Piscator, Starckius; strepitus, Calvin; clamoris, Vatablus.

his circumstances; but now the time was coming when the one would have no occasion to rejoice, nor the other to mourn: not the buyer rejoice, because, being carried captive, he can't enjoy his possessions; nor the seller mourn, because, if he had not sold his house or field, he must have left it: *for wrath is upon all the multitude thereof;* upon the whole body of the Jewish nation, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, buyer and seller; those that are in good circumstances, and those that are in bad ones; so that hereby they were all upon a level, in the same case and condition.

Ver. 13. *For the seller shall not return to that which is sold,* &c.] In the year of jubilee, because he shall be in captivity: according to the law in Lev. xxv. 13, when a man had sold his possession, he returned to it again, if alive, in the year of jubilee; let it come sooner or later, within thirty, or twenty, or ten years after the sale, be it as it will: now the Babylonish captivity being seventy years, in that time there must be a jubilee; and yet those that had sold their estates, being captives in another land, could not return to them: *although they were yet alive,* either though what they have sold is in being, and in good condition; or rather, though they that have sold them are in the land of the living, but, not being in their own land, can't possess: *for the vision is touching the whole multitude thereof;* the prophecy of the destruction of the Jews is general, and respects the whole body of the people; men of all ranks and degrees, the buyer and the seller, the rich and the poor: *which shall not return;* void and of no effect, but shall be fully accomplished; see Isa. lv. 11. though some think this refers not to prophecy, but to the people, who did not upon it return by repentance; in this sense it is taken by Jarchi and Kimchi; and so the Targum, "for the prophets prophesied to the "whole multitude of them to return by repentance, "and they returned not:" *neither shall any strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life;* either secure himself from danger by his unrighteous mammon, his ill-gotten goods; or think to escape by his daring impiety, and vicious course of life, continued in without repentance.

Ver. 14. *They have blown the trumpet, even to make all ready,* &c.] That is, the Jews, when they understood that the enemy was approaching, blew the trumpet, to give the inhabitants of their several cities and towns warning of it; that they might gather together, provide themselves with armour, and put themselves in a posture of defence, or go forth to meet the enemy, and stop his progress: or, *blow ye the trumpet,* so the Septuagint and Arabic versions; and so may be considered as an irony or sarcasm; blow the trumpet, as an alarm of war, and see what will be the effect of it: *but none goeth to the battle* not having courage enough to face the enemy, but instead of that fled to the fortified cities, and particularly to Jerusalem: the reason of this timidity and cowardice was, *for my wrath is upon all the multitude thereof;* the intention of God was to destroy them all by one means or another; and therefore a heart was not given them to defend themselves, or oppose the enemy.

Ver. 15. *The sword is without,* &c.] Without the city, where the enemy was besieging; so that those that went without, in order to make their escape, fell into their hands: *and the pestilence and the famine within;* within the city; so that such who thought themselves safe in their own houses died by those judgments: *him that is in the field shall die by the sword;* by the hands of the Chaldeans: *and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him;* and he shall die by the hand of God.

Ver. 16. *But they that escape of them shall escape,* &c.] Some few should escape the pestilence, famine, and sword, and flee to the mountains, where they should live a very miserable and uncomfortable life; so that this is no contradiction to the wrath of God being upon the whole multitude, ver. 12, 14. as it follows: *and shall be on the mountains,* whither they shall flee, when the city is broken up and taken; and so the Syriac version reads it, in connexion with the preceding words, *and they that escape of them shall escape to the mountains;* barren and desert places, where they shall find no subsistence, nor have any agreeable company and conversation, but live in solitude and distress: *like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity;* like doves that live in valleys, or gather together there, and hide themselves in the holes of the rocks, on the sides of the valleys, from birds of prey; or are so called, to distinguish them from wild doves, which, when they have lost their mates, make a very mournful noise, though not loud and clamorous. So those Jews that escaped, being in such an uncomfortable condition, turned out of house and home, and deprived of their substance, should lament their fate; not in loud cries, lest they should be heard by the enemy and taken, but in secret sighs, and in a mournful tone; acknowledging to God, and to one another, their sins, they now became sensible of, which brought these calamities upon them. So God's people, the remnant according to the election of grace, who *escape* the general ruin sin has brought on mankind, are for the most part *upon the mountains,* in an afflicted and persecuted state; they are like *doves* for their harmlessness, amiableness, cleanness, modesty, chastity, sociableness, and timorous disposition; and like doves *of the valleys,* in a low estate, through corruption, temptation, desertion, affliction, and persecution; and *mourn* over their *own iniquity,* the sin of their nature, their unbelief and various transgressions being committed against a God of love, contrary to his grace, grieving to his spirit, and dishonourable to his Gospel; and being what break their peace, bereave them of comfort, and deprive them of communion with God.

Ver. 17. *All hands shall be feeble,* &c.] No strength in them, to lay hold on weapons of war to defend themselves, or fight the enemy; no heart nor courage in them, to go forth and meet him; and even afraid to lift up their voice in mourning, lest they should be heard, and pursued, and taken: *and all knees shall be weak as water;* tremble and beat one against another, for fear of the enemy: or, "shall flow with water," as the Targum; either with sweat or urine, which are sometimes both caused by fear.

Ver. 18. *They shall also gird themselves with sackcloth,* &c.] As a token of mourning, Gen. xxxvii. 34: *and horror shall cover them;* either the horror of a guilty conscience, or the perpetual dread and terror of the enemy: *and shame* shall be *upon all faces;* because

of their sins and trangressions, which they shall now be convinced of; or because of their desolate condition, their sins had brought them into: *and baldness upon all their heads;* through the plucking off of the hair of their heads in their distress; for to make baldness as a token of mourning for the dead was forbidden the Jews, Deut. xiv. 1.

Ver. 19. *They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed,* &c.] As being of no use unto them to preserve them from famine and pestilence, and as being an hinderance to them in their flight from the enemy. Kimchi observes that this may be interpreted of their idols of gold and silver, which shall now be had in contempt by them, and cast away, when they shall find they cannot save them from ruin; see Isa. ii. 20. *Their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord;* these can neither deliver from temporal judgments nor from wrath to come; see Prov. x. 2. and xi. 4. nor idols made of them: *they shall not satisfy their souls, nor fill their bowels;* gold and silver cannot be eaten; these will not satisfy the craving appetite, nor fill the hungry belly: the words shew that the famine would be so great, that bread could not be got for any money; and therefore gold and silver would be of no avail; since they could not be fed upon, or give any satisfaction to a famishing soul; nor could idols of gold and silver neither: *because it is the stumbling-block of their iniquity;* what was the occasion of their iniquity, covetousness, and idolatry, at which they stumbled, and fell into sin, and so into punishment for it.

Ver. 20. *As for the beauty of his ornament, he set it in majesty,* &c.] Or, *for pride* [i]. The gold, silver, jewels, riches, and treasure, which the Lord gave to this people, they made a bad use of; and instead of contributing to the support of his worship and interest, and of giving liberally to the poor, they converted it to their own pride and luxury: or rather the temple, as Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it, is meant; which was a beautiful structure, and adorned with gifts, and set for glory, majesty, and excellency by the Lord; yea, where his excellent Majesty dwelt himself: *but they made the images of their abominations* and *of their detestable things therein;* or, *of it* [k]; that is, of their gold and silver, which is another bad use they put their riches to: or rather *in it* [l]; that is, the temple; where, having made their idols, they placed them; see Jer. vii. 30: *therefore have I set it far from them:* that being destroyed, and they being carried away captive into a strange land, far from that.

Ver. 21. *And I will give it into the hands of the strangers for a prey,* &c.] The Babylonians, who lived in a foreign country, and were strangers to the commonwealth of Israel; the temple was suffered of the Lord to fall into their hands as a prey; who spoiled it of all its riches and glory, and carried away the vessels of gold, of silver, and of brass, and other valuable things; see Jer. lii. 17—23: *and to the wicked of the earth for a spoil;* meaning the same persons, and the same thing, and the same use they should make of it; for not the wicked of the world in general are meant, but of *the* land, or *this* land; the land of Babylon, where the prophet was: *and they shall pollute it;* by entering into it and spoiling it, by pillaging and burning it.

Ver. 22. *My face will I turn also from them,* &c.] Deny them his presence, and withdraw his protection from them; shew them no favour, nor afford them any help and succour in their distress, when they cry unto him; so the Targum, "I will cause my Shechinah to remove from them:" unless the Chaldeans are meant, as some think, whose robberies and ravages the Lord would wink at, and not restrain, but suffer them to plunder and spoil at pleasure: since it follows, *and they shall pollute my secret* place; the holy of holies, by going into it, which none but the high-priest might do, and he but once a year; though the Targum understands this of the Jews, and makes it to be a reason of what is threatened in the preceding clause, rendering it thus, "because they have profaned the land of the house of my Shechinah:" *for the robbers shall enter into it, and defile it;* as did the king of Babylon and his army; and afterwards, in the second temple, Antiochus, Pompey, and Titus Vespasian.

Ver. 23. *Make a chain,* &c.] To bind them; not the robbers, the Chaldeans, but the Jews; in order either to bring them to the bar to be tried for capital crimes hereafter mentioned, or to be led bound in chains into captivity; see Neh. iii. 10: *for the land is full of bloody crimes;* or, *judgment of bloods* [m]; capital crimes, such as are deserving of death, particularly murder, or shedding of innocent blood; so the Targum interprets it of sins of murder: *and the city is full of violence;* rapine, oppression, and injury done to the poor, the widow, and the fatherless; meaning the city of Jerusalem, where was the great court of judicature, and where justice ought to have been administered.

Ver. 24. *Wherefore I will bring the worst of the Heathen,* &c.] The Chaldeans, notorious for their cruelty, savageness, and barbarity; *and they shall possess their houses;* which they have built, and thought to have lived and died in, and left them to their children for an inheritance; but the Chaldeans, and not their children, became their heirs, and inherited their houses and lands: *I will also make the pomp of the strong to cease;* or, *the pride of the mighty ones* [n]; the noble and the rich; their wealth and substance, by which their pride and grandeur were supported, being taken away from them: *and their holy places shall be defiled;* the temple, in which were the holy place, and the holy of holies: or, *they that sanctify them;* the priests that offered sacrifices, which only sanctified to the purifying of the flesh; even these holy persons and things, as well as holy places, would be defiled.

Ver. 25. *Destruction cometh,* &c.] Upon the temple, city, nation, and people; the king of Babylon, the destroyer of the Gentiles, and now of the Jews, being on his way, Jer. iv. 7: *and they shall seek peace,*

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[i] לגאון in superbiam, V. L. Calvin, Starckius.
[k] בו ex eo, Tigurine version.
[l] In eo, Pagninus, Montanus, Polanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Starckius.
[m] משפט דמים judicio sanguinum, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Polanus, Starckius; criminibus capitalibus, Piscator; sanguinariis judiciis, Castalio.
[n] גאון עזים superbiam fortium, Calvin; superbiam robustorum, Starckius.

and there shall be *none;* that is, the Jews will seek to make peace with the Chaldeans; but the latter will not hearken to them, but go on with the siege, till they have taken the city, put part to the sword, and carried the other captive.

Ver. 26. *Mischief shall come upon mischief,* &c.] One misfortune or calamity after another; first one unhappy event, and then another, as was Job's case. The Targum is, "breach upon breach shall come[o]:" *and rumour shall be upon rumour;* that the Chaldean army is in such a place; and then that it is in another place still nearer; and then that it is but a few miles off, and will be here immediately: rumours of wars, as well as wars themselves, are very distressing; see Matt. xxiv. 6: *then shall they seek a vision of the prophet;* apply to him for a prophecy, to know the event of things, whether and when they might expect a deliverance: *but the law shall perish from the priest;* whose lips should keep knowledge, and from whose mouth the law, the doctrine and interpretation of it, might be expected; but now either there would be no priests at all; or such as were would be ignorant and unlearned, and incapable of instructing the people: *and counsel from the ancients;* with whom it usually is; and which is of great service in a time of distress: this therefore adds greatly to the calamity, that there would be no prophet to tell them what should come to pass; no priest to instruct them; nor senator or wise man to give them counsel.

Ver. 27. *The king shall mourn,* and *the prince shall be clothed with desolation,* &c.] Meaning one and the same person, Zedekiah not being able to save himself and his people; and who falling into the hands of the king of Babylon, his children were slain before him; then his own eyes put out, and he bound in chains, and carried captive to Babylon, Jer. xxxix. 6, 7: *and the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled;* weakened through fear and distress; incapable of business, and unable to help themselves and others; and the more so, when they found their case desperate; which was manifest by the mourning and desolation of their king, in whom their confidence had been placed: *I will do unto them after their way;* or, *for their way*[p]; because of their evil ways and works: *and according to their deserts will I judge them;* take vengeance on them, as the Targum: or, *in their judgments will I judge them*[q]; the same measure they have meted out to others shall be measured out to them, Matt. vii. 1: *and they shall know that I am the Lord;* the only Lord God, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, true and faithful, holy, just, and good.

CHAP. VIII.

THIS chapter contains a vision the prophet had of the idolatry of the Jews, which was the cause of their destruction. The time when, place where, and persons with whom he was, when the hand of the Lord came upon him, are mentioned, ver. 1. then follows a description of the divine Person that appeared to him, ver. 2. and an account is given how he was in a visionary way brought to Jerusalem, and to the temple, where he saw the glory of the God of Israel, and the idolatry of the people, ver. 3, 4. which latter was gradually represented to him; first the image of jealousy in the entry at the gate of the altar northward, ver. 5. then greater abominations through a hole in the wall, by which he saw their idols, in the form of reptiles and four-footed beasts, portrayed on the wall, ver. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. next seventy of the ancients of Israel, among whom were one mentioned by name, offering incense to these idols, ver. 11, 12. after this, greater abominations still are shewed him, at the north of the temple, women weeping for Tammuz, ver. 13, 14. and then again far greater ones, twenty-five men, between the porch and the altar, with their backs to the temple, and their face to the east, worshipping the sun, and putting the branch to the nose, ver. 15, 16, 17. wherefore it is resolved to deal with them in fury, without any mercy, pity, and compassion, ver. 18.

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth* month, *in the fifth day of the month,* &c.] This was the sixth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin; the sixth month was the month Elul, which answers to part of August, and part of September. The Septuagint and Arabic versions wrongly render it, the fifth month. The fifth day of the month is thought to have been the sabbath-day, which seems probable by what follows; this was just a year and two months from the first vision, ch. i. 1, 2. As *I sat in mine house;* in Chaldea, by the river Chebar; he was now sitting, the time of lying on his side, both right and left, being now up, even four hundred and thirty days. It was in the fifth year, and on the fifth of Tammuz, that the first vision was; seven days the prophet sat with them of the captivity at Tel-abib; at the end of which he was ordered to lie on his side; first on his left side three hundred and ninety days, and then on his right side forty days: now reckoning from the middle of Tammuz, to the fifth of Elul in the sixth year, were but, as Kimchi observes, four hundred days; but this being, as another Jewish writer says[r], an intercalated year, by the intercalation of a month, which consisted of thirty days, the whole number was completed, and the prophet was now sitting; or it may be this position is observed, because he was now teaching and instructing the people, which was frequently done sitting; see Matt. v. 1. and the note there; and this in his own private house, being now in captivity, and having neither temple nor synagogue to teach in. *And the elders of Judah sat before me;* to hear the word of the

[o] So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 95. 1.

[p] מדרכם pro viis ipsorum, Calvin; pro via ipsorum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus.

[q] ובמשפטיהם אשפטם et in, *sive* pro judiciis eorum judicabo eos, Calvin, Polanus, Cocceius.

[r] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 26. p. 73. Vid. Kimchi in loc.

Lord from his mouth, the law explained, or any fresh prophecy delivered by him; or to have his advice and counsel in their present circumstances. These were the elders of Judah that were carried captive along with Jehoiachin; though some think they were those that were at Jerusalem, and that all this was only in a visionary way; but the former sense seems most agreeable; seeing this was previous to the vision, and with what goes before describes the time, place, and witnesses of the vision. *That the hand of the Lord fell there upon me;* which the Targum interprets of the spirit of prophecy, which came with power upon him: it denotes the energy and efficacy of the spirit of God, in throwing him into an ecstacy, and acting upon him, and revealing to him the things he did; which are related in the following verses.

Ver. 2. *And then I beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire,* &c.] The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, *behold the likeness of a man;* reading איש, *a man,* for אש, *fire;* but without supposing such a reading, for which there is no foundation, this likeness may very well be understood of the likeness of a man; since mention is made of his loins in the next clause, and of his hand in the following verse; and the description agrees with the appearance of a man in ch. i. 26, 27. it was usual for the son of God, who doubtless is here meant, to appear in a human form; and so Junius and Tremellius supply the words, "and lo a likeness *of a man,* as in the appearance of fire;" it was the form of a fiery man that was seen, as he is further described: *from the appearance of his loins, even downward, fire;* his lower parts, thighs, legs, and feet; expressive either of the light of grace communicated from Christ to his people; or of his fervent love towards them, or flaming zeal for God and his house; or rather of his wrath against an idolatrous people; see Rev. i. 15. a like description is in ch. i. 27. *and from his loins, even upward, as the appearance of brightness;* his upper parts, back, belly, breast, shoulders, arms, head, &c. which may denote his incomprehensible majesty and glory; his glory being the glory of the only-begotten, the brightness of his father's glory, and the express image of his person. The Targum renders both the one and the other part of the description thus, "and I saw, and lo a likeness as the look of "fire, the look of glory, which the eye cannot see, "nor is it possible to look upon it; and beneath the "look of fire, and the look of glory, which the eye "cannot behold, nor is it possible to contemplate it; "and above, as the look of brightness:" *as the colour of amber;* or *chasmal;* which some take to be the name of an angel. The Syriac version is, *as the look of God;* see the note on ch. i. 4, 27.

Ver. 3. *And he put forth the form of an hand,* &c.] That is, he that appeared in the likeness of a man, and with so much glory and splendour, out of the midst of the fire and brightness which were about him, put forth the form of a hand, that looked like a man's hand; for this appearance was not real, only visionary; and this seems to design the spirit of God sent forth by Christ, sometimes called the finger of God, Luke xi. 20. as appears by what follows: *and took me by a lock of mine head;* without hurting him, shewing his power over him; and by this means raising him from his seat, as it seemed to the prophet: *and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and heaven;* took him off of his seat, and out of his house, lifted him up in the air, and carried him through it, as he thought; for this was not real and local; in like manner as the spirit caught away Philip, Acts viii. 39. but in vision, as follows: *and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem;* so it was represented to him in a true vision, which was of God, and not of Satan, that he was carried from Chaldea to Jerusalem; not that he really was, for he was still in Chaldea; and hither in vision was he brought again, and found himself to be when that vision was over, ch. xi. 24, 25. but things so appeared to him, as if he was actually brought to Jerusalem by the power of the spirit of God: *to the door of the inner gate;* not of Jerusalem, but the temple, or rather the court, the inner court; see ch. x. 3. and so it should be rendered *to the door of the gate of the inner* court[*]; and thus it is explained by Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech: *that looketh toward the north;* for there were gates on every side: *where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy;* some graven image, perhaps the image of Baal; so called, because it provoked the Lord to jealousy, Deut. xxxii. 21. Gussetius[t] suggests, that סמל, *Semel,* here may be the same with Semele; who, in the opinion of the Heathens, made Juno jealous.

Ver. 4. *And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there,* &c.] In the temple, between the cherubim, where the Shechinah or the glory of the divine Majesty dwelt; for as yet he had not removed, though provoked to it, and as he afterwards did; or he was here to destroy the idols, and both city and temple, for the idolatry of the people; or this is here mentioned, to shew the baseness and wickedness of the people, that they should place an idol where the Lord himself was: *according to the vision that I saw in the plain;* it was the same glorious Person he saw in the temple whom he had before seen in the plain, ch. ii. 22, 23. and that was the same he had seen in the vision by the river Chebar, ch. i. 3, 28.

Ver. 5. *Then said he unto me, son of man,* &c.] That is, the glorious Person described above in this vision, the glorious God of Israel, seen by the prophet in the temple, he spoke unto him, calling him son of man; a name by which he often goes in this prophecy: *lift up thine eyes now toward the north;* of the mountain of the house without the court, as Jarchi interprets it: *so I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north;* being obedient to the heavenly vision: *and behold northward at the gate of the altar;* at the northern gate of the inner court, where was the altar of burnt-offering, brought by Ahab; to the north of the altar he built in imitation of that at Damascus, 2 Kings xvi. 10—14. and here stood *this image of jealousy in the entry;* or the image of this jealousy; the image before mentioned, which provoked the Lord to jealousy; this

[*] אל פתח שער הפנימית ad ostium portæ interioris, *sub.* atrii, Pagninus, Vatablus, Piscator.

[t] Ebr. Comment. p. 903.

stood at the entry of the northern gate, which led into the inner court, and to the altar.

Ver. 6. *He said furthermore unto me, son of man,* &c.] He continued his speech to the prophet, saying *seest thou what they do?* the idolatrous Jews, who had set up a graven image at the northern gate of the court, where the altar was, and were sacrificing to it: even *the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here:* for to set up an idol where he was, and an altar by his altar, and to sacrifice to Baal, and not to him, or to Baal along with him, or besides him, or to any other idol, were very abominable to the Lord: even to such a degree, *that I should go far from my sanctuary?* be obliged to leave it, not being able to bear such abominable idolatries: or, *that they should go far from my sanctuary*[u]; depart from the true worship and service of it, and fall into idolatry: *but turn thee yet again;* from the north to the south it may be; however, to some other part of the temple: and *thou shalt see greater abominations;* or, *great abominations*[w]; for there is no necessity of rendering it *greater;* but the meaning is, that he should see other great abominations besides what he had seen, than which there could not be any thing well greater.

Ver. 7. *And he brought me to the door of the court,* &c.] Of the inner court, the court of the priests and Levites. Dr. Lightfoot[x] says this was the east gate, and most common way of entrance; and in that gate the sanhedrim used to sit in these times; and there the prophet sees their council-chamber painted about with imagery: *and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall;* of one of the chambers of the priests and Levites, where they lay.

Ver. 8. *Then said he unto me, son of man, dig now in the wall,* &c.] And so make the hole larger; that he might have a fuller view of what was to be seen within the wall: *and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door;* an opening, by which he could go into the cell or chamber, and take a full view of what was to be seen there. All this was visionary, for in reality the prophet did not dig, nor could he, not having any thing to dig with; but so things appeared to his mind in the vision; first a little hole, by which he could discern there was a room; then, by making use of some means, a large door appeared, at which there was an entrance into it.

Ver. 9. *And he said unto me, go in,* &c.] Into the room or chamber the door opened into: *and behold the wicked abominations they do here;* the idolatries there committed, wicked in themselves, and abominable to God.

Ver. 10. *So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things,* &c.] As beetles and others, worshipped for gods: *and abominable beasts;* unclean ones; not only oxen, but dogs and cats, and other impure creatures; for such were the gods of the Egyptians, from whom the Jews took their deities: *and all the idols of the house of Israel;* which were many, even as numerous as their cities: *portrayed upon the wall round about;* the pictures of them were drawn and placed around the wall of the room or chamber; and where they were worshipped by the priests and Levites, and members of the sanhedrim; and this was not in one chamber only, but in many, as appears from ver. 12.

Ver. 11. *And there stood before them,* &c.] Before the pictures, as the Vulgate Latin version expresses it, praying, sacrificing, and offering incense unto them: *seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel;* the whole sanhedrim, or great court of judicature among the Jews, as Kimchi; or at least there is an allusion to that number, which were appointed in Moses' time to be officers over the people, and govern and direct them, Numb. xi. 16. which shews how sadly depraved and corrupted the state was, that not the common people only, but the civil magistrates, the chief rulers and governors, were given to idolatry; and those that should have taught the people the right way led them wrong; and it is still a further aggravation of their crime that they should do this in the chambers of the priests and Levites, where they ought not to have been: *and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan;* who was either the prince of the sanhedrim, or at least a person of great note and esteem; and shews the corruption to be general, from the least to the greatest: Shaphan was a scribe in Josiah's time, who had a son named Ahikam, perhaps the father of this, 2 Kings xxii. 3, 12. in ch. xi. 2, he is said to be the son of Azur, and one of the princes of the people: *with every man his censer in his hand;* to offer incense to the idols portrayed on the wall; and which they did, for it follows: *and a thick cloud of incense went up;* there were many that offered; and perhaps they offered a large quantity, being very liberal and profuse in this kind of devotion to their idols.

Ver. 12. *Then said he unto me, son of man, hast thou seen,* &c.] Here should be a stop, as the accent *segolta* shews; hast thou taken notice of, hast thou considered, what thou hast seen, the amazing shocking abominations committed by these men? it follows, and the question is to be repeated, *hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark?* their deeds being evil, such as will not bear the light, of which they had reason to be ashamed before men; and which they imagined would not be seen by the Lord, though the darkness and the light are both alike to him: *in the chambers of his imagery?* the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it, *in his hidden* or *secret chamber;* and the Vulgate Latin version, *in the hidden place of his bedchamber.* The Targum is, "in the chamber of the house of his bed;" in his bedchamber; that is, in those chambers of the temple, which belonged to the priests and Levites, on the walls of which were portrayed the images and pictures of their gods. Here they had their secret rites or mysteries performed, in imitation of the Heathens; who had the several mysteries of their religion privately observed; to which none were admitted but those that were initiated into them; as those of Osiris among the Egyptians; of Ceres with the Grecians; and

[u] לרחקה מעל מקדשי ut longius recedant, vel abeant, sub Israelitæ a sanctuario meo, Vatablus; and to this sense are the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions; ad longe recedendum, Coccéius.

[w] תועבות גדלות abominationes magnas, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.

[x] Prospect of the Temple, c. 28. p. 2018.

of Bona Dea among the Romans; as Junius observes. Though some interpret this of the imaginations of their minds, according to which they framed to themselves deities, and a form of worship. *For they say, the Lord seeth not, the Lord hath forsaken the earth*: this they gave as a reason of their idolatry, because the Lord took no notice of them, did not help them when in distress, but, as they concluded, had forsaken them; therefore they betook themselves to the gods of the Egyptians, Syrians, and other nations, for their assistance and protection: for these words are not the language of Epicureans, or such who deny the providence of God in general; who think that God takes no notice of the lower world, only of the upper one, as Kimchi and others interpret them; for these elders of Israel were not so ignorant and stupid as to deny the general providence of God, only distrusted his particular care of them.

Ver. 13. *He said also unto me, turn thee yet again, &c.*] Towards the north, as before: and *thou shalt see greater abominations that they do*; or, *the great abominations*; for so the words may be strictly rendered; nor does it appear that what follows, though great abominations, were greater than the creeping things, four-footed beasts, and other idols, or dunghil-gods, portrayed upon the walls, which the elders of Israel burnt incense to.

Ver. 14. *Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house, which was towards the north, &c.*] By *the Lord's house* no doubt is meant the temple, which the Targum here calls the house of the sanctuary of the Lord; that gate of the temple (for the temple had several gates) which was to the north was the gate called Teri or Tedi, and was very little used [y]. In this part of the temple were the sacrifices offered; and therefore it was the greater abomination to commit idolatry where the Lord was more solemnly worshipped: *and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz*: they were not in the court of the women, where they should have been; but at the northern gate, near the place of sacrifice; and they were sitting there, which none but the kings of the house of Judah, and of the family of David, were allowed in the temple [z]; but, what was the greatest abomination, they were weeping for Tammuz. Jarchi says this was an image which they heated inwardly, and its eyes were of lead; and these being melted with the heat, it seemed to weep; wherefore (the women) said, it asks for an offering: but not the idol, but the women, wept. Kimchi relates various interpretations of it; "some "(he says) expound it by an antiphrasis, *making Tammuz glad*; in the month of Tammuz they made a "feast to the idol, and the women came to make him "glad: others say, that with great diligence they "brought water to the eyes of the idol called Tammuz, and it wept; signifying that it desired they "would worship it: others interpret the word Tammuz as signifying *burnt*; (from the words in Dan. "iii. 19. לְמֵזֵא לְאַתּוּנָא, *to heat the furnace*;) as if you "should say, they wept for him, because he was burnt; "for they burnt their sons and daughters in the fire, "and the women wept for them. He further observes, "that Maimonides [a] writes, that he found written in "one of the books of the ancient idolaters, that there "was a man of the idolatrous prophets, whose name "was Tammuz; who called to a certain king, and commanded him to worship the seven stars, and the "twelve signs of the zodiac, for which the king put "him to a violent death; and, the same night he died, "all the images from the ends of the earth gathered "together to the temple of Babylon, to a golden image "which was the image of the sun; and this image "was hanging between the heavens and the earth, "and it fell into the midst of the temple, and so all "the images round about it; and it declared unto "them what had happened to Tammuz the prophet; "and all the images wept and lamented all that night; "and when it was morning, they all fled to their temples at the ends of the earth; and this became an "everlasting statute to them, that at the beginning of "the first day of the month Tammuz, every year, "they lament and weep for Tammuz; and there are "others that expound Tammuz the name of a beast "which they worship;" but, leaving these interpretations, Tammuz was either the Adonis of the Grecians; and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it Adonis; who was a young man beloved by Venus, and, being killed by a boar, his death was lamented by her; and, in respect to the goddess, an anniversary solemnity was kept by men and women lamenting his death, especially by women. So Pausanias, speaking of a certain place, there (says he) the women of the Argives (a people in Greece) mourn for Adonis [b]. Lucian [c] gives a particular account of this ceremony, as performed at Byblus, a city in Phœnicia, not far from Judea; from whence the Jews might have borrowed this custom. "I have seen (says he), in Byblus, a "large temple of Venus Byblia, where they performed "the rites unto Adonis, and I was a spectator of "them. The Byblians say the affair relating to Adonis (or his death) by a boar happened in their "country; and, in memory of it, every year they beat "themselves, lament and offer sacrifice, and great "mourning goes through the whole country; and "when they beat themselves and mourn, they sacrifice to Adonis as dead; but the day following they "pretend he is alive; and they shave their heads, as "the Egyptians do at the death of Apis;" and indeed it is thought by some that this Tammuz is the Osiris of the Egyptians; the same with Mizraim, the first king of Egypt, who, being slain in battle, his wife Isis ordered that he should be worshipped as a god, and a yearly lamentation made for him; and indeed Osiris and Adonis seem to be one and the same, only in different nations called by different names. Mention is made in Plato [d] of Thamus, a king that reigned at Thebes over all Egypt, and was the god called Ammon; no doubt the same with this Tammuz; and who is here called, in the Syriac and Arabic versions, Thamuz or Tamuz; he seems to be the same with Ham;

[y] Misn. Middot, c. 2. sect. 3.
[z] Maimon. Hilchot Melachim, c. 2. sect. 4.
[a] Moreh Nevochim. par. 3. c. 29. p. 426.
[b] Corinthiaca, sive l. 2. p. 121.
[c] De Dea Syria. Vid. Theocriti, Ἀδωνιάζουσαι, Idyll. 15.
[d] Phædrus, tom. 3. p. 274. Ed. Serran.

and Egypt was called the land of Ham, Psal. cv. 27. and it is most probable the Jews borrowed this piece of idolatry from the Egyptians their neighbours; with whom they were now very familiar, and from whom they expected help against the Chaldeans; but as there were such shocking obscenities used in this idolatrous service, it is most amazing that the Jewish women, who had been instructed in the law and worship of God, should ever go into it. Gussetius[e] thinks that Bacchus, the god of wine, is meant; and gives several reasons for it; and among the rest observes, that in the fourth month, called Tammuz from him, the vine was forming in ripe grapes; near the beginning of a fifth month, it was pressed out, and tunned up; and by the next month, having done hissing, it was stopped up, which represented him buried; and for which the weeping was in this month.

Ver. 15. *Then said he unto me, hast thou seen this, O son of man?* &c.] This shocking piece of idolatry, women weeping for Tammuz: *turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these;* or, *great abominations besides these*[f].

Ver. 16. *And he brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house,* &c.] The court of the priests, where they offered sacrifice, and into which none might come but themselves: *and, behold, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar:* the porch that led into the temple, and the brasen altar, the altar of burnt-offerings, which was a very sacred place, and reckoned more holy than the court of the priests[g]: were *about five-and-twenty men;* the number, more or less, not being exactly known; who they were, whether the priests or princes of the people, is not certain; probably some of both: *with their backs towards the temple of the Lord;* that is, the most holy place, which they were obliged to, in order to do what is afterwards affirmed of them; for the sanctuary was built to the west, that in their worship the Jews might not look to the east, as the Gentiles did; wherefore these men, that they might imitate the Gentiles in their idolatry, turned their backs to the most holy place; which is an aggravation of their impiety; casting the utmost contempt on God, his worship, and the place of it: *and their faces towards the east;* when the sun rises: *and they worshipped the sun towards the east;* as many nations did, though forbidden the Jews by an express law of God, Deut. iv. 19. and xvii. 2, 3. yet this they fell into, and had horses and chariots devoted to this idolatry; see 2 Kings xxi. 3, 5. and xxiii. 5, 11. The word rendered *worshipped* is compounded of two words; one signifying to *corrupt*, the other to *worship*, shewing that, by worshipping the sun, they corrupted themselves, and the house of God; and so the Targum renders it, "and, lo, they corrupted themselves, worshipping in the east the sun;" and so it is explained in the Jerusalem Talmud, "they corrupted the temple, and worshipped the sun;" but Kimchi thinks the word[h] consists of the verb in the past tense, and of the participle; and that the sense is, when the prophet saw the men worshipping the sun to the east, as amazed at it, put this question to those that went in, *do ye worship also*[i]? so Ben Melech.

Ver. 17. *Then he said unto me, hast thou seen this, O son of man?* &c.] Took notice of and considered this piece of idolatry, worshipping the sun toward the east: *is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here?* could these things, which are such dreadful abominations, committed here in the temple, be reckoned light things by them, as surely they cannot? yet these are not all that they have done: *for they have filled the land with violence:* with rapine and oppression; doing injury to the poor and needy, the widow and the fatherless, in all places: *and have returned to provoke me to anger:* by other instances of idolatry: *and, lo, they put the branch to their nose:* a laurel, or olive, or vine branch, which idolaters carried in their hands, and put to their nose, in honour of the idol they worshipped; in like manner as they kissed their hand at the sight of the sun, Job xxxi. 26, 27. and which the Jews did in imitation of the Heathen. This is one of the eighteen places in which there is *tikkun sopherim*, or a *correction of the scribes:* who, instead of *my nose*, direct to read *their nose;* hence the words are differently interpreted by the Jewish commentators; who, by זמורה, rendered *branch*, think an ill smell is meant; arising either from their posteriors, their back parts being towards the temple; or from the incense which they offered up to their idols; so Kimchi and Menachem in Jarchi; agreeably to which Fortunatus Scacchus[k] understands this, not of any branch used by idolaters, which they put to the nose of their idol, or their own, for the honour of that; but of the censer which the Israelites used, contrary to the command of God, and which they put to their nose to enjoy a forbidden smell; see ch. xvi. 18. and xxiii. 41. but Gussetius[l] gives another sense of the words, rendering them, *they send forth a branch to their anger;* the Israelites are compared to a vine, as in Isa. v. 1. sending forth bad branches, idolatrous actions, as here in this chapter; and to these bad branches they sent forth or added another, even anger against God, the prophets, true believers, and right worshippers of God; and therefore he also would deal in fury and wrath, as in the next verse; so Dr. Lightfoot[m] renders it, "*they send the branch to my wrath*, or "*to their own wrath;* that is, to what they have "deserved; as if it was said, in the same manner "that any one puts wood to the fire, the branch "of the wild vine, that it may the quicklier be "burnt; so do these put the branch to my wrath, that "it may burn the more fiercely; hence it follows, "*therefore will I also deal in fury,*" &c. The Targum is, "and, lo, they bring shame (or confusion) to their "faces:" what they do turns to their own ruin and destruction: as follows:

[e] Ebr. Comment. p. 903. So Luther apud Dieteric. Antiqu. Bibl. par. 2. p. 130.
[f] תועבות גדלות מאלה abominationes magnas præter istas, Calvin.
[g] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 7. fol. 184. 4.
[h] משתחויתם.

[i] Vid. Hottinger. Smegma Orientale, l. 2. par. 1. c. 24. p. 154. who rather is of opinion that the word is compounded of the participle and the particle את, or the pronoun אתם.
[k] Sacror. Eleaochr. Myrothec. l. 2. p. 530.
[l] Ebr. Comment. p. 231.
[m] Heb. & Talmud. Exercitat. in Johan. xv. 6.

Ver. 18. *Therefore will I also deal in fury*, &c.] Being provoked by such abominable idolatries, and such horrid insolence, and most contemptuous treatment: *mine eye shall not spare: neither will I have pity*: see ch. v. 11. and vii. 4, 9: *and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice*; very pressingly and earnestly for help, being in great distress: yet *will I not hear them*: as they turned their backs on him, he'll turn a deaf ear to them, and not regard their cries. The Targum is, "they shall pray before me "with a great voice, and I will not receive their "prayer."

CHAP. IX.

IN this chapter is contained a vision, representing the destruction of the idolatrous Jews, and the preservation of the godly that were among them, in which different persons were employed; they that were concerned in the destruction of the idolaters are described by their office; they had charge over the city; by their form and appearance, men; by their number, six; by the quarter from whence they came, the way of the higher gate northward; and by the weapons they had in their hands, slaughter-ones; and by their place and posture, standing beside the brasen altar, ver. 1, 2. among these were one clothed in linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side; to whom the glorious God of Israel, who was removed from the cherub to the threshold of the house, gave orders to go through the city of Jerusalem, and mark those that mourned over the abominations of it, ver. 3, 4. and the rest he ordered to go through the city, and slay all of every age, and sex, and state, except those that had the mark; beginning at the sanctuary, and filling the courts with the slain; which orders were obeyed, ver. 5, 6, 7. upon which the prophet expostulates with the Lord, and intercedes for the people; but is not heard, because of the abounding of iniquity among them; their frequent shedding of blood; their perversion of justice; and their abominable infidelity and atheism; for which reasons he was determined to shew them no mercy, ver. 8, 9, 10. and the chapter is closed with a report made by the man clothed with linen, that he had done as was commanded him, ver. 11.

Ver. 1. *He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice*, &c.] That is, the glory of the Lord God of Israel, whom the prophet saw in the temple, and who directed him from place to place, and shewed him all the abominations committed there: this loud voice of the Lord was not so much to excite the attention of the prophet, as to call together the ministers of his vengeance; and to shew the greatness of his indignation, and the vehemence of his wrath, which was stirred up by the sins of the people: *saying, cause them that have the charge over the city to draw near*: or, "who were "appointed over the city," as the Targum; that is, the city of Jerusalem; by whom are meant either the ministering angels, who had been the guardians of it, but now were to be employed another way; or the princes of the Chaldean army, who had a charge against the city to destroy it; see Isa. x. 6. Jer. xxxiv. 21. The Syriac version is, *draw near, ye avengers of the city*; and the Septagint and Arabic versions are, *the vengeance of the city draws nigh*: *even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand*: weapons of war, as bows and arrows, sword and spear; see Jer. vi. 22, 23.

Ver. 2. *And, behold, six men*, &c.] Either angels in the form of men; or the generals of Nebuchadnezzar's army, as Kimchi interprets it: whose names are, Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim, Rab-saris, Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, Jer. xxxix. 3. these six executioners of God's vengeance are, in the Talmud[o], called "wrath, anger, fury, destruction, breach, and con- "sumption:" *came from the way of the higher gate*, Kimchi observes, from the Rabbins, that this is the eastern gate, called the higher or upper gate, because it was above the court of the Israelites. Maimonides[n] says, the upper gate is the gate Nicanor; and why is it called the upper gate? because it was above the court of the women; see 2 Kings xv. 35: *which lieth toward the north*: where were the image of jealousy, and the women weeping for Tammuz, and other idolatrous practices were committed; which were the cause of the coming of these destroyers: moreover, the Chaldean army with its generals came out of the north; for Babylon lay north or north-east of Jerusalem; and so this gate, as Kimchi says, was north-east; and he adds, and Babylon was north-east of the land of Israel; see Jer. i. 13, 14. and iv. 6, 7: *and every man a slaughter-weapon in his hand*: as ordered ver. 1. a different word is here used; it signifies a hammer, with which rocks are broken in pieces, as the above-mentioned Jewish writer observes. The Septuagint render it an axe or hatchet: *and one man among them*: not one of the six, but who made a seventh. The Jews say this was Gabriel[p]; but this was not a created angel, as they; nor the Holy Spirit, as Cocceius; but the Son of God, in a human form; he was among the six, at the head of them, as their leader and commander; he was but one, they six; one Saviour, and six destroyers: *was clothed with linen*: not in the habit of a warrior, but of a priest; who, as such, had made atonement for the sins of his people, and intercession for them; and this may also denote the purity of his human nature, and his unspotted righteousness, the fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints: *and with a writer's inkhorn by his side*; or *at his loins*[q]; not a slaughter-weapon, as the rest; but a writer's inkhorn; hence Kimchi takes him to be the king of Babylon's scribe; but a greater is here meant; even he who took down the names of God's elect in the book of life; and who takes an account, and keeps a book of the words, and even thoughts, of his people; and also of their sighs, groans, and tears; see Mal. iii.

[o] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 55. 1.
[n] Hilchot Cele Hamikdash, c. 7. sect. 6.

[p] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 77. 1. & Glass. in ib.
[q] במתניו in lumbis suis, Paguinus, Montanus, &c.

16. Psal. lvi. 8. but now his business was to mark his people, and distinguish them from others, in a providential way; and keep and preserve them from the general ruin and destruction that was coming upon Jerusalem: or, *a girdle on his lions*, as the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions render it; and so was prepared and fit for business; which sense of the word is approved of by Castel[r]; and he asks, what has an inkhorn to do at a man's loins? but it should be observed, that it was the custom of the eastern people to carry inkhorns at their sides, and particularly in their girdles, as the Turks do now; who not only fix their knives and poniards in them, as Dr. Shaw[s] relates; but the *hojias*, that is, the writers and secretaries, hang their inkhorns in them; and by whom it is observed, that that part of these inkhorns which passes between the girdle and the tunic, and holds their pens, is long and flat; but the vessel for the ink, which rests upon the girdle, is square, with a lid to clasp over it: *and they went in;* to the temple, all seven: *and stood beside the brasen altar;* the altar of burnt-offering, so called to distinguish it from the altar of incense, which was of gold; here they stood not to offer sacrifice, but waiting for their orders, to take vengeance for the sins committed in the temple, and at this altar; near to which stood the image of jealousy, ch. viii. 5.

Ver. 3. *And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was,* &c.] That is, the glorious God of Israel; or the glorious Shechinah, and divine Majesty, which dwelt between the cherubim over the mercy-seat in the most holy place, removed from thence, as a token of his being about to depart from the temple, which in a short time would be destroyed. The Targum is, " the glory of the " God of Israel departed in the cherub on which he " dwelt, in the house of the holy of holies;" the cherubim removed with him, and were his chariot in which he rode; see ch. x. 18. and xi. 22: *to the threshold of the house;* of the holy of holies, as Jarchi interprets it; and so was nearer to the brasen altar, where the seven men stood, to give them their orders; of which an account follows: *and he called to the man clothed with linen,* &c.; he, being the principal person, is called first; and his business being to preserve the Lord's people shews that this was the first care of God.

Ver. 4. *And the Lord said unto him,* &c.] This shews that a divine Person is meant by the glory of the God of Israel: *go through the midst of the city;* that is, as it is next explained, *through the midst of Jerusalem;* the city the six men had the charge over or against, ver. 1: *and set a mark upon the foreheads;* not the Hebrew letter ת, as some say, because in the form of a cross, and so signifying salvation by the cross of Christ; for this letter has no such form, neither in the characters used by the Jews, nor by the Samaritans, at least in the present character; though Origen and Jerom on the place say that the letter *tau* had the form of a cross in the letters the Samaritans used in their time; and this is defended by Walton[t], who observes, that Azariah in his Hebrew alphabet gives a double figure, one like that which is in present use, and another in the form of a cross, called St. Andrew's cross, and as it appears in some shekels; and in the Vatican alphabet, which Angelus F. Roccha published, the last letter has the form of a cross; as have the Ethiopic and Coptic alphabets, which, it is certain, sprung from the ancient Hebrew; and so Montfaucon says[u], in some Samaritan coins, the letter *thau* has the form of a cross; which, if Scaliger had met with, he says he would never have opposed the testimonies of Origen and Jerom; though, after all, it seems to be no other than the form of the Greek X; and so the Talmudists say[w] the high-priest was anointed on his forehead in the same form: some think this letter was the mark, because it is the first letter of the word תורה, *the law;* as if it pointed out such who were obedient to it; or of the word תחיה, *thou shalt live.* It is a Rabbinical fancy, mentioned by Kimchi[x], that Gabriel had orders to write the letter ת in ink upon the foreheads of the righteous, and in blood upon the foreheads of the wicked; in the one it signified תחיה, *thou shalt live,* and in the other תמות, *thou shalt die:* but, as Calvin observes, rather, if this letter could be thought to be meant, the reason of it was, because it is the last letter of the alphabet; and so may signify, that the Lord's people marked with it are the last among men, or the filth of the world; or that such who persevere to the end shall be saved: but the word signifies, not a letter, but a mark or sign; and so it is interpreted in the Septuagint version, and by the Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, and others; and denotes the distinction the Lord had made by his grace between them and others; and now by his power and providence in the protection of them; for the Lord knows them that are his, and will preserve them. The allusion is either to the marking of servants in their foreheads, by which they were known who they belonged to, Rev. vii. 3. or to the sprinkling of the posts of the Israelites' houses with blood, when the first-born of Egypt were destroyed, Exod. xii. 22, 23: *of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof;* the *abominations* were those abominable idolatries mentioned in the preceding chapter, and those dreadful immoralities hinted at in ver. 9. all which were grieving and distressing to godly minds, because they were contrary to the nature and will of God; transgressions of his righteous law; and on account of which his name was dishonoured, and his ways blasphemed and evil-spoken of; for these they sighed and groaned in private, and mourned and lamented in public; bearing their testimony against them with bitter expressions of grief and sorrow, by groans, words, and tears; and such as these are taken notice of by the Lord; he comforts those that mourn in Zion, and preserves them.

Ver. 5. *And to the others he said in mine hearing,* &c.] To the other six men that had the slaughter-weapons in their hands: *go ye after him through the city;* that is, after the man clothed with linen; for he was sent out first to take care of the righteous, and

[r] Lexic. Polyglott. col. 3393.
[s] Travels, p. 227. Ed. 2.
[t] Supplementum de Sicl. Formis, p. 37. 3. Prolegom. 3. de lingua Hebr. sect. 36.

[u] Palæograph. Græc. l. 2. c. 2.
[w] T. Bab. Ceritot, c. 1. fol. 5. 2.
[x] Vid. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 55. 1.

preserve them; and the rest were not suffered to stir till he was gone; and then they are bid to go after him. The Syriac version is, "to them that were with "him he said to them before me, go through the city "after me;" as if these were the words of the man clothed with linen to the other six; and so the Arabic version; but the other is the true reading, and gives the right sense, as the following words shew: *and smite*: the inhabitants of the city: *let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity*: not that the Chaldeans were inclined to mercy and pity, for they were a cruel and barbarous people; but this is said to shew the resentment of God against the sins of the Jews; and that it was his will they should act the severe part they did.

Ver. 6. *Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women*, &c.] All of them objects of compassion, because of their age and sex: and yet none to be spared; and which orders were exactly obeyed; see 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17: *but come not near any man on whom is the mark*: these were not to be slain; and though some were carried captive, as Daniel, and others; yet it was for their good and God's glory: see Rev. vii. 3, 4. and ix. 3, 4: *and begin at my sanctuary*; the temple, the house of God, and the priests and Levites that dwelt there. The Septuagint version is, *begin at my saints*: those who professed themselves to be the saints of the Lord, and were separated and devoted to his service; and so the Rabbins say [y], don't read במקדשי, *at my sanctuary*: but במקודשי, *at those that sanctify me*, or *my sanctified ones*: which they interpret of those that keep the whole law, from *aleph* to *tau*: see 1 Pet. iv. 17: *then they began at the ancient men which were before the house*: the seventy elders of Israel, who offered incense to the idols portrayed upon the walls of the chambers of the temple, ch. viii. 10, 11. these they slew first.

Ver. 7. *And he said unto them, defile the house*, &c.] The temple; don't be afraid of slaying any person in it, for fear of defiling it; they have defiled it with their abominations, and now do you defile it with their blood: *and fill the courts with the slain*: the court of the priests, and the court of the Israelites, and the court of the women, and all the chambers where the priests and Levites were, and had their images portrayed: *go ye forth*: from the brasen altar by which they stood, and out of the temple, after they had done their business there, and had slain all they should: *and they went forth, and slew in the city*; they went out of the temple, and slew in the city all but those that had the mark.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass, while they were slaying them*, &c.] That were in the city: *and I was left*; in the temple; and the only one that was left there, the rest were slain; for there were none marked in the temple, only in the city, ver. 4: *that I fell upon my face*: as a supplicant, with great humility: *and cried, and said*; being greatly distressed with this awful providence: *ah, Lord God! wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel*: the ten tribes had been carried captive before; there only remained the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and these were now threatened with an utter destruction: *in thy pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem?* shewn in the destruction of men, both in the city and temple, by famine, pestilence, and sword.

Ver. 9. *Then he said unto me*, &c.] In order to satisfy the prophet, and make him easy, and shew the equity and justice of the divine proceedings: *the iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceeding great*; it can't be well conceived or expressed how great it is; it abounded and superabounded: this is the answer in general, but in particular it follows: *and the land is full of blood*; of murders, as the Targum interprets it; of shedding of innocent blood; and even of all atrocious and capital crimes: *and the city full of perverseness*; or of perversion of judgment, as the Targum; the city of Jerusalem, where was the highest court of judicature, where the sanhedrim of seventy-one sat to do justice and judgment, have nothing but perversion and injustice: *for they say, the Lord hath forsaken the earth, and the Lord seeth not*; does not concern himself with human affairs, and takes no notice of what is done below; and, having imbibed such atheistical principles, were hardened in sin, and gave themselves over to all iniquity; having no restraints upon them from the consideration of the providence of God, and his government of the world: or else the sense is, that the Lord had withheld his mercy and favours from them; and therefore they shewed no regard to him, and looked upon all their evils and calamities as fortuitous events, and not as ordered by him as punishments for their sins.

Ver. 10. *And as for me also*, &c.] As they have not spared the poor and the needy, the widow and the fatherless, but have perverted their judgment, and shed innocent blood: *mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity*, but *I will recompence their way upon their head*; deal with them by the law of retaliation, and reward them according to their deserts; see ch. vii. 4.

Ver. 11. *And, behold, the man clothed with linen, which had the inkhorn by his side*, &c.] Ver. 2. to whom the orders were given to mark the mourners in the city, ver. 4. The Syriac version is, *then I saw the man*, &c. which must direct him to observe and call to mind the distinguishing goodness of God to his own people: *reported the matter, saying, I have done as thou hast commanded me*; meaning that the righteous were marked, and had been preserved, whilst the others were slain. Christ, as man and Mediator, sustains the character of a servant; as such he has commands enjoined him, which he has obeyed; he has done all he was to do; he has fulfilled the whole will of God, and wrought out the complete salvation of his people; a report of which he made when here on earth, John xvii. 4. and will do again at the last day; when all his people will be gathered in, and he shall deliver the kingdom to the Father, and present them all to him, having been kept by his power, saying, *lo, I and the children thou hast given me*; when all will be done as was commanded, and he undertook, and the report made accordingly. Ben Melech observes, that the Keri, or marginal reading is, "according to all which "thou hast commanded me;" as if he should say, there is nothing wanting of all that was commanded.

[y] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 4. 1.

CHAP. X.

In this chapter is a vision, very much like that in the first chapter, with some difference, and with a different view, the design of it being to represent the wrath of God against Jerusalem, and his departure from the city and temple. A throne much like that in ch. i. 26, is described ver. 1. orders are given from it to scatter coals over the city, ver. 2. the situation of the cherubim when these orders were given, ver. 3. the removal of the glory of the Lord from the cherub to the threshold of the house, and the consequences of it; the house filled with smoke; the court with the brightness of the Lord's glory; and the sound of the cherubim's wings heard to the outer court, as the voice of God, ver. 4, 5. the orders of taking and scattering fire over the city executed, and the manner in which they were, ver. 6, 7. a description of the cherubim and the wheels, much like that in the first chapter, ver. 8—17. the departure of the glory of God from the threshold to the east gate of the Lord's house, with the motion of the cherubim and wheels along with him, ver. 18, 19. and the chapter is concluded with observing, that the cherubim are the same with the living creatures seen in the vision of the first chapter, and had the same form, likeness, and motion, ver. 20, 21, 22.

Ver. 1. *Then I looked, and, behold,* &c.] After the vision of the destruction of the greater part of the inhabitants of Jerusalem by the six men with slaughter-weapons, and of the preservation of a few by the man clothed with linen; another vision is seen by the prophet, in some things like to that he saw, of which there is an account in the first chapter; though in some circumstances different, and exhibited with a different view; partly to represent the destruction of Jerusalem by fire, and partly the Lord's removal from it, before or at that time: *in the firmament that* was *above the head of the cherubim:* the same with the living creatures, ch. i. 22, 26. where the firmament or expanse of heaven is said to be over their heads, as here; see the note there: *there appeared over them as* it were *a sapphire-stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne:* see the note on ch. i. 26.

Ver. 2. *And he spake unto the man clothed with linen,* &c.] That is, the God of Israel, or the glory of the Lord, that sat upon the throne before described; he gave orders to the man clothed in linen, who appears in another character, and represents the Chaldean or Roman army: *go in between the wheels,* even *under the cherub:* the singular for the plural, the *cherubim;* the wheels were under these; the churches are under their ministers, their pastors, guides, and governors; or rather, since the wheels were by the cherubim, it should be rendered, as by some, *unto the cherub,* or *cherubim*[a]: *and fill thine hand with coals of fire from between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city:* these *coals of fire* were an emblem of the wrath of God against Jerusalem, and of the destruction of it by fire; and these being fetched from between the cherubim, shew that the cause of this wrath and ruin was the ill treatment of the prophets of the Lord; see 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15—19. as the destruction of the same city afterwards by the Romans was owing, as to the rejection and killing of the Messiah, so to the prosecution of his apostles, 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16: *and he went in my sight,* in the sight of the prophet, as it appeared to him in vision; he saw him go in, as he was ordered, between the wheels, and under the cherubim; but as yet he did not see him take the coals of fire, and much less scatter them; these were afterwards done, as related in the other part of the vision.

Ver. 3. *Now the cherubim stood on the right side of the house,* &c.] According to the Targum, it was the south side of the house; and so Jarchi interprets it; opposite to the north, where the gross idolatries were committed, ch. viii. 3, 5, 14. standing at the greatest distance from them, and bearing their testimony against them: *when the man went in;* they stood as it were in a levee, through which the man passed, waiting upon him; paying a respect to him; assenting to what he did; and approving of it: this circumstance is mentioned, because they were not always in this position, only at this time; nor did they continue so; we afterwards hear of their motion: *and the cloud filled the inner court;* the court of the priests, not as a token of God's presence, as at the dedication of the temple; but rather of judicial blindness and darkness, which the people of the Jews were left unto.

Ver. 4. *Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub,* &c.] Or, *cherubim;* those that were upon the mercy-seat, between which the Shechinah or glorious majesty of God dwelt, in the most holy place: this is a token and intimation of the Lord's leaving of the temple; and a little before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, to which this vision chiefly, if not altogether, refers, a voice was heard in the temple, "let "us go hence[b]:" and stood *over the threshold of the house;* either of the holy of holies, from whence he was removing; or rather of the holy place, the court of the priests, the inward court, and so open to the outward court, and view of the people in it: *and the house was filled with the cloud;* the temple, being forsaken of God, was filled with darkness; as an emblem of that blindness which is come upon the Jews, and will continue on them till the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in: *and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory;* either the inward court, as the glory of the Lord passed through it, from the holy of holies; or rather the outward court, of which mention is made in the next verse; the glory of the Lord being on the threshold of the house, which looked towards that, and so enlightened it. This outward court signifies the Gentiles; who, when the Lord removed from the Jewish nation and people, were favoured with the

[a] אל תחת לכרוב in locum cerubinorum, *vel* cheruborum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; ad cherubim, Tigurine version; which is approved by Noldius, p. 84. No. 398.

[b] Josephus de Bello Judæorum, l. 6. c. 5. sect. 3.

glorious light of the Gospel, and ordinances of Christ; whereby they were enlightened, and filled with the knowledge of the Lord; with the knowledge of him, who is the brightness of his father's glory, and the express image of his person; so through the fall of the Jews salvation came to the Gentiles, Rom. xi. 11, 12.

Ver. 5. *And the sound of the cherubim's wings was heard even to the utter court*, &c.] Or outward court. The sound of the Gospel, which is a joyful sound; a sound of love, grace, and mercy; of life, liberty, peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; the sound of this in the swift ministry of the apostles, signified by the *cherubim's wings*, went into all the earth, and throughout the whole Gentile world; by which many souls were quickened and enlightened; many churches were formed; and the glory of the Lord, being revealed, was seen by all flesh; and the whole world was filled with the brightness of the Lord's glory, as it will be again, and more abundantly, in the latter day: and this sound was *as the voice of the Almighty God when he speaketh*; the Gospel is as thunder, which is the voice of God; and the ministers of it are *Boanergeses*, sons of thunder: it shakes the conscience; shews men their danger; and points at the Saviour: it is not the word of man, but in deed and in truth the word of God: it is the voice of Christ, who is the Almighty; and it appears to be so, by its powerful effects, when attended with a divine energy, in quickening dead sinners; enlightening dark minds; unstopping deaf ears; softening hard hearts; and turning men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God; it is so when God speaks in it, and by it; when it comes not in word only, but in the Holy Ghost, and in power.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass*, that *when he had commanded the man clothed with linen*, &c.] After the orders were given by him that was upon the throne to the man thus described: *saying, take fire from between the wheels, from between the cherubim*; as in ver. 2: *then he went in*; immediately, into the place where the wheels and cherubim were; even under the firmament of heaven, and the throne that was in it: *and stood beside the wheels*, or *wheel*; to see what it was, as Kimchi thinks; or rather in order to go in between them, as he was bid to do, ver. 2.

Ver. 7. *And one cherub stretched forth his hand from between the cherubim*, &c.] One of the four living creatures, or cherubim, put out his hand from among the rest: *unto the fire that* was *between the cherubim*; so fire is said to go up and down among them, ch. i. 13. to which the reference is here: *and took* thereof, *and put it into the hands of him that was clothed with linen*: denoting, as before observed, that it was for the ill usage of the ministers of God's word that wrath came upon the people of the Jews, and the destruction of their city by fire; so wrath will come upon antichrist, and the antichristian states, for their usage of the ministers and churches of Christ, and in consequence of the prayers, and by the instigation of such persons; see Rev. vi. 9, 10, 11. and xviii. 4—7. so one of the four beasts or living creatures, the same with the cherubim here, is said to give to the seven angels seven golden vials, full of the wrath of God, Rev. xv. 7: *who took it*, and *went out*; took the fire, and went out of the temple, and scattered it upon the city of Jerusalem; so representing the Chaldean, or rather the Roman army, burning it with fire; see Matt. xxii. 7. where they are called the armies of the King of kings.

Ver. 8. *And there appeared in the cherubim*, &c.] The Septuagint version is, *I saw the cherubim*; and so the Syriac version, *I saw in the cherubim*; what follows: *the form of a man's hand under their wings*: one of them put forth his hand, which was seen by the prophet, as declared in the preceding verse; but this was only the *form* of one; which is observed to shew that it is not to be taken literally, but as seen in the vision of prophecy; and being under their wings denotes secrecy and privacy: and the whole being applied to the ministers of the word is expressive of their activity and diligence in the work of the Lord, both in private and in public; and that they make no boast nor shew of their works and labours, and ascribe nothing to themselves, but all to the grace of God that is with them, 1 Cor. xv. 10. see the note on ch. i. 8.

Ver. 9. *And when I looked, behold, the four wheels by the cherubim*, &c.] The churches by the ministers: of these *wheels*, and why the churches are so called, and of their number *four*, and their situation *by* the cherubim, see the note on ch. i. 15: *one wheel by one cherub, and another wheel by another cherub*: a minister to a church; every church has its own pastor, elder, or overseer, by it, and over it: *and the appearance of the wheels* was *as the colour of a beryl-stone*; a precious stone of a sea-green; see the note on ch. i. 16. The Targum renders it in general, *a precious stone*; the Septuagint version, *a carbuncle*; and the Vulgate Latin version, *a chrysolite*.

Ver. 10. *And as for their appearances, they four had one likeness*, &c.] They were exactly like one another; they were all composed of the same matter, had all the colour of a beryl-stone, were all in the same form of a wheel; and in matter, form, and shape, entirely tallied and agreed one with another, as true Gospel churches do: see the note on ch. i. 16: *as if a wheel had been in the midst of a wheel*; not included in one another, but were formed in a cross or transverse way; see the note as before.

Ver. 11. *When they went, they went upon their four sides*, &c.] Which four sides they had, by being made in the transverse way before mentioned; just as the New-Jerusalem church-state is said to be four-square, Rev. xxi. 16. and this may denote the uniformity of Gospel churches in every state and condition, prosperous and adverse; andthe constancy of their walk, conduct, and conversation: *they turned not as they went*; neither to the right hand or the left, but went on in the path of faith and duty, keeping close to the word of God, and keeping up a conversation, discipline, and worship, according to it: *but to the place where the head looked they followed it*; meaning either the rulers, guides, and governors of churches, pastors and elders; whose faith and conversation are followed by the members: or rather Christ himself, the head of the church, who is to be followed whithersoever he goes or directs: unless by the head is meant the same as the spirit, ch. i. 20. the spirit of God, by whom the true members of Gospel churches are led, and after whom they walk. The Targum is, " the place to which the

" *first* turned (or looked), after it they went;" that is, the first of the wheels; and so may signify that the primitive churches are the pattern after which all the churches in after-ages are to go. *They turned not as they went*: this is repeated partly for the confirmation of it; and partly to excite attention to it, as being worthy of observation; see the note on ch. i. 17.

Ver. 12. *And their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings,* &c.] This is to be understood not of the wheels, to whom body or flesh, backs, hands, and wings, do not belong, but of the cherubim; and the sense is, that as the wheels were alike, and had one and the same form and appearance, so had the cherubim; they were exactly alike in their body, backs, hands, and wings; denoting the agreement between Gospel ministers, in their doctrine, work, and conversation: *and the wheels were full of eyes round about*: that is, the rings or circles of the wheels, as in ch. i. 18. signifying that churches consisted of enlightened persons, who had a sight of their sin and danger, and looked to Christ for salvation, and walked circumspectly, and watched over one another: even *the wheels that they four had*; the wheels that belonged to the four living creatures or cherubim.

Ver. 13. *As for the wheels, it was cried to them in my hearing,* &c.] Or they were called, as the prophet heard in the vision, by the following name: *O wheel*; or, *the wheel*: for though there are several particular churches, yet they make up but one general assembly and church of the first-born, written in heaven; and will be all together in their perfect state, signified by the round form of the wheel; see the note on ch. i. 15.

Ver. 14. *And every one had four faces,* &c.] That is, every one of the wheels, for of these the words are continued; and which agrees with ch. i. 15. see the note there: *the first face was the face of a cherub*: this being in the room of the ox's face, ch. i. 10, shews that the face of an ox and a cherub are the same; and that the living creatures have the general name of cherubim, from the face of an ox; and are so called from כרב, which in the Syriac and Chaldee languages signifies to *plough*, that creature being made use of in such service: *and the second face was the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle*: how these are applicable to Gospel churches, and the true members of them, see the note on ch. i. 15.

Ver. 15. *And the cherubim were lifted up,* &c.] From the earth, as in ch. i. 19. see the note there: *this is the living creature that I saw by the river Chebar*: a river in Chaldea, where the prophet was when he had the vision of the living creatures recorded in the *first* chapter; and hence it is out of doubt that the living creatures and the cherubim are the same.

Ver. 16. *And when the cherubim went, the wheels went by them,* &c.] Ministers being guides to the churches in doctrine, worship, devotion, and conversation; see the note on ch. i. 19: *and when the cherubim lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also turned not from beside them*: ministers and churches go together; if the one remove, the other do also; they can't long subsist without each other: and, generally speaking, as are the light, knowledge, zeal, affection, and devotion of the one, such are those of the other; see the note as above.

Ver. 17. *When they stood, these stood,* &c.] When the one were inactive, lifeless, and without motion, making no progress in knowledge, experience, and practice, the other were so likewise; see the note on ch. i. 21: *and when they were lifted up, these lifted up themselves* also; like people, like priest, whether in things commendable or not, Hos. iv. 9: *for the spirit of the living creature was in them*; the same spirit that was in the cherubim was in the wheels; and the same spirit of God, who is a *spirit of life*[t], as the words may be rendered, is in the churches, as in the ministers; generally speaking, if the one are lively, the other are also, and both move as they are acted by the spirit; and also their motion from place to place, which is spoken of in the following verse, is directed by the spirit; see Acts xvi. 6, 7.

Ver. 18. *Then the glory of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house,* &c.] Whither he had removed from the cherub or the cherubim, between the mercy-seat, ver. 4. taking another step towards a general departure from the temple and city, of which this was another signal and warning: *and stood over the cherubim*; not on the mercy-seat from whence he came, for hither he returned not; but over the cherubim or living creatures seen in the vision, which were under the throne in the firmament of heaven; an emblem, as we have seen, of Gospel ministers: and this may denote the exaltation of Christ, who is the glory of the Lord, the brightness of his father's glory, above them; his protection of them; and presence with them; for, let him move where he will, he will not depart from his faithful ministers; he will be with them to the end of the world.

Ver. 19. *And the cherubim lifted up their wings,* &c.] As birds do, when they are about to remove and fly away; these being upon the motion, ready to depart, as well as the glory of the Lord: *and mounted up from the earth in my sight*; the land of Judea, where the Gospel was first preached; but this being slighted and despised, the apostles and first ministers of the Gospel took their flight from thence, and turned to the Gentiles: *when they went out, the wheels also were beside them*; wherever they went in the Gentile world, their ministry was successful, souls were converted, and churches formed; when the glory of the God of Israel departed from the temple, and from the city of Jerusalem, and from the land of Judea, the Gospel ministry and the Gospel church-state were removed likewise, and carried and fixed elsewhere: and every one *stood at the door of the east gate of the Lord's house*; that is, the glory of the God of Israel, and the cherubim, and the wheels, they stood together in one place, the eastern gate of the temple, one of the outward gates; the gate of the court of the Israelites, or outward court, which looked to the east; which shews that they were just going, and leaving the house or temple desolate, no more to return to it; see Matt. xxiii. 38, 39. the next remove was into the city, and then to a mountain on the east side of it; see ch. xi. 23. it was in the eastern part of the world that the

[t] רוח החיה πνευμα ζωης, Sept.; spiritus vitæ, V. L. Starckius.

Gospel was first preached, after it was carried from Judea: *and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above:* both over the cherubim and the wheels; great gifts were bestowed upon the ministers, and great grace was upon the churches; and the presence of God was with both, and a glory on them, and on that glory a defence.

Ver. 20. *This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel, by the river of Chebar,* &c.] This is repeated from ver. 15. not only for the confirmation of it; but with an addition, to shew that the appearance of the man upon the throne, ch. i. 26, is no other than the God of Israel; and inasmuch as Christ is there meant, for the Father never appeared in a human form, it follows that Christ is the God of Israel, under whose power, protection, and influence, the cherubim, his ministers, are; and so this is a proof of the true and proper deity of Christ: *and I knew that they were the cherubim;* not by having seen the cherubim on the mercy-seat, and comparing these forms with them, which none but a high-priest could ever see; for, though Ezekiel was a priest, it does not appear that he was a high-priest; but by the forms of them he had seen carved on the doors and walls of the temple, 1 Kings vi. 29, 35.

Ver. 21. *Every one had four faces apiece,* &c.] Every one of the four living creatures, or cherubim, had four faces; which were the face of a man, of a lion, of an ox, and of an eagle, ch. i. 10: *and every one four wings:* the Septuagint version reads *eight wings;* and the Syriac version *six;* so many in all indeed they had, see the note on ch. i. 23: *and the likeness of the hands of a man was under their wings;* see the note on ver. 8.

Ver. 22. *And the likeness of their faces was the same faces,* &c.] Or their faces were like the same, *which I saw by the river of Chebar;* which prove that the living creatures and the cherubim must be the same: *their appearance and themselves;* were exactly the same; there was no difference in their faces or in their bodies: *they went every one straight forward;* their motion as well as their form were alike; they kept one even course, looking right on, and their eyes right before them.

CHAP. XI.

THIS chapter contains an account of the sins of the princes of Judah; a prophecy of their destruction; some comfortable promises respecting those of the captivity; and the chapter is closed with the finishing of the vision of the Lord's removing from Jerusalem; and the whole being ended, the prophet related it to the men of the captivity. In ver. 1 the prophet is shewn five-and-twenty men, among whom were two he knew, and are mentioned by name, and were princes of the people; and he is told that these men devised mischief, and gave bad advice to the people, ver. 2, 3. wherefore he is bid to prophesy against them, ver. 4. which he accordingly did, the spirit of the Lord falling upon him, ver. 5. declaring that their secret evils were known, as well as their public ones; and that, seeing they had multiplied their slain, and had feared the sword, the sword should come upon them; some should fall by it, and others should be carried captive; the consequence of which would be, that God would be known, and his justice acknowledged, it being what their sins deserved, ver. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. upon this prophecy being delivered out, one of the princes before named died immediately; which filled the prophet with great concern, and put him upon expostulating with God, ver. 13. wherefore, for his comfort, he is told, that though the inhabitants of Jerusalem had insulted their brethren that were carried captive, and looked upon the land of Israel as their own possession, that God would be a little sanctuary to them; that he would gather them out of all lands, and give them the land of Israel; that they should come thither, and remove all idolatry from it, and should have regenerating and renewing grace given them, to walk in the statutes and ordinances of the Lord, by which they should appear to be his people, and he to be their God, ver. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. but as for such that continued in their abominable idolatries, these should receive a just recompense of reward, ver. 21. after which follows an account of the entire removal of the glory of the Lord from the city of Jerusalem, ver. 22, 23. and the prophet being, in vision, brought again to Chaldea, reports the whole he had seen to them of the captivity, ver. 24, 25.

Ver. 1. *Moreover, the spirit lifted me up,* &c.] From the inner court of the temple, where the prophet was, according to the last account of him, ch. viii. 16. it was the same spirit that took him by the lock of his head, and lifted him up, as in ch. viii. 3. and perhaps in the same manner: *and brought me unto the east gate of the Lord's house, which looketh eastward;* where were the cherubim, and the wheels, and the glory of God above them, ch. x. 19: *and behold at the door of the gate five-and-twenty men;* not the same as in ch. viii. 16. for they were in a different place, between the porch and the altar; and about different service, they were worshipping there; and seem to be men of a different order, priests; whereas these were at the door of the eastern gate, sitting as a court of judicature, and were civil magistrates; though Jarchi and Kimchi take them to be the same. Some say Jerusalem was divided into twenty-four parishes, districts, or wards, and every one had its own head, ruler, and governor; and that there was one who was the president over them all, like the mayor and aldermen of a city. *Among whom I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azur:* not the same that is mentioned in ch. viii. 11. he was the son of Shaphan, this of Azur; he was one of the seventy of the ancients of Israel, this one of the twenty-five heads or rulers of the people; he seems to have been a prince; by having a censer in his hand, this was a priest: the Septuagint and Arabic versions call him Jechoniah: *and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah;* these two are mentioned by name, as being principal men, and well known by the prophet; and the latter is observed

more especially for what befell him, hereafter related: *princes of the people:* men who were intrusted with power and authority to exercise the laws of the nation; and who should have been reformers of the people, and ought to have given them good advice, and set them good examples; whereas they were the reverse, as follows:

Ver. 2. *Then said he unto me, son of man,* &c.] That is, the Lord, or the Spirit of the Lord, that lifted him up: *these are the men that devise mischief;* or *vanity*[b]; this is to be understood not of the two only that are named, though it may of them chiefly; but of all the twenty-five, who formed schemes for the holding out of the siege, and for the security of the city, and of themselves in it, which was all folly and vanity: *and give wicked counsel in this city:* either in ecclesiastical affairs, to forsake the worship of God, and cleave to the idols of the nations; or in civil things, as follows:

Ver. 3. *Which say* it is *not near, let us build houses,* &c.] Meaning that the destruction of the city was not near, as the prophet had foretold, ch. vii. 3, 6, 7, 10, 12. and therefore encourage the people to build houses, and rest themselves secure, as being safe from all danger, and having nothing to fear from the Chaldean army; and so putting away the evil day far from them, which was just at hand: though the words may be rendered, it is *not* proper *to build houses near*[c]; near the city of Jerusalem, in the suburbs of it, since they would be liable to be destroyed by the enemy; but this would not be condemned as wicked counsel, but must be judged very prudent and advisable: and the same may be objected to another rendering of the word, which might be offered, *not in the midst to build houses;* or it is not proper to build houses in the midst of the city, in order to receive the multitude that flock out of the country, through fear of the enemy, to Jerusalem for safety; since by this means, as the number of the inhabitants would be increased, so provisions in time would become scarce, and a famine must ensue, which would oblige to deliver up the city into the hands of the besiegers; wherefore the first sense seems best. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render them, *are not the houses lately built?* and so not easily demolished, and are like to continue long, and we in them. *This* city is *the cauldron, and we* be *the flesh;* referring to, and laughing at, what one of the prophets, namely Jeremiah, had said of them, comparing them to a boiling pot, Jer. i. 13. and it is as if they should say, be it so, that this city is as a cauldron or boiling pot, then we are the flesh in it; and as flesh is not taken out of a pot until it is boiled, no more shall we be removed from hence till we die; we shall live and die in this city; and as it is difficult and dangerous to take hot boiling meat out of a cauldron, so it is unlikely we should be taken out of this city, and carried captive; what a cauldron or brasen pot is to the flesh, it holds and keeps it from falling into the fire; that the walls of Jerusalem are to us, our safety and preservation; nor need we fear captivity.

Ver. 4. *Therefore prophesy against them,* &c.] Evil things against them, things that are disagreeable to them; since they flatter themselves with good things, and cry peace and safety, let them know that destruction is coming upon them: or, *concerning them*[d]; what will befall them, and that it will be otherwise with them than they imagine: *prophesy, O son of man:* this is repeated, not only to stir up the prophet to the performance of his work and office, not fearing the faces, and revilings, and mockings of men; but to shew the indignation of the Lord at their scoffs and jeers, and the certain accomplishment of what should be predicted.

Ver. 5. *And the spirit of the Lord fell upon me,* &c.] In an extraordinary manner, and afresh, and enlightened his mind, and shewed him things that should come to pass; and filled him with boldness and courage to declare them. The Targum interprets it of the spirit of prophecy: *and said unto me, speak:* what I shall shew and put into thy mouth, that speak out; be not afraid, but boldly declare all that I give thee in commission to say: *thus saith the Lord, thus have ye said, O house of Israel;* as in ver. 3. which perhaps was said in secret, and spoken privately, but known by the Lord; and it was not only the princes that said it, but the whole body of the people joined in with it, and agreed to it; though it is very probable they were influenced by the former: *for I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them;* not only their scoffing words, but the thoughts of their hearts; not one of them escaped the knowledge of God; the consideration of which should command an awe on men, and engage them to a watchfulness over their thoughts, words, and actions.

Ver. 6. *Ye have multiplied your slain in this city,* &c.] Had killed many of the prophets of the Lord that had been sent unto them, and had shed much innocent blood; and not only had unjustly condemned many to die, and had put them to death without a cause; but also the death of all those that were slain whilst the city was besieging, and when it was taken, were owing to their advice and counsel, in encouraging them to hold out, and not deliver up the city; fancying they should be able to defend it, contrary to the declarations of the Lord by the prophet; wherefore their death is laid to such advisers, and they are called their slain: *and ye have filled the streets thereof with slain;* such numbers of innocent persons being put to death, as in the times of Manasseh, 2 Kings xxi. 16. or so many dying of the famine, pestilence, and sword, during the siege, and at the taking of Jerusalem.

Ver. 7. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Applying the parabolical expressions they had derided, and explaining them in a different sense from what they had put upon them: *your slain whom ye have laid in the midst of it, they* are *the flesh;* the prophets they had killed; the persons who had died innocently for crimes laid to their charge they had not been guilty of; and such who had fallen by one judgment or another since the siege, they were the persons intended by *the flesh,* and not such as were alive; and therefore could promise themselves nothing from this proverb they had

[b] און vanitatem, Calvin, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius; vanum, Cocceius, Starckius.

[c] לא בקרוב בנות בתים non in propinquo ædificandæ domus, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius, Polanus; non in propinquo ædificare domos, Montanus, Piscator, Starckius.

[d] עליהם de eis, Vulg. Lat.; super eos, Pagninus, Montanus.

took up, and scoffed at: *and this city is the cauldron;* that holds the slain, and in which they will lie and continue, and not the living: *but I will bring you forth out of the midst of it;* where they promised themselves safety, and a long continuance; yet should not abide, but be carried captive.

Ver. 8. *Ye have feared the sword,* &c.] Of the Chaldeans; and therefore they sent to the Egyptians for help. The Targum is, "ye have been afraid of "them that kill with the sword;" and not afraid of the Lord; see Matt. x. 28: *and I will bring a sword upon you, saith the Lord God;* or those that kill with the sword, as the Targum; meaning the Chaldeans, who were sent by the Lord, and, when they took the city, put many to death by the sword, and carried captive others.

Ver. 9. *And I will bring you out of the midst thereof,* &c.] Jerusalem, the cauldron, as they said it was, and where they thought they should be safe; this is repeated, to express the certainty of it, and to excite their attention to it, and remove their vain confidence: *and deliver you into the hands of strangers;* the Chaldeans: *and will execute judgments among you;* punishments for sin, such as famine, pestilence, sword, and captivity.

Ver. 10. *Ye shall fall by the sword,* &c.] Of the Chaldeans; not in the city of Jerusalem, but out of it, when it was broken up, and they fled: *I will judge you in the border of Israel;* that is, inflict punishment on them, particularly by the sword; which was done at Riblah in the land of Hamath, where the sons of Zedekiah were slain, and all the princes of Judah, Jer. lii. 9, 10. and this was on the border of the land of Israel, Numb. xxxiv. 8, 11: *and ye shall know that I am the Lord;* who knows things, and foretels them before they are; and am able to accomplish all that is threatened; and am just and righteous in all my ways and works; and who am known by the judgments executed by me.

Ver. 11. *This* city *shall not be your cauldron,* &c.] It was one, as in ver. 7. but not theirs; it was the cauldron for the slain, for the dead, but not the living: *neither shall ye be the flesh in the midst of it;* or, *and ye shall be*[g]; or, *but ye shall be;* the negative is understood, and rightly supplied by us; though the Targum renders it without it, "but ye shall be in the midst of "it, as flesh that is boiled in the midst of a pot:" but *I will judge you in the border of Israel;* this is repeated, that they might take notice of it, and to assure them that so it would be.

Ver. 12. *And ye shall know that I am the Lord,* &c.] See the note on ver. 10: *for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments;* which is the reason why the Lord would judge them on the border of Israel, and deliver them up into the hands of strangers; nor can he be thought to act the severe and cruel part to them, when this their disobedience is observed; since they had his statutes and his judgments made known to them, which were not known to other nations, and yet they regarded them not; wherefore it was but righteous in him to inflict his judgments upon them; and which is the more aggravated by what follows, and which still more clearly shews the justice of the divine proceedings against them: *but have done after the manners of the Heathens that are round about them;* or, *the judgments of the Heathens*[h]; regarded them, and acted according to them, when they slighted and disobeyed the judgments of the Lord; instead of worshipping of him according to his revealed will, they served the idols of the nations round about them, and gave into all their superstitious rites and ceremonies.

Ver. 13. *And it came to pass when I prophesied,* &c.] Or, *as I prophesied*[i]; that is, whilst he was prophesying, or declaring the above things from the mouth of the Lord, concerning the slaughter of the Jews by the sword, and the captivity of the rest: *that Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died;* one of the princes of the people, and was among the five-and-twenty men the prophet saw at the door of the east gate of the temple, ver. 1. this man dropped down dead on a sudden, just as Ananias and Sapphira at the feet of Peter. It was in a vision Ezekiel saw this, and in the temple; but no doubt at the same time this prince died at his own house, whose death was notified to the prophet in this way. *Then fell I down upon my face;* as greatly surprised at the event, and filled with concern at what would be the issue of this providence; looking upon it as a pledge and earnest, a token and forerunner, of the utter destruction of the people: *and cried with a loud voice;* expressing the vehemency of his affection, and the earnestness of his supplication: *and said, ah, Lord God! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?* or, *art thou making*[k]? the ten tribes had been carried captive many years ago, and a large number of the other two tribes in Jeconiah's captivity, so that there were but a remnant left in the land; and, upon the sudden and awful death of this prince, the prophet feared the Lord was going to make an utter end of them at once; which he deprecates.

Ver. 14. *Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,* &c.] In answer to his prayer. The Targum calls it, "the word of prophecy from the Lord;" this was by way of comfort to the captives in Babylon, as the former was by way of threatening to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Ver. 15. *Son of man, thy brethren, even thy brethren, the men of thy kindred,* &c.] Or, *of thy redemption*[l]; to whom the right of redemption of his lands and possessions belonged, as it did to those that were next akin. The Septuagint, by a mistake of the word, render it, *the men of thy captivity;* and so the Syriac and Arabic versions, following them. 'Tis true those were his fellow-captives who are here meant; some of them that were carried captive were his brethren by blood, and all by nation and religion; and these phrases, and the repetition of them, are designed not only to excite the prophet's attention to, and to assure them of what is after declared; but to take off his concern for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who had used his brethren

[g] ואתם תהיו & vos eritis, Montanus, Cocceius.
[h] כמשפטי הגוים Juxta judicia gentium, Pagninus, Montanus; secundum jura gentium, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; secundum judicia gentium, Cocceius, Starckius.
[i] כהנבאי me prophetante, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.
[k] אתה עשה tu faciens, Montanus, Starckius.
[l] אנשי גאלתך viri redemptionis tuæ, Montanus, Heb.; viri redemptoræ tuæ, Piscator.

ill, and to turn his thoughts and affections towards his friends in Chaldea. Kimchi thinks that these three expressions refer to three captivities; the captivity of the children of Gad and Reuben; the captivity of Samaria, or the ten tribes; and the captivity of Jehoiachin. It follows, *and all the house of Israel wholly are they*: or, "all the house of Israel, all of them," as the Targum; that is, all the whole house of Israel. The Septuagint render it, *all the house of Israel is made an end of*; the Syriac version, *shall be blotted out*; and the Arabic version, *shall be cut off*: all wrong; since these words are not a threatening to the ten tribes, or those of the Jews in captivity, for all that follows is in favour of them; but only point at the persons the prophet is turned unto, and who are the subject of the following discourse. A colon, or at least a semicolon, should be here put; since the accent *athnach* is upon the last word. *Unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, get ye far from the Lord*: Kimchi interprets it, from the land of the Lord, the holy land; they being carried captive into a foreign country. The Targum is, "from the fear of the Lord;" the worship of the Lord; they being at a distance from the temple, and the service of it. These words are an insult of the inhabitants of Jerusalem upon the captives, suggesting that they were great sinners, and for their sins were taken away from their own land, and carried to Babylon; and that they deserved to be excommunicated from the house and people of God, and were so; and indeed this is a kind of a form of excommunication of them: *unto us is this land given in possession*: you have forfeited your right to it, and are disinherited; we are sole heirs, and in the possession of it, and shall ever continue in it. The Syriac version reads this and the preceding clause as if they were the word of the Israelites to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, thus; "because they said to them, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, "depart from the Lord, for unto us is given this "land for an inheritance." The Arabic version indeed makes them to be the words of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but render the last clause thus; *to you* (i. e. *the Israelites*) *is given the land for an inheritance*.

Ver. 16. *Therefore say, thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Since they were so insulted and ill-treated by their brethren the Jews: *although I have cast them afar off among the Heathen*; both the ten tribes, even all the house of Israel, who were carried into Assyria, and placed in the cities of the Medes, in Halath and Habor, by the river Gozan, 2 Kings xvii. 6. and those of the Jews in Jeconiah's captivity, among whom were Ezekiel, and his brethren, and his kindred: *and although I have scattered them among the countries*; and therefore, what with the distance of the place where they were, and the dispersion of them among the people where they resided, their case might seem to be desperate; and that there was no probability, and scarce any possibility, of their being preserved as a people, and of their restoration to their own land: *yet will I be to them a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come*; their dwelling-place, as he has been to his people in all generations; their protection from all their enemies, in whom, and by whose power, they should be safe; and whose presence they should enjoy, though deprived of public ordinances, of temple-worship and service; though they were at a distance from the great sanctuary, the temple, the inhabitants of Jerusalem boasted of, yet the Lord would make up the want of that to them with himself. The Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi [m], interpret this of the synagogues, which were second to the temple, the Israelites had in foreign countries, where they prayed to the Lord, and worshipped him, and enjoyed his presence. It may be rendered, *the sanctuary of a few* [n]; they being but few, especially that were truly godly, that were carried captive: or, *a sanctuary for a little while* [o]; that is, during seventy years, and then they should be returned, as follows. The Targum is, "I have given them synagogues, second to my sanctuary, and they are as few in the provinces where "they are carried captive."

Ver. 17. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, I will even gather you from the people*, &c.] The Babylonians, Medes, and Persians, where they had been carried captive: *and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered*; that is, out of Chaldea and Media, out of which they should come in a body, and not singly, or in small numbers, as they did when Cyrus issued out his proclamation: *and I will give you the land of Israel*: not only the Jews of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, but many of the ten tribes came out of Babylon with Zorobabel, and settled in the land of Israel; and hither they came also in after-times, even those that settled in other countries, at their several festivals, and about such time more especially that the Messiah was expected, and continued there; and this will have a fuller completion at the restoration of the Jews in the latter days.

Ver. 18. *And they shall come thither*, &c.] That is, those of the captivity shall come to the land of Israel, they or their posterity: *and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof*: the idols of the nations, that had been there introduced, detestable to God and all good men: *and all the abominations thereof from thence*: idols, as before, even all of them, so that idolatry should be wholly rooted out; this had its accomplishment under Zorobabel, Ezra, Haggai, &c. when the worship of God was restored, and there was a reformation of many abuses in religion; and again in the times of the Maccabees; and will have a greater fulfilment at the time of the conversion of the Jews; when every thing that is detestable and abominable among that people will be removed; of which conversion the following words are a prophecy.

Ver. 19. *And I will give them one heart*, &c.] In opposition to a divided heart, Hos. x. 2. divided between the true God and idols, wavering and halting between two opinions, sometimes serving God, and sometimes Baal; a heart to pursue one way of worship, and to serve the Lord with one shoulder or consent, Jer. xxxii,

[m] Ex T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 29. 1.

[n] לְמִקְדָּשׁ מְעַט ad sanctuarium paucitatis, Calvin; in sanctuarium paucorum, Cocceius. So Ben Melech says the word is a substantive in some copies.

[o] Paulisper, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Castalio.

40. Zeph. iii. 9. a heart sincere to God and man, in opposition to a double or hypocritical one, Psal. xii. 2. a heart single to the honour and glory of God, and firmly attached to his word and worship: also concord, harmony, an unity of affections to one another, so as to be of one heart and one soul, as the first Christians were, who were Jews, Acts iv. 32. and an unity of judgment, an oneness of principle and practice, as there ought to be, 1 Cor. i. 10. and all this is the gift of God, and flows from his grace and favour. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, *another heart*; different from what they had before. *And I will put a new spirit within you*; meaning either the Holy Spirit of God, the author of regeneration and renovation: this is represented by the ancient Jews[p] as the same with the spirit of the Messiah that moved upon the face of the waters, Gen. i. 2. or the spirit of man, the seat of this renewing work; or rather the work itself, called a *new man*, a *new creature*, Ephes. iv. 24. 2 Cor. v. 17. and this is a new frame and disposition of mind, in which are new principles of light and life, grace and holiness; a new understanding of themselves and state, of God and of Christ, of divine things and Gospel truths; new affections for God, and all that is good; new desires after grace and righteousness, after God and communion with him, after his word and ordinances, and conformity to Christ; new purposes and resolutions to serve the Lord, and glorify him; new delights and joys, and in short all things become new. Instead of *within you*, the Septuagint, and all the Oriental versions, read, *in them*; and to this the Targum agrees. *And I will take the stony heart out of their flesh*; a heart hardened by sin, and confirmed in it; destitute of spiritual life, senseless and stupid as to spiritual things; stubborn and inflexible, on which no impressions are made by corrections, admonitions, and instructions of superiors; and so an impenitent one: this God only can remove; men can't soften their own hearts; nor can ministers work upon them; nor will judgments themselves bring men to repentance: it is the work of God only; who does it by his word, with which he breaks the rock in pieces; by the discoveries of his love, with which he melts the heart that is harder than the nether millstone; by giving repentance to them, by working faith in them, to look to a crucified Christ and mourn, and all this by *his* spirit: this is said to be taken *out of their flesh*; not their body, but their nature corrupted by sin, John iii. 6. which shews that this hardness is natural to men, and rooted in them, and that it requires omnipotence to remove it. *And will give them an heart of flesh*; a sensible and penitent one; a soft and tender one; a sanctified and spiritual one; one flexible and obsequious to the will of God; on which impressions are made; on which the laws of God are written; into which the doctrines of the Gospel are transcribed, Christ is formed, and the fear of God is implanted, with every other grace, all which are the gifts of God, and owing to his efficacious grace. The Targum of the whole is, "and I will give them a fearing heart, and "a spirit of fear I will put in their bowels (or in the "midst of them); and I will break the heart of wick-"edness, which is as hard as a stone, out of their "flesh, and I will give them a heart fearing before "me to do my will."

Ver. 20. *That they may walk in my statutes*, &c.] Have their conversation ordered according to the will and word of God; to which there is neither will nor power, till God gives a new heart and spirit, or works in them both to will and to do: *and keep mine ordinances, and do them*; all things appertaining to religion and worship, both in public and private: *and they shall be my people, and I will be their God*; it will appear by walking in the statutes of the Lord, and by keeping his ordinances, that they are his people, made willing in the day of his power to serve him; and by having covenant-blessings bestowed on them, the grace of God wrought in them, his fear upon them, and new hearts and spirits given them, that he is their covenant God and Father; by this means, what under the prevalence of idolatry was hid, will now be made manifest.

Ver. 21. *But* as for them, *&c.*] Who remained in Jerusalem, and were not carried captive, but continued in their own land, and worshipped idols, the same as in ver. 15: *whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations*; not images of gold and silver, which cannot be said to have a heart; but devils and evil spirits worshipped in them, who are well-pleased and delighted with the worship given them; so that the hearts of the devils worshipped, and the hearts of the idolatrous worshippers, were alike and agreed; wherefore their hearts were very different from those before mentioned; so far from having one heart, that their hearts were double and divided, partly after God, and partly after their idols; and so far from walking in the statutes of the Lord, that they were walking after the will of their idols, and in the worship of them; which were abominable and detestable to God, and all good men. The Targum is, "and after the worship of their "idols, and of their abominations, their heart wan-"ders." *I will recompence their ways upon their own heads, saith the Lord God*: that is, punish them according to their deserts, by the sword, famine, pestilence, and captivity.

Ver. 22. *Then did the cherubim lift up their wings*, &c.] In order to remove, as in ch. x. 19: *and the wheels beside them*; which were lifted up also along with the cherubim: *and the glory of the God of Israel* was over *them above*; both cherubim and wheels.

Ver. 23. *And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city*, &c.] Of Jerusalem, whither it was removed from the door of the east gate of the temple, ch. x. 19. though no mention is made of such removal; and now, having left the temple, it leaves the city: *and stood upon the mountain, which is on the east side of the city*; either waiting for the repentance of the inhabitants of it, leaving them with reluctance; or in order to bring down his judgments upon it, and behold its destruction and ruin: this mountain was the mountain of Olives, as the Targum interprets it: and so Jarchi and Kimchi; see Zech. xiv. 5. Christ stood on this mountain and wept over Jerusalem, and from hence he ascended to heaven. This Jarchi calls the third remove of the Shechinah or glory of the God of Israel. The

[p] Zohar in Gen. fol. 107. 3.

Rabbins say[t] it removed ten times, and reckon them thus, "from the mercy-seat to the cherub; from the "cherub to the cherub; from the cherub to the "threshold; from the threshold to the court; from "the court to the altar; from the altar to the roof; "from the roof to the wall; from the wall to the city; "from the city to the mountain; from the mountain "to the wilderness; and from the wilderness it "ascended and sat in its own place, according to "Hos. v. 15."

Ver. 24. *Afterwards the spirit took me up,* &c.] From the east gate of the temple, whither he had brought him; when he had been shewn, and every thing had been told him, necessary for the reproof of the Jews in Jerusalem, and for the comfort of the captives: *and brought me in vision by the spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity;* all this was done in vision; so it appeared to the prophet, under the influence of the divine Spirit of God, as if he was carried to Jerusalem, and there saw and heard all he did, and then was brought back again to Chaldea; whereas this was only mental, not corporeal; he was all the while in Chaldea, though things were so represented to his mind as if he had been removed from place to place: *so the vision that I had seen went up from me;* he returned to himself, and became as another man, or as he was before; and found himself in his own house, and among the elders of Judah. This shews that the vision was from heaven, and therefore it is said to go up from him; and that prophecy was not of the will of men, but of God; and that the prophets were not always under the influence of a prophetic spirit; but this came and went, and was only with them at certain times.

Ver. 25. *Then I spake unto them of the captivity,* &c.] The elders of Judah, and others with them, at Tel-abib, where the prophet had a house: *all the things the Lord had shewed me;* all the visions contained in the preceding chapters, from the beginning of the 4th chapter to the end of this: as the portraying Jerusalem on a tile, and lying on his side for a long time, as an emblem of the siege of that city; the barley cakes, denoting a famine; the sharp knife with which he cut off his hair, signifying the destruction of its inhabitants; how he was brought to Jerusalem, what idolatries he saw in the temple; the vision of the six men with slaughter-weapons, and of another with a writer's inkhorn by his side; and also the vision of the cherubim and wheels, and the glory of the God of Israel, and their departure from the city and temple, together with what was threatened to the Jews in Jerusalem, and was promised to them in Chaldea; all which the prophet faithfully related, and kept back nothing that the Lord had made known unto him by words or signs.

CHAP. XII.

IN this chapter, under the sign of the prophet's removing household goods, is represented the removal of the king of Judah and his people from their own land into captivity; and under another sign, of the prophet's eating and drinking with quaking, and trembling, and carefulness, is set forth, either the famine that should be during the siege of Jerusalem, or the desolations following the taking of it; and the chapter is concluded with a reproof of the Jews flattering themselves that these prophecies respected times a great way off, and therefore hoped they would never be accomplished. The preface to the first sign is in ver. 1, 2. which describes the people of the Jews as rebellious, and given up to judicial blindness and hardness; and suggests the cause of all their calamities: the order to prepare goods for removing, to shew to the people; for digging a wall; carrying the stuff out in their sight, on his shoulders, at twilight; and covering his face when he did it, is in ver. 3, 4, 5, 6. the execution of this order, which is declared in part for the whole, is in ver. 7. then follows the explication of this sign, ver. 8, 9, 10, 11. and the application of it, first to King Zedekiah, in whom should be fulfilled several of the particulars mentioned, ver. 12, 13. and to the people about him, and his army that should be scattered and fall by the sword, ver. 14. the end of which should be, that the Lord should be known, his power, truth, and righteousness, by a few that should escape the famine, pestilence, and sword, ver. 15, 16. The second sign, with the explication and application of it, is in ver. 17, 18, 19, 20. and the chapter is closed with a reproof of the Jews; the proverbial expression they used, and which the Lord resented, is cited ver. 21, 22. and the prophet is bid to assure them that it should cease, or there should be no room for it; and also every vain vision and flattering divination, ver. 23, 24. and that the word of the Lord should not be prolonged, but should quickly and certainly be accomplished; and that their hopes of the contrary were in vain, ver. 25, 26, 27, 28.

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] The word of prophecy, as the Targum; the vision of the cherubim being over, this, very likely, immediately followed upon the former; though the exact time of the prophecy cannot be fixed, because the date is not given; it must be between the sixth month of the sixth year of Jehoiachin's captivity, ch. viii. 1. and the fifth month of the seventh year, ch. xx. 1.

Ver. 2. *Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house,* &c.] The captives in Babylon, who murmured at their present condition and circumstances, and looked upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem to be in happy ones, and believed they would continue in them, as the false prophets persuaded them; not believing the prophets of the Lord; and encouraged them to stand out against the king of Babylon, repenting that they had surrendered to him, and hoped they should by their means be delivered: see the same character of them, ch. ii. 3, 5, 6, 7. and iii. 9, 26: *which have eyes to see, and see not; they have*

[t] T. Bab. Roshhashana, fol. 31. 1.

ears to hear, and hear not; they had natural sense and understanding, and means and opportunities of being better informed, and of knowing the true state of things, and how they were, and would be: but they wilfully shut their eyes against all light and evidence, and stopped their ears, and would not hearken to the words of the prophets: *for they are a rebellious house;* stubborn, obstinate, and self-willed: or, *a house of rebellion*[r].

Ver. 3. *Therefore, thou son of man, prepare thee stuff for removing, &c.*] Or, *vessels of captivity*[s]; such as persons take along with them when they go a journey, or into a far country; such as a staff, scrip, purse, shoes, &c. or household goods; such as tables, chairs, and the like, which are removed when a person goes from one house to another; by which sign they of the captivity were to be taught that Zedekiah and the people of the Jews should in like manner be carried captive into Babylon; which they were not willing to believe, and the false prophets had told them the contrary: *and remove by day in their sight;* be carrying the stuff out, day by day, several days running, as Jarchi from Menachem interprets it; that they may see and take notice of it, and ask the reason of it; which, when known, they might send to their correspondents at Jerusalem, and acquaint them with it: *and thou shalt remove from thy place to another place in their sight;* from the house in which he dwelt, to another house at some distance; yet so as to be seen by them, both from whence and whither he removed: *it may be they will consider;* or *see*[t]; make use of their eyes, and of their understandings, and think better of things. The Targum is, "perhaps they will fear;" the Lord, and regard his prophets, and be afraid of his judgments: *though they be a rebellious house;* such who are the most obstinate may be reclaimed.

Ver. 4. *Then shalt thou bring forth thy stuff by day in their sight, &c.*] Bring it forth, that they may be spectators of it; and *by day*, that it might be manifest to them what was carried out; and this day by day, till all was removed: *as stuff for removing;* that is intended to be removed from one place to another, and is carried away in the day-time, in the view of every one: *and thou shalt go forth at even in their sight:* as a man, having removed his goods in the day-time, goes forth himself at evening: this denotes the flight of Zedekiah from Jerusalem in the night, Jer. xxxix. 4: *as they that go forth into captivity;* with a sorrowful countenance, in a mournful habit, and with airs and gestures shewing anger, anxiety, and distress; with a bundle on their shoulders, and a staff in their hands.

Ver. 5. *Dig thou through the wall in their sight, &c.*] The wall of the house where he was, as an emblem of the city of Jerusalem closely besieged, from whence there was no escape but by digging through the wall: this shewed the manner in which Zedekiah made his escape, by the way of the gate, between the two walls, which was by the king's garden, Jer. lii. 7: *and carry out thereby;* not his stuff, as before; but provisions for himself, necessary for his journey or flight; as no doubt Zedekiah and those with him did.

Ver. 6. *In their sight shalt thou bear it upon thy shoulders, &c.*] The bundle, packed up for his use and service, carried out through the wall dug by him. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it, as if he himself was to be carried out upon the shoulders of another, thus: *in their sight, upon the shoulders, thou shalt be carried;* but the former sense is best: *and carry it forth in the twilight;* signifying the same as before: *thou shalt cover thy face, that thou see not the ground;* or *land;* not the land of Israel, but the land of Chaldea, where the prophet was: this shews that great shame and confusion which should attend the king of Judah when he fled, and great fear and terror also; and likewise his regard to his eyes being put out by the king of Babylon; so that he saw not the land into which he was carried captive, Jer. lii. 11: *for I have set thee for a sign unto the house of Israel;* to shew unto them by deeds, as well as by words, what should befall them; see Isa. viii. 18. and xx. 2, 3, 4.

Ver. 7. *And I did so as I was commanded, &c.*] Though it might seem ridiculous in the sight of men, and he be bantered and despised for it; yet, it being the will of God, he was obedient to it; as it becomes the servants of the Lord to be with all readiness and cheerfulness; even in things for which they may be laughed at by others: *I brought forth my stuff by day, as stuff for captivity;* brought his goods out of his house, in order to be had to another place, as a type of the captivity of his countrymen the Jews: *and in the even I digged through the wall with mine hand;* not with an iron instrument, with which walls are dug; but with his hand, he having no such instrument with him, and being in haste, and also that it might be done without noise; denoting the suddenness of Zedekiah's flight, and the haste he was in; not having time and leisure to take proper instruments with him, he and his men pulled out the stones of the wall with their own hands, and silently made their way through and escaped; see ver. 12: *I brought* it *forth in the twilight,* and *I bare* it *upon* my *shoulder in their sight;* that it might be a sign and emblem of the above things to them, and they might learn some instructions from it.

Ver. 8. *And in the morning came the word of the Lord unto me, saying.*] That is, in the morning after he had done all the above things commanded him; explaining the meaning of them, and shewing to whom they belonged.

Ver. 9. *Son of man, hath not the house of Israel said unto thee, &c.*] The Jews that were in captivity; for with these the prophet was, and before their eyes he had done the above things; and they only could put the following question to him, who were *the rebellious house;* ver. 2: *what dost thou?* this they put not seriously, as desirous of being informed what was meant by all this; but as deriding the prophet for acting such a weak and silly part: this the Lord knew they had done, and therefore directs the prophet to make a proper answer; though some think the sense is, *hath not the house of Israel said unto thee, what dost thou?* no, they have not; they take no notice of

[r] בית מרי domus rebellionis, Montanus, Vatablus, Starckius; domus inobedientiæ, Cocceius.

[s] כלי גולה vasa transmigrationis, Pagninus, Montanus, Starckius; instrumenta migrationis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus.

[t] אולי יראו fortasse visuri sunt, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; fortasse videbunt, Piscator, Starckius.

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it; never say one word about it, or inquire into the meaning of it; quite careless, thoughtless, and stupid; wherefore, though they will not ask any thing concerning it, yet begin with them, and shew them the design of it.

Ver. 10. *Say thou unto them, thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] In answer to their sneering question; or notwithstanding their stupidity and indolence, and in order to awaken them out of it: *this burden concerneth the prince in Jerusalem;* the present reigning prince in Jerusalem, King Zedekiah. The sense is, either that that burden of goods the prophet carried out on his shoulders had a regard to the king of Judah and his captivity, and was an emblem of it; or rather that the burden of prophecy, or that sorrowful calamity predicted by the above sign or type, had relation to that prince, and would be fulfilled in him; and so the Targum, "upon the prince is the burden of this prophecy;" in like manner Jarchi interprets it of prophecy: *and all the house of Israel which are among them;* they were also concerned in it, and would be carried captive with their prince.

Ver. 11. *Say, I am your sign, &c.*] Which represents you, and shews what will befall you: *like as I have done, so shall it be done unto them;* as he had carried out his stuff, and had removed it from one place to another, so they should be carried away out of their own land into a foreign country, as follows: *they shall remove,* and *go into captivity;* the Babylonish captivity.

Ver. 12. *And the prince that is among them, &c.*] Zedekiah their king that reigned over them, in whom they trusted, and under whose government they thought themselves safe and secure: *shall bear upon his shoulder in the twilight, and shall go forth* out of Jerusalem, where his palace and throne were, leaving the main of his riches behind him; only should carry away what he could on his shoulder, a bundle of his most valuable effects, or provisions for his flight: or, as Kimchi and Ben Melech think, his clothes, for lighter march, and more speedy haste: *they shall dig through the wall to carry out thereby;* it seems by this, that when the king, and his nobles and servants, made their escape, they not only went forth between two walls, but broke through one, in order to get away; which was done, not by the king himself, but by his servants; so the Targum, "in a wall shall they dig to "bring him out by it;" and therefore the number is changed, not *he,* but *they, shall dig,* &c. though in the following words the singular is again used: *he shall cover his face, that he see not the ground with his eyes;* either through shame at leaving the city, his palace, and all his grandeur. The Targum is, "he shall "cover his face because he hath sinned:" or that he might not be known and be discovered who he was; and so it was through fear of being betrayed by a false friend, or taken by the enemy: or else this may respect his having his eyes put out at Riblah, so that he could not see with them the land he was carried into; though it rather seems to refer to his first escape out of Jerusalem with a mask or vizor on him, which might hinder his seeing the ground he went upon; and which, in his fright, he could not attend to, looking out here and there, not being able to keep his eye long upon any place. The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions, render it, *that he may not be seen with the eye, and he shall not see the land.*

Ver. 13. *My net also will I spread upon him, &c.*] Meaning the Chaldean army, which the Lord raised up, and brought against him, and gave success unto: *and he shall be taken in my snare;* as a bird is taken in the snare of the fowler: or a wild beast by the hunter. The Jews have a tradition, which is mentioned both by Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abendana on the place, that there was a cave which reached from Zedekiah's house to the plains of Jericho, by the way of which he fled; and that God prepared a deer, which went upon the top of the cave; and the Chaldeans pursued it; and when it came to the mouth of the cave, Zedekiah was coming out, and they took him: *and I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it;* his eyes being put out at Riblah, Jer. xxxix. 7. The Prophet Jeremiah says that his eyes should behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, Jer. xxxiv. 3. and yet here Ezekiel says that he should not see the land of the Chaldeans. Josephus[a] observes, that Zedekiah thought these two prophecies contradicted each other, and therefore gave credit to neither; but they both proved true; he saw the king of Babylon at Riblah; but his eyes being there put out, he saw not Babylon, whither he was carried captive: *though he shall die there;* as he did, Jer. lii. 11.

Ver. 14. *And I will scatter to every wind all that are about him to help him, &c.*] Either his life-guards, the men of war that were with him when he fled, Jer. lii. 7. or his auxiliary troops, the Egyptians, whom he had taken into his pay for his assistance: *and all his bands;* or *wings*[b]; the wings of his army. The Targum interprets it his army; these were all scattered from him when he was taken, Jer. lii. 8: *and I will draw out the sword after them;* which fled into Egypt, and other countries; so that they did not escape, though they went not into captivity; see ch. v. 12.

Ver. 15. *And they shall know that I am the Lord, &c.*] God omniscient, and can and do foresee and foretel future events, when the above things shall come to pass; and omnipotent, able to do what he purposed and declared he would; and true and faithful to his word, and holy and righteous in all his ways and works: *when I shall scatter them among the nations, and disperse them in the countries;* of Egypt, Babylon, Media, and other places.

Ver. 16. *But I will leave a few men of them, &c.*] Or, *men of number*[c]; of a small number, such as are easily reckoned up; which will require no great skill in numbers, nor trouble to count them: *from the sword, and from the famine, and from the pestilence;* during the siege of Jerusalem, and at the breaking of it up; but then they should be carried captive into other countries: *that they may declare all their abominations among*

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[a] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 10. c. 7. sect. 2. and c. 8. sect. 2.

[b] אגפיו alas militum, Montanus; alas ejus, Cocceius, Starckius; so Ben Melech.

[c] אנשי מספר viros numeri, Montanus, Vatablus; homines numero, Starckius.

the Heathen whither they come: who, observing their calamities and distresses, would read their sin in their punishment; and conclude they must have been guilty of great enormities, who were punished in such a manner; so that their punishment was a visible and standing declaration to the Heathens of the abominable sins they had been guilty of: or else the end of reserving a few of them from the above capital judgments was, that they being brought to a sense of their sins by their afflictions, might freely confess them, express their repentance for them, and justify God in his proceedings towards them: *and they shall know that I am the Lord:* not the Heathens, among whom this declaration would be made; but the Jews, brought under a conviction of their sin, and of the justice of God in his dealings with them.

Ver. 17. *Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying.*] Here follows another sign of the desolation of the Jews, which the prophet was unto them; as the former signified their going into captivity, this their famine and distress at the siege of Jerusalem, and the dreadful calamities attending and following that.

Ver. 18. *Son of man, eat thy bread with quaking*, &c.] As one in surprise or fear, or that has got an ague upon him: *and drink thy water with trembling and with carefulness:* fearing want of it, or as apprehensive of danger of its being taken away; see ch. iv. 16.

Ver. 19. *And say unto the people of the land*, &c.] Of Chaldea, where the prophet now was; not the natives of the land, but the Israelites, who were captives in it: who were ready to murmur and repine at their own case, as miserable; and at that of the Jews at Jerusalem, as happy; and therefore they are taught by this sign, as well as by the following prophecy, that they were mistaken: *thus saith the Lord God of the inhabitants of Jerusalem;* or *to* them, or *concerning* them [y]; whom the captives in Chaldea thought lived so happily, and would continue so: and *of the land of Israel;* or, *upon the land of Israel* [z]; inhabitants on it; to this sense the Targum and Septuagint version interpret it, and also Kimchi: *they shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment;* meaning at the siege of Jerusalem, when they could not eat and drink in peace; but, while they were eating and drinking, were disturbed and put into fear and surprise by the besiegers; and also, hearing that their provisions would not hold out, were careful how they ate and drank, and were frighted with the thoughts of being reduced to extreme want: *that her land may be desolate from all that is therein;* or, *from its fulness* [a]; men and cattle, cities, towns, houses, vineyards, fields, fruits, and plenty of all good things. Jarchi expounds it of riches: *because of the violence of all them that dwell therein;* not the violence of the Chaldeans, making a prey of all they met with, plundering cities and towns, and making forage of the fruits of the earth, by which means the land was desolate; but the rapine, oppression, and injustice of the Jews, which were the cause of all these calamities which came upon their country.

Ver. 20. *And the cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste*, &c.] Not only the city of Jerusalem, but the other cities of Judea; as they were by the Chaldeans, which were then full of inhabitants: *and the land shall be desolate;* the whole land of Judea be destitute of men and cattle, and lie uncultivated, and become barren and unfruitful: *and ye shall know that I am the Lord;* who were then captives in Babylon, as well as those who should be dispersed among the nations would; see ver. 15, 16.

Ver. 21. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] After he had been a sign unto the people, in the two instances above mentionod; and they had hardened themselves against the belief of the things signified by them, because the time of their accomplishment was not yet.

Ver. 22. *Son of man, what* is *that proverb that ye have in the land of Israel*, &c.] Which question is put, not as ignorant of it, but as filled with indignation at the impiety and boldness of those that used it, and in order to expose the wickedness and folly of it: *saying, the days are prolonged;* the days of affliction and distress; the time of Jerusalem's destruction, and of the Babylonish captivity, these were not to be of a long time: and therefore they were ready to flatter themselves they would never be, at least in their days; and hence, because judgment was not immediately executed, their hearts were set in them to do evil; and thus they abused the patience and long-suffering of God; and they used this and the following expression so often, and so long, that they became proverbial to them: *and every vision faileth?* or *perishes* [b]; every prophecy comes to nothing; no one is fulfilled; at least because not at once, therefore they concluded it never would, or, however, hoped it never would; and so pleased themselves, and continued in their impenitence and unbelief, and contempt of prophecy.

Ver. 23. *Tell them therefore*, &c.] Plainly and boldly, with the greatest assurance and confidence, as from God himself: *thus saith the Lord God, I will make this proverb to cease;* by quickly accomplishing the things which they, by this proverb, represented as at a great distance, and what would never be brought about: *and they shall no more use it as a proverb;* when the things predicted shall take place: *but say unto them, the days are at hand, and the effect of every vision;* the time is hastening on, and will quickly come, when every prophecy shall be fulfilled: it was in the sixth year of Jehoiachin's captivity that these prophecies were delivered out; and in the ninth year Nebuchadnezzar came with his army, and besieged Jerusalem; so that the days were at hand; in three years' time there began an accomplishment of the above predictions, which were scoffed at in the proverb used.

Ver. 24. *For there shall be no more any vain vision*, &c.] Or prophecy; such as the false prophets had given out, that the people should be in peace and safety, and not be delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon; which they gave heed to, and so en-

[y] לְיוֹשְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַםִ habitatoribus Hierosolymorum, Montanus, Starckius; de habitaturibus, Piscator; de habitantibus Hierosolymam, Coccejus.

[z] אֶל אַדְמַת יִשְׂרָאֵל ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ, Sept.; super terram Israel, Calvin; in terram Israelis, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; so Ben Melech.

[a] מִמְּלֹאָהּ a plenitudine sua, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius.

[b] אָבַד periit, Munster, Montanus, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator; perit, Starckius.

couraged the lying prophets to go on prophesying smooth things; when the prophecies of the true prophets were accomplished, then the false ones were rejected, and their prophecies no more regarded: nor could there be any more a place for them, or a reception of them: *nor flattering divination within the house of Israel*: the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, *in the midst of the children of Israel*: and so the Targum; but Kimchi says, that copies that so read are wrong; and which is confirmed by the Masora, which observes, that the reading is so in all places but in this. The Syriac version renders it *doubtful prediction*; and the Vulgate Latin version *ambiguous divination*; like the prophecies and answers of the Heathen oracles, which were delivered in terms of doubtful signification, and might be taken in more senses than one. The Septuagint version is, *he that divines for grace*; in order to ingratiate himself into the people, to gain their good will, or their money, or both; and therefore divines smooth things, and flatters them with that which is most agreeable to their inclination; but when they shall see the city taken, and themselves carried captive, they will no more regard such soothing diviners, who pretended from the stars to tell what shall come to pass, as the Arabic version suggests.

Ver. 25. *For I am the Lord: I will speak*, &c.] A sovereign Being, immutable and eternal; who will speak by his prophets what is his mind and will shall be done: *and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass*; the word of prophecy delivered out in his name by the true prophets never fails, but is always accomplished; as that was which respected the siege of Jerusalem, and captivity of the Jews: *it shall be no more prolonged*; the judgment threatened shall be inflicted, and that in a very short time: *for in your days, O rebellious house*; whilst they were living; which they hoped would never be, at least not till after their death; whereas, within five or six years after this, all came to pass: *will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord God of hosts*; not only the prophecy of their ruin should be given out in their days, but accomplished in that time; which they might depend upon, since he who said it is the mighty God, the Lord of armies in heaven and in earth.

Ver. 26. *Again, the word of the Lord came to me, saying.*] This is repeated to confirm what was before spoken, and that they might assure themselves that there would be a certain and speedy accomplishment of what the Lord had said by his prophet.

Ver. 27. *Son of man, behold*, they of *the house of Israel say*, &c.] Either they of the ten tribes in Babylon, or the Jews in Judea, who were also Israelites: these the Lord directs the prophet to take notice of, and be a witness of what they said; since he himself, as a prophet, was concerned in it: *the vision that he seeth is for many days* to come, *and he prophesieth of the times that are afar off*: that is, according to them, the vision that Ezekiel the prophet saw concerning their ruin; and the prophecy which he delivered out relating to that was not to be fulfilled as yet; there were many days and years still to come; it was at a great distance, and so they put away this evil day far from them; they own that he had a vision and prophecy, but it respected future times, and distant ages; and therefore they did not trouble themselves with it; it gave them no great concern, because they considered it as afar off.

Ver. 28. *Therefore say unto them, thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Carry this message to them from me, whether they will hear it or no; so shall it be: *there shall none of my words be prolonged any more*; the fulfilment of prophecies delivered in the name of the Lord by the prophets shall be no longer deferred, but shall quickly be: *but the word which I have spoken shall be done, saith the Lord God*; one jot and tittle of it shall not pass away till all be fulfilled; sooner may heaven and earth pass away than that shall; it is for ever settled in heaven, and shall be fulfilled on earth; he that has said it is of one mind, and none can turn him; and is able to do whatsoever he pleases.

CHAP. XIII.

IT being said in the preceding chapter, ver. 24, that there should be no more a vain vision, nor a flattering divination; the prophet is ordered to prophesy against the false prophets and prophetesses, ver. 1, 2, 17. the former are described as prophesying out of their own hearts, ver. 2. as foolish ones, following their own spirit, and seeing nothing, ver. 3. they are compared to foxes in the deserts, ver. 4. and are represented as unconcerned to stand in the gap for the people, ver. 5. and as seeing vanity and lying divination: wherefore the Lord was against them, ver. 6, 7, 8. what they are threatened with are, that they should not be in the assembly of God's people; nor written in the writing of the house of Israel; nor enter into the land of Israel, ver. 9. the reason of which was, because they seduced the Lord's people, by speaking peace to them when there was none; which is figuratively expressed by building a wall, and daubing it with untempered mortar, ver. 10. upon which the wall is threatened to be rent, and caused to fall with a stormy wind; signifying the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldean army; and the false prophets to have the wrath of God poured on them who doubted it, ver. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. and then follows the order to the prophet to prophesy against the false prophetesses, and set his face against them, and pronounce woe upon them in the name of the Lord; who are described as prophesying out of their own hearts; sowing pillows to all armholes; and making kerchiefs on the head of all sorts of persons; and which they did for poor small gain, and to the detriment of immortal souls, good and bad, ver. 17, 18, 19. wherefore the Lord threatens to tear off their pillows and kerchiefs, and deliver his people out of their hands, no more to be hunted by them, ver. 20, 21. the reason of which was, because they saddened the hearts of the righteous, and strengthened the hands of the wicked, ver. 22. and the chapter is concluded with a resolution that they should see no more vanity

nor divine divinations; and that the Lord's people should be delivered from them, and they should know that he was the Lord, ver. 23.

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] Giving orders to prophesy against the false prophets and prophetesses, which were either in the land of Israel, of whom the prophet had notice; or rather who were among the captives in Babylon, where Ezekiel now was.

Ver. 2. *Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel*, &c.] Who called themselves so, and were accounted such by others; though they were not true, but false prophets; and so the Targum calls them: *that prophesy*: that is, smooth things to the people; promising a speedy return from the captivity; or that Jerusalem should not be taken by the Chaldeans, and the inhabitants of it, and of the land, be carried captive: *and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts*; who were not sent of God, nor spake from him; but of themselves, what came into their heads, and was agreeable to their fancies, imaginations, and carnal hearts; such are false teachers, that go forth without being sent, and teach not according to the word of God, but according to their own carnal reasonings; so the Targum, "according to the will of their "hearts;" what they pleased themselves: *hear ye the word of the Lord*: which came from the Lord himself, and not from man, meaning the following prophecy; so the written word of God should be attended to, both by teachers and hearers, as the only rule of faith and practice; see Isa. viii. 20.

Ver. 3. *Thus saith the Lord God, woe unto the foolish prophets*, &c.] The false prophets, as the Targum; who are foolish, as all are who are not sent of God, and furnished by him with wisdom and knowledge, and who prophesy out of their own hearts; for what else but folly can proceed from thence? this must be a great mortification to these prophets to be called foolish, when they reckoned themselves wise men, being vainly puffed up in their fleshly minds, and were accounted so by others; but what is wisdom with men is foolishness with God: *that follow their own spirit*; or *walk after it* [c]; and not the spirit of God, who leads into all truth; they pretended to a spirit of prophecy, but it was their own spirit and the dictates of it they followed, and not the spirit of the Lord; and therefore it is no wonder that they prophesied false things, and led the people wrong; as all such teachers do, who give way to their own fancies and imaginations, and forsake the word of God, and do not implore the assistance and teachings of the blessed Spirit: *and have seen nothing*: no vision, as the Syriac version renders it; they pretended to have revelations of things future from the Lord, but they had none; what they saw were vain visions and lying divinations, and were as nothing, and worse than nothing; yea, they said what they never saw.

Ver. 4. *O Israel, thy prophets* are *like the foxes of the deserts.*] The false prophets, as the Targum; these are called Israel's prophets, because received, embraced, and encouraged by them; not the Lord's, for they were not sent by him, nor had any messages from him; and such are comparable to foxes, for their craftiness and cunning, and lying in wait to deceive, as these seduced the Lord's people, ver. 10. and such are false teachers, who walk in craftiness, and handle the word of God deceitfully, and are deceitful workers; and to foxes in the deserts, which are hungry and ravenous, and make a prey of whatsoever comes within their reach, as these prophets did of the people, ver. 19. Kimchi interprets *deserts* of breaches and ruinous places in the walls of a vineyard, where the foxes lie, or through which they enter into the vineyard and spoil it; as these false prophets entered in among the Israelites, like to a vineyard, and did them much hurt and damage, by insinuating themselves among the weak, and those of little faith, which the above writer compares to breaches in vineyards; see Cant. ii. 15. It may be the deserts may have respect to the land of Chaldea, where Israel was carried captive, and where these foxes, the false prophets, could play their part to advantage; not being under the notice and restraints of the sanhedrim at Jerusalem.

Ver. 5. *Ye have not gone up into the gaps*, &c.] Or *breaches* [d]; so the Targum. The allusion is to breaches made in the walls of a city when besieged; at which time those within gather together in great numbers to meet the enemy, and prevent his entrance by the breaches. These words are either spoken to the princes of Israel, the civil magistrates; or to the prophets, who seeing the sins of the people, like a mighty torrent, opening a breach for the wrath and judgments of God to pour in upon them, should have called them, and importunately pressed them to repentance and reformation, and to have put up their prayers, and made intercession to God for them; neither of which they did, and therefore are here blamed; see ch. xxii. 30. Psal. cvii. 23: *neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel*: or a *fence*, a fortification. The Vulgate Latin renders it, *a wall*: a new wall, which is generally made by the besieged within, when a breach is made upon them: it signifies the same as before. Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it of repentance and good works; and so the Targum, which paraphrases the words thus, "neither have ye done for yourselves good works, to "deprecate for the house of Israel, to stand to pray "for them:" *to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord*: when he came forth in battle-array against them, with great wrath and indignation, in the way of his righteous judgments. The Targum is, "when war- "riors come up against them in the day of the wrath "of the Lord;" when the Chaldeans came against them by the will of God, he being angry with them.

Ver. 6. *They have seen vanity, and lying divination*, &c.] The visions the false prophets pretended to see were nothing but the fruit of their own fancies and imaginations, and had nothing real in them; and what they divined or foretold should be were all lies, and never came to pass, and never would: *saying, the Lord saith: and the Lord hath not sent them*: they came to the people with a lie in their mouths, giving out that the Lord spoke by them; when they had no mis-

[c] ההלכים אחר רוחם qui ambulant post spiritum suum, Pagninus, Calvin, Cocceius, Starckius.

[d] בפרצות in fracturas, Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version; rupturas, Calvin, Piscator, Starckius.

sion from him; nor any commission to say what they did; or any warrant from him for their prophecies: *and they have made* others *to hope that they would confirm the word;* or, *that the word would be confirmed* [e]; that what was said by them would have its accomplishment; and that their prophecies would be fulfilled. By their solemn way of speaking; by the use they made of the name of the Lord; by the strong assurances they gave, and by their frequent repetition of their predictions, the people were brought to hope and believe that the event would answer to what they said; wherefore, instead of bringing them to a sense of their sins, and repentance for them, whereby the judgments of God would have been prevented, they hardened them in them, and hastened their ruin.

Ver. 7. *Have ye not seen a vain vision,* &c.] A vision only in pretence, and not in reality; the effect of their own fancy, and not any thing shewn them by the Lord: *and have ye not spoken a lying divination;* delivered out a known lie, saying they had it from the Lord, when they had it not; or a prophecy that will deceive, and be without effect, and in the issue prove a falsehood: *whereas ye say, the Lord saith* it; *albeit I have not spoken?* this is a proof that what they gave out for a vision and prophecy was a vain and false one; seeing they pretended they had it from the Lord, when he never spoke a word to them, or by them.

Ver. 8. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] This is what he says, and it may be depended on will come to pass; though the other he said not, they said he did, but was a lying divination: *because ye have spoken vanity, and seen lies;* which will in the issue prove so, lying and deceitful; what never came from God, but from themselves and the father of lies, and would never be accomplished: *therefore, behold, I am against you, saith the Lord God;* or, *I unto you;* which may be supplied thus, *I* come, or will come, *unto you* [f]; in a way of providence, and chastise and punish you: see Rev. ii. 16. or I will be your adversary; and a sad thing it is for any to have God to be against them; there's no contending with him; none ever hardened themselves against him, and prospered; men are but with him as stubble, or as thorns and briers to a consuming fire.

Ver. 9. *And mine hand shall be upon the prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies,* &c.] Meaning, by his hand, not the true spirit of prophecy, attended with a divine power and energy, as in ch. i. 3. and ii. 14. but the wrath and power of God seizing on them and punishing them. So the Targum, "and the stroke of "my power shall be upon the false prophets," &c. The sense is, that they should feel the weight of his hand, and the lighting down of his arm with the indignation of his wrath, by inflicting punishment upon them: *they shall not be in the assembly of my people:* shall have no place in the church of God, nor fellowship with the saints; they shall not join with them in religious worship here; but either shall be left by the righteous judgment of God to separate themselves from them, or shall be excluded their communion: and much less shall they stand in the congregation of the righteous hereafter: or, *they shall not be in the secret,* or *council of my people* [g]; shall not be consulted by them on any account, civil or religious; or not be let into the secret counsels of the Lord, as the Lord's people be, who are his favourites and his friends; see Psal. xxv. 14. The Targum is, "in the good secret "which is hidden for my people they shall not be:" *neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel;* their names shall not be in the roll or register of those that return from captivity, as in Ezra ii. but shall die in their exile; they shall not be in the list and catalogue of the citizens of any city in the land of Israel, particularly of Jerusalem, the chief city; see Isa. iv. 3. and it should appear that their names were never written in the Lamb's book of life; or that they ever were among the number of God's elect, the true and spiritual Israel of God. So the Targum, "and in the writing of eternal life, which is writ-"ten for the righteous of the house of Israel, they "shall not be written;" see Psal. lxix. 28: *neither shall they enter into the land of Israel;* should not return to the land of Israel, when the captives should at the end of the captivity; nor enter into the land of Canaan, the heavenly rest, which remains for the people of God; for into the New-Jerusalem state shall nothing enter that makes an abomination, or a lie, as these prophets had done; see Rev. xxi. 27. and xxii. 15: *and ye shall know that I am the Lord God:* omniscient, omnipotent, true and faithful, holy, just, and good.

Ver. 10. *Because, even because they have seduced my people,* &c.] Who were so by profession; otherwise such who are truly the people of God, though they may be deceived in civil things, yet not in religious matters, at least not totally and finally; in this sense it is impossible to deceive the elect of God; but as false teachers are deceivers, they lie in wait, and use all means to deceive them, and do deceive nominal professors, which is resented by the Lord; and this is given as a reason of their punishment; and which is doubled, as in Lev. xxvi. 43, to shew the heinousness of their sin, and the certainty of their punishment: *saying, peace, and* there was *no peace;* giving out that peace would be made with the king of Babylon; that the captives would return to their own land, where, with those that were in it, they would enjoy great prosperity; when no such thing came to pass, nor would; but the contrary was certain, by the predictions of the true prophets sent by the Lord: *and one built up a wall;* one of the false prophets, and of the chief of them, gave out that Jerusalem would continue a walled city, and abide firm and impregnable against the Chaldean army, and would never be taken: *and, lo, others daubed it with untempered* mortar; others of the false prophets, observing that what the first had delivered out was pleasing to the people, not only assented to it, but strongly affirmed it; and, with colourings and specious arguments, made it look more plausible and probable; when, alas! the whole was no other than

[e] לקים דבר ut praestet verbum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; ratum fore, Grotius; eventurum esse, Castalio.

[f] הנני אליכם ecce ego ad vos, Vulg. Lat.; sub venio, Grotius; veniam, Piscator, Starckius; venturus sum cum ira mea, Vatablus.

[g] בסוד עמי לא יהיו in secreto populi mei non erunt, Montanus; in arcano, Munster; in consilio, Junius & Tremellius, Calvin, Polanus; in concilio, Vatablus.

like putting a parcel of loose stones or bricks together, and throwing some slushy stuff upon them, as moistened sand without lime, or clay without straw, as the Targum and Vulgate Latin versions render it; which would never cement the bricks or stones together. R. Joseph Kimchi interprets it of bricks not burnt: so false teachers imitate the true ministers of the word, in preaching peace; but then they don't direct aright where it is to be had, which is only in Christ; or the proper persons, sinners pressed with the guilt of sin, and seeking for ease and peace in a right way; but publish it to those to whom it does not belong, for there is no peace to the wicked; and put them upon making peace themselves by their own works of righteousness, and their legal repentance, and outward humiliation; or promise it to them, though they have no faith in Christ, and are not sensible of their sin and danger: these men are builders, but not wise master-builders; they don't build upon the foundation Christ, but build up a wall without him; leaving him out of the building who is the chief corner-stone; deliver out some loose and unconnected doctrines, that are not according to the Scriptures, nor consistent with each other; and encourage the people to perform some loose duties and cold services, without the cement of faith and love; and which is no other than building upon the sand, or with it; though they fancy it to be a wall, a shelter, and protection to them, from the wrath and justice of God, and by which they shall climb up to heaven; which will prove a bowing wall, and a tottering fence; and in these mistakes they are buoyed up by false teachers, and are flattered as being in a fair way for eternal happiness.

Ver. 11. *Say unto them which daub it with untempered mortar, &c.*] The false prophets, that flattered the people with peace, prosperity, and safety: *that it shall fall;* the wall they have built and daubed over; the city of Jerusalem shall be taken and destroyed; the predictions of the prophets shall prove lies; and the vain hopes and expectations of the people fail: *there shall be an overflowing shower;* that shall wash away the wall with its untempered mortar; meaning the Chaldean army, compared to an overflowing shower of rain, for the multitude of men in it, and the force, power, and noise, with which it should come, bearing down all before it; see Isa. viii. 7, 8: *and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall;* upon the wall, and break it down; or, *ye, O great hailstones, shall cause* it *to fall*[h]; or, *I will give great hailstones*, and *it shall fall*[i]. The word *elgabish*, which in some copies is one word, and in others two, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe, is either the same with *gabish*, which signifies a precious stone, and is rendered pearl in Job xxviii. 18. or it may be, as it seems to be, an Arabic word; and Hottinger[k] takes it to be *gypsum*, or lime, or the *lapis laminosus*, or slate; so the Lord threatens to rain down lime or slate upon them from heaven, which should destroy the wall built with untempered mortar: *and a stormy wind shall rend* it; this seems to signify the same as the overflowing shower, the Chaldean army, compared to a strong tempestuous wind; see Jer. iv. 11, 12, 13. as the hailstones may signify the king of Babylon, with his princes, nobles, and generals.

Ver. 12. *Lo, when the wall is fallen,* &c.] Jerusalem is taken: *shall it not be said unto you;* the false prophets, by the people who had been deceived by them: *where is the daubing wherewith ye have daubed* it? what is become of all your promises of peace, and assurance of safety and prosperity; your smooth words and plausible arguments; your specious pretences, and flattering prophecies? thus would they be insulted by those they had deceived, as well as laughed at by such who disregarded their predictions, and believed the prophets of the Lord.

Ver. 13. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Confirming what he had before bid the prophet say, ver. 11: *I will even rend* it *with a stormy wind in my fury;* stormy winds sometimes rend rocks asunder, 1 Kings xix. 11: and much more feeble tottering walls; what is before ascribed to the stormy wind is said to be done here by the Lord himself, making use of that as an instrument; stormy winds fulfil his word, Psal. cxlviii. 8. the cause of which is his wrath, which made the dispensation, or the invasion of the Chaldean army, the more terrible; and this is mentioned in all the following clauses: *and there shall be an overflowing shower in mine anger, and great hailstones in* my *fury to consume* it; which, coming from the Lord, and attended with his wrath and fury, must needs bring on utter ruin and destruction. The whole is paraphrased by the Targum thus, "and I will bring a mighty king "with the force of tempests; and a destroying people "as a prevailing rain in my fury shall come; and "kings, who were powerful as hailstones, in wrath to "consume."

Ver. 14. *So will I break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered* mortar, *&c.*] Which is repeated and expressed in these words, both for the sake of confirmation and explanation of what is before said: *and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be discovered;* meaning the city of Jerusalem, and by these phrases declaring the utter destruction of it; whereby also would be discovered the vain assurances and lying predictions of the false prophets, and which would appear to be entirely groundless: so the Targum, "and I will destroy the city in "which ye have prophesied false prophecies; and I "will cause it to fall to the ground, and its foundations "shall be discovered:" *and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed in the midst of it;* the false prophets perished in the destruction of Jerusalem, and not one of them escaped: *and ye shall know that I am the Lord;* who is true to his word, and able to accomplish it, whether of punishment or of threatening.

Ver. 15. *Thus will I accomplish my wrath upon the wall,* &c.] Or upon the city, as the Targum; pour out all his indignation, and inflict just punishment upon the city of Jerusalem and its inhabitants: *and upon them that have daubed it with untempered* mortar; the false prophets: so the Targum, "and the false pro-"phets that prophesy in it false prophecies:" *and will say unto you, the wall* is *no* more, *neither they that*

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[h] ואתנה אבני אלגביש תפלנה & vos, O lapides grandinis, ruere facietis *aedificium*, Munster.

[i] Et dabo lapides grandinis, qui corruere facient *parietem*, Pagninus.

[k] Smegma Oriental. l. 1. c. 7. p. 119.

daubed it; neither the city of Jerusalem, nor the prophets that prophesied of its safety; nor their false prophecies; nor the vain hopes of the people they fed them with: so the Targum, "there is no city, nor "false prophets."

Ver. 16. To wit, *the prophets of Israel, which prophesy concerning Jerusalem, &c.*] This explains who are meant by those that daubed with untempered mortar: *and which see visions of peace for her;* not in reality, but in pretence; they boasted that they had visions and revelations from the Lord, and assured the people they should enjoy great peace and prosperity; but these, as they are before called, were vain visions and lying divinations: there seems to be in this an allusion to the name of Jerusalem, which, according to some, signifies, "they shall see peace:" *and there is no peace, saith the Lord;* not to the wicked; nor to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who listened to the false prophets; nor to the false prophets themselves.

Ver. 17. *Likewise, thou son of man, set thy face against the daughters of thy people,* &c.] The false prophetesses; for as there were women in some ages, who had the true spirit of prophecy, as Miriam, Deborah, and Huldah; so there were some that pretended to it, who had it not, as Noadiah in the times of Nehemiah, Neh. vi. 14. and such there were in the times of Ezekiel; against whom he is bid to set his face, and look them out of countenance, and make them ashamed; who, contrary to the modesty of the sex, had impudently taken upon them to prophesy to the people; and such have been since in the times of the Gospel, as Jezebel, Rev. ii. 20. and Prisca, Maximilla, Quintilla, and others: *who prophesy out of their own heart;* as the men did, ver. 2. what their own hearts suggested to them; what came into their minds, and their own fancies and imaginations led them to; what was according to their carnal affections and desires, and agreeable to those that heard them: *and prophesy thou against them:* declare their prophecies false; warn the people from giving heed to them; and foretel what shall befall them for deceiving the people.

Ver. 18. *And say, thus saith the Lord God, woe to the women that sew pillows to all arm-holes,* &c.] Or, *put pillows to all elbows*[l]; thereby signifying that they might be at ease, and rest secure, and look upon themselves as in the utmost safety, and not fear any enemy, the invasion of the Chaldeans; or that their city would be destroyed, and they carried captive, as the prophets of the Lord had foretold: *and make kerchiefs upon the head of every stature;* whether taller or lower; the word *stature*, according to Kimchi, is used, because the people stood when they inquired of these prophetesses whether they should have peace or no, or good or evil should befall them: or, *of every age*, as the Septuagint version; young or old; they put these kerchiefs, or *veils*[m], as some render the word, upon all sorts of persons (for they refused none that came to them they could get any thing by), upon their heads, either as a token of victory and triumph, signifying that they should have the better of their enemies, and rejoice over them; or to make them proud, and suggest to them that they should never be stripped of their ornaments; or else, as the former sign shews that they lulled them asleep upon pillows, and led them on in a carnal security, so they kept them in blindness and ignorance: and this they did, *to hunt souls;* to bring them into their nets and snares; to catch them with their false prophecies, and deceive them by their fallacious signs, and superstitious rites and ceremonies, and so ruin and destroy them[n]. *Will ye hunt the souls of my people;* that cleave to me, and regard my prophets; will ye endeavour to insnare those, and seek to destroy their peace and comfort, and even their souls? ye shall not be able to do it: *and will ye save the souls alive* that come *unto you?* and inquire of you how things will be, and listen to your lying divinations; can you save them from the ruin and destruction that is coming upon them? no, you will not be able to do it; and what wickedness is it in you to attempt the one or the other? The Targum is, "the souls of my people can ye destroy or quicken? "your souls, which are yours, can you quicken?" the sense is, they could neither do the one nor the other; and yet such was their iniquity, that they sought to do both.

Ver. 19. *And will ye pollute me among my people,* &c.] Defile the name of the Lord, by abusing it, to cover their wicked designs and practices, pretending they were sent by him, when they were not; that what they said came from him, though he spoke not by them; and that it was his will they declared, when it was their own, and what came out of their own hearts and heads: so the Targum, *will ye pollute my will among my people;* to profane his name among the Gentiles was a great sin, but to pollute it among his own people was greater; attempting to draw them aside from his fear and worship, and that for gain, for small gain too: *for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread;* which shews them to be abandoned creatures, that were ready to do or say any thing for the meanest trifle; their consciences were seared; they gave up themselves to work wickedness with greediness, and for filthy lucre-sake, and for a small portion of that; which exaggerates their sin and folly; see Prov. xxviii. 21. Mic. iii. 5: *to slay the souls that should not die;* by threatening the captives in Babylon, who had surrendered themselves in Jehoiachim's time, with destruction and death; who ought to have been comforted in their exile, and whom the Lord in his own time would deliver: *and to save the souls alive that should not live;* by promising the inhabitants of Jerusalem long life, safety, and prosperity; when they should either die by the sword, famine, and pestilence; or be carried captive, which was as death; for so they did, or attempted to do, both the one and the other, by their false prophecies, as follows: *by your lying to my people that hear your lies?* their false prophecies, which some hearkened to, and believed; and others were intimidated by, and feared that so it would be.

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[l] למתפרות applicantibus, sive accommodantibus, Gataker; conjungentibus, vel adunantibus, Gussetius, Ebr. Comment. p. 947. כסתות על כל אצילי pulvillos super omnes cubitos manus, Calvin; pro omnibus cubitis manuum, Piscator.

[m] Velamina, Polanus. So Kimchi and Ben Melech.

[n] Gussetius thinks that by the words rendered *pillows* and *kerchiefs* are meant *nets*, with which they covered their heads and arms; for, otherwise, what connexion is there between the above things and hunting? See Ebr. Comment. p. 390, 566.

Ver. 20. *Wherefore thus saith the Lord God, behold, I am against your pillows*, &c.] Not only had an abhorrence of them, but was determined to destroy them, detect their fallacies, and expose the folly of such actions, and them to shame and contempt: *wherewith ye there hunt the souls to make* them *fly*: to the places where they prophesied; into the toils and nets they spread for them, in order to catch them with their divinations and prophecies, and make a gain of them: or, *into the gardens*, or *groves* *; there to commit idolatry, Isa. lxv. 3: *and I will tear them from your arms*: by which it seems that these pillows were not only put under the arms of those that came to inquire of these she-prophets or fortune-tellers; but they put them under their own arms, and lay upon them as if they were asleep, and in a trance or ecstacy; and so the kerchiefs or veils were upon their heads, which covered their faces, to shew that they were quite retired from the world, and wholly attentive to the visions and revelations they pretended were made them by the Lord; and which they gave out, in this superstitious way, to the credulous people that flocked about them: *and will let the souls go, even the souls that ye hunt to make* them *fly*: which were captivated with their superstitions; drawn into their nets and snares; decoyed into the gardens, where they were prevailed upon to sacrifice to idols, and were taken with their soothsaying and lying divinations; these the Lord promises to break the snare for them, and set them at liberty, and preserve them from that ruin and destruction they were ready to come into; see Psal. cxxiv. 7.

Ver. 21. *Your kerchiefs also will I tear*, &c.] From their heads; discover their tricks, and expose them to the contempt of the people, and destroy both them and their works: *and deliver my people out of your hand*; from being hunted, insnared, and deceived by them: *and they shall be no more in your land to be hunted*; but should either flee into Egypt, and other countries, for shelter, or be carried captive into Babylon: *and ye shall know that I am the Lord*; see ver. 9, 14.

Ver. 22. *Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad*, &c.] By polluting the name of the Lord; by hunting and decoying souls into their destructive nets; and by threatening such who would not give heed to their superstitious rites, lying divinations, and false prophecies: so false teachers make the hearts of such sad, who, having seen the insufficiency of their own righteousness, trust in the righteousness of Christ, and are justified by it; by teaching such doctrines as depreciate the love and grace of God the Father; making his love dependent on the creature; his covenant conditional, and salvation to be by works, and not by grace; as detract from the person, offices, and grace of Christ; denying his deity and divine sonship; making light of his blood, and setting up man's righteousness against his: and such as are injurious to the Spirit's work; ascribing regeneration and conversion to man's free will; giving such marks and signs of grace as are not to be found in any, and representing it as what may be entirely lost: *whom I have not made sad*; nor would he have them made sad by others; neither by false prophets and their lies, nor by any other means; neither by any thing within them, nor any thing without them; not by any or all of their spiritual enemies: he would have them comforted; the covenant of grace, and the promises of it, are made for such a purpose; the Scriptures are written for this use; ordinances are designed for this end; ministers are appointed for this work; and this is the office of the divine Spirit; and the Son of God himself was sent on this account: *and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way*; by repentance and reformation; and so far were the wicked from returning from it in this way, that they were emboldened in sin, and hardened in it; and were more frequent and open in the commission of it; and that through the prophecies of these false prophetesses; as wicked men are by the doctrines of false teachers: and particularly *by promising him life*; or that he should live long, and enjoy much peace and prosperity in the land of Israel, and not be carried captive into Babylon; and as false teachers harden men in sin, by giving them hopes of eternal life, though they continue in their evil ways; or upon the foot of universal redemption, and upon their repentance, as the fruit of their own free will; and therefore take their swing of sin, as believing that Christ died for all men, and so for them, and therefore shall be saved, live as they will; and that it is in their power to repent when they please, and therefore procrastinate it to the last.

Ver. 23. *Therefore ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations*, &c.] They should not be suffered any longer to impose upon the people; and they should be so sufficiently exposed, that the people would not give heed to their vain visions and lying divinations any more; and no gain coming to them hereby, they would not be disposed to make pretensions to them, as they had done: or the sense is, that they should perish in the siege and destruction of Jerusalem; and so they and their false prophecies would cease together: *for I will deliver my people out of your hand, and ye shall know that I am the Lord*; see ver. 21.

CHAP. XIV.

IN this chapter are contained the displeasure of God at hypocritical idolaters that sought unto him, and at the false prophets; the judgments that should come upon them, and which should not be averted by the intercession of the best of men: and yet a promise that a remnant should be saved. The elders of Israel are said to sit before the prophet, ver. 1. to whom the Lord gives an account of them, ver. 2, 3. and orders the prophet what he should say to them, that the Lord would answer them himself, ver. 4, 5. and that he should bid the house of Israel repent and turn from their idols, or else the Lord would set his face against them, and cut them off, both them and the false prophets they sought unto: and this is threatened

* לפרחות in floralia, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Starckius; in floridis hortis, Piscator.

in order to reform them, and continue them his covenant-people, ver. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. and then the judgment of famine is particularly threatened; to avert which, the prayers of the best of men would be of no effect, ver. 12, 13, 14. and next the judgment of noisome beasts, with the same intimation, ver. 15, 16. likewise the sword, ver. 17, 18. and also the pestilence, ver. 19, 20. and much less when they should be all sent together, ver. 21. and the chapter is concluded with a promise that a remnant should be saved; which would be a comfort to the captives of Babylon, and accounts for what the Lord had done, or would do, in Jerusalem, ver. 22, 23.

Ver. 1. *Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me*, &c.] The Syriac version adds, *to consult the Lord*; by the prophet. These, according to Kimchi, were the elders of the captivity, the heads of the captives that were now in Babylon with Ezekiel: but there are others that think they were some that came from Jerusalem to Babylon on some business or another; and having heard much of the prophet, came to visit him, and to hear his prophecies, and inquire of the Lord by him: *and sat before me*; silent and pensive, as persons in anxiety and distress; or as hearers of him, for sitting is a hearing gesture; they sat and heard with great attention, gravity, and seriousness, with seeming affection and reverence; and all this was not in a visionary way, but was a real fact; see Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32.

Ver. 2. *And the word of the Lord came unto me*, &c.] Whilst the elders were sitting before him, and whispered secretly and powerfully the following things in his ears: *saying*:

Ver. 3. *Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart*, &c.] Though they look so grave and demure, seem so devout and religious, and hear with so much attention and reverence, and express such a desire of consulting me by thee, they are no other than idolaters; and though they are at such a distance from their native place, and have not their idols with them, yet they have them in their fancy and imagination, and their hearts are after them, and are set upon them: these engross their affections, they are near and dear unto them, notwithstanding all their pretensions: or, they *have caused their idols to ascend upon their heart* [p]; their hearts are the altars on which they worship them, and the throne on which they have placed them: they are held in the highest esteem by them, and have the greatest honours done them, and have the ascendant over them; even their *dunghil*-gods, as the word [q] signifies; though they are but *dung*, filthy and abominable, these they lay upon their hearts; and what else is man's righteousness, when made an idol of, trusted to, and depended on? it is no other, as the apostle says, than *loss* and *dung*, Phil. iii. 8. and so every carnal lust that is gratified and indulged is no other than an idol, or a dunghil-god, set up in the heart: *and put the stumbling-block of their iniquity before their face*; whenever they had an opportunity of so doing; for their hearts were not only inwardly affected to idols, but they outwardly worshipped them; set them before them, and bowed the knee to them, and prayed: and these idols are called *the stumbling-block of their iniquity*, because by worshipping these they fell into sin, and so into ruin; they were the occasion of their sin, and of their punishment: they stumbled at them, and fell, even though they were before their eyes; nay, they set them themselves before their face, which shews their obstinacy and resolution to continue in idolatry, though it would be their ruin: *should I be inquired of at all by them?* suffer them to come near me, and put a question to me, or be consulted by them through thee? no, I will not: or, *am I seriously inquired of by them?* so some [r] render the words; no, I am not: or, *being asked, shall I answer them?* so the Targum and Vulgate Latin version: or, *answering shall I answer them* [s]? no, I will not, they deserve no answer from me; they shall have none other of me than such an one as follows.

Ver. 4. *Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them*, &c.] That is, speak unto them as a prophet, and as from the Lord, and say what follows; so the Targum, "prophesy unto them, and say unto them:" *thus saith the Lord God, every man of the house of Israel, that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling-block of his iniquity before his face*; let him be who he will, one in public office, an elder of Israel, or a private person; no respect will be had, no distinction made, nor favour shewn; being an idolater in heart and practice, secretly and openly, he shall bear the punishment of his sin: *and cometh to the prophet*; the Prophet Ezekiel, as the elders of Israel now did, or any other prophet of the Lord: the Vulgate Latin version adds, *inquiring of me by him*; expecting to have an answer, and one according to their wishes: *I the Lord will answer him that cometh*; that cometh to the prophet; or, as the Targum, "that cometh to ask "instruction of me:" here is a various reading, a Keri and a Cetib; we follow the Keri, or marginal reading, בא, *that cometh*; and so does the Targum; but the Cetib, or written text, is בה, *in it*, thus; *I the Lord will answer him in it* [t]; in the question he puts to the prophet, or to the Lord by him; or in that time, immediately; but not with smooth things, as he expects, but with terrible things in righteousness; not in a way of grace and mercy, but in a way of judgment; not as he desires, but as he deserves: *according to the multitude of his idols*; in proportion to the number of his gods, and his idolatrous actions, shall the answer or punishment be: or these words may be connected with the word *cometh*, and be read thus, *that cometh with the multitude of his idols* [u]; with his heart full of idols, set up there; which is an instance of his hypocrisy, seen and detected by the Lord; and of his impudence, in daring to come unto him in such a manner; and of his folly, to expect a gracious answer from the Lord, this being his case. The Targum understands it quite otherwise, as if the answer the Lord would give would be a kind

[p] העלו גלוליהם על לבם ascendere fecerunt idola sua in, *vel* super cor suum, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin.

[q] גלוליהם stercoreos deos suos, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; stercora sua, Cocceius; stercora ipsorum, Starckius.

[r] האדרש אדרש להם an *igitur serio* interrogor ab eis? Piscator.

[s] An respondendo respondebo illis? Starckius. So Sept. Ar.

[t] Eadem *tempore*, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; in illo tempore, Piscator; in ea re, Cocceius, Starckius.

[u] בא ברוב גלוליו ipsi venienti in multitudine idolorum suorum, Pagninus, Montanus.

and agreeable one, paraphrasing this clause thus, "although he is mixed (implicated or entangled) in "the multitude of the worship of his idols."

Ver. 5. *That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart*, &c.] By which they are insnared, and drawn aside to their ruin; being given up to strong delusions, to believe a lie, and worship idols; God threatening to answer them by righteous judgments, and thereby take the wickedness, the hypocrisy, and idolatry, that were in their hearts, and expose and make it manifest unto others; or, by punishing them, to draw out the corruption and sin that were in them, that it might be seen what a wicked people they were. The Targum interprets the text in another way, "that "I may bring near the house of Israel, and put re- "pentance into their hearts." *Because they are all estranged from me through their idols;* they grew shy of God and his worship, when they fell into idolatry. Alienation from God, from the life of God, from the law of God, from the worship of God, and of the affections from him, is owing to some idol or another set up in the heart, or before the eye; whatever is worshipped besides God, or gains the ascendant in the heart, alienates from him; and God will not admit of a rival, he cannot and will not bear it; and for this reason he inflicts punishment, or answers in a terrible way.

Ver. 6. *Therefore say unto the house of Israel*, &c.] Deliver out the following exhortation to repentance unto them; for God's end, in all his threatenings and judgments, is to bring men to repentance: *thus saith the Lord God, repent, and turn* yourselves *from your idols:* or, *turn, and cause to be turned from your idols**; turn yourselves from the worship of idols, as the Targum, and do all that in you lies to turn others from the same; particularly your wives and young men, as Kimchi; and the rather they were obliged to do this, since in all probability they had been the means of drawing them into idolatry: *and turn away your faces from all your abominations;* their idols, detestable to God, and ought to have been so to them; these he would have them turn their faces from, not so much as look at them, much less worship them, that they might not be insnared by them; this is said, in opposition to their setting of them before their face, ver. 3, 4.

Ver. 7. *For every one of the house of Israel*, &c.] King and subjects, princes and people, high and low, rich and poor, of every rank, sex, and age: *or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel;* the proselytes; whether of righteousness, such as were circumcised, and embraced the Jewish religion; or of the gate, who were only inhabitants with them; one as another were obliged to worship the God of Israel, and abstain from idolatry; there was but one law to the Israelite and to the stranger, respecting this matter: *which separateth himself from me;* from the worship of God, and so from communion with him; turns his back on him, and becomes an apostate from him, by joining himself with idols: *and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling-block of his iniquity before his face;* these things are repeated, partly to observe the heinousness of the sin they were guilty of; and partly to shew the stupidity of this people, which required things to be said over and over, ere they could take them in, and be convinced of their evil: *and cometh to a prophet to inquire of him concerning me*; this explains what such persons would come to a prophet for, ver. 4. and exposes their hypocrisy: *I the Lord will answer him by myself:* not by the prophet to whom he comes, but by himself: or, *in my word*, as the Targum; yet not by words, but by blows; not in mercy, but in wrath; and in such manner, that it shall appear to come from the Lord, and to be according to truth and justice.

Ver. 8. *And I will set my face against that man*, &c.] And look him out of countenance, notwithstanding all his daring impudence and presumption in coming to a prophet of the Lord, and inquiring of him by him, when guilty of gross idolatry; which must needs be the case, when the face of God is set against a man. The Targum renders it, *my fury*, or *wrath;* and indeed that is what is meant; when God sets his face against a man, he pours out his wrath, or inflicts punishment on him; see Psal. xxxiv. 16. Jarchi's note is, "as a man that says I am at leisure from all busi- "ness, and I will attend to this;" laying aside all other business, wholly giving himself up to one thing, on which he is set. Dreadful is a man's case, when the Lord thus sets himself against him! *And will make him a sign and a proverb;* a spectacle of horror to look at, because of his misery; and a proverb, to be took up, and spoke of, as Zedekiah and Ahab were, Jer. xxix. 22: *and will cut him off from the midst of my people;* by a sudden death, which the Jews call death from heaven, or by the immediate hand of God; and which is answering by himself, as in the preceding verse: *and ye shall know that I am the Lord;* that is, those that remain, are not cut off, but are reclaimed by these examples from idolatry, and are brought to repentance, the remnant among them that should be saved; these should know and acknowledge the Lord was omniscient, and knew the hypocrisy of those men above described; and was omnipotent, and could make good his threatenings, and inflict deserved punishment; and that he was holy, just, and true, in all his ways.

Ver. 9. *And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing*, &c.] That is pleasing to men, and is not true, in hope of reward and applause, but it never comes to pass, and his expectations are not answered: *I the Lord have deceived that prophet;* by sending a lying spirit to him, as to Ahab's prophets, 1 Kings xxii. 22, 23. by giving him up to strong delusions, to believe a lie, and publish it, 2 Thess. ii. 11. and to his own heart's lusts; being willing, for the sake of gain, to prophesy smooth things, though false to the people, promising them peace when there was none; and then by frustrating his predictions, and disappointing him of his ends and views. R. Saadiah interprets this, as Kimchi observes, of God revealing and making it manifest that he was deceived; but more is meant by it than this, or even a bare permission; for though God is not the author of sin, yet he wills it to be done for

* שובו והשיבו convertimini, & facite converti, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus.

wise ends and purposes, and sometimes in a way of judgment, as a punishment for sin; and which was the case here, both with respect to the prophet that deceived, who as the fruit of his sin, his covetousness, was given up in just judgment to a reprobate mind: and the people that were deceived, who, rejecting the true prophets of the Lord, were willing to have smooth things prophesied to them: *and I will stretch out my hand upon them;* his avenging hand; the stroke of his power, as the Targum; a heavy one, and that for giving heed to a lying spirit; for uttering falsehood, and that with a wicked design, to gain the applause of the people, or for filthy lucre-sake: *and I will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel;* by some sore judgment or sudden death, and so be made a public example of.

Ver. 10. *And they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity,* &c.] Both the false prophet, and those that sought unto him, and were deceived by him; and which being laid according to the strictness of divine justice, is intolerable: sad is the case when a man is obliged to bear his own sins, and the punishment of them, and has no surety to undertake for him, and be a mediator between God and him, and make atonement for him: *the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeketh* unto him; they being both alike culpable, each pursuing the desires of their own evil hearts; the one seeking for smooth things to be spoken to him; the other speaking them, in order to gratify him, and for the sake of gain; the one being a false prophet, and the other seeking to and inquiring of him, though he was such, slighting and rejecting the true prophets of the Lord; both being deceived, and both blind, and so should fall into the same ditch, being under the same judicial blindness and hardness of heart. The Targum is, "according to the sin of "him that comes to learn and learns not; according "to the sin of the false prophet shall it be."

Ver. 11. *That the house of Israel may go no more astray from me,* &c.] Or from his worship, as the Targum; from the law of God, and obedience to it: sin is a going astray from God, a deviation from his commandments; it leads men out of the way of their duty into wrong paths, which issue in ruin, if grace prevent not; and sometimes the means which God makes use of for the restoring of his own people, and bringing them back to himself, are the punishments which he inflicts upon others; and which is his end in so doing, as it was here; that the false prophets, and those that followed them, being made examples of, might be a warning unto others, and caution them against falling into the same sins, that so they might not bear the same punishment; or be a means of reclaiming them from their errors, and for the future beware of going astray again: *neither be polluted any more with all their transgressions;* for every transgression, as it is an aberration from the law of God, so it is of a defiling nature: it defiles the mind and conscience, yea, the whole man, from which there is no cleansing but by the blood of Christ; it is loathsome in itself, contrary to the pure and holy nature of God, and abominable to a gracious mind, and therefore to be avoided; and which may be learnt from the punishment of it on others: *but that they may be my people, and I may be their God, saith the Lord God;* that is, that they may behave as such, and that it may appear that God is their God, and they are his people.

Ver. 12. *The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying.*] At the same time as before, continuing the prophecy, and a denunciation of judgments; for it does not seem to begin a new prophecy. The Targum renders it, the word of prophecy from the Lord.

Ver. 13. *Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously,* &c.] That is, the inhabitants of the land, when they are in general become sinners against God and his law; and not merely sinners, as all men are, but grievous ones, notorious sinners, guilty of very gross enormities, of great prevarication, perfidy, and treachery; for God is a God longsuffering, and has great patience with a people; and does not usually come forth in his judgments against a nation, until sin has universally prevailed among them, and they are guilty of grievous abominations, and those continued in: but when this is the case, *then will I stretch out mine hand upon it;* his hand of vindictive wrath and justice, and cause it to fall heavily, and men to feel it: *and will break the staff of the bread thereof;* take away bread-corn from the nation, the support of human life; which is that unto it, and the stay of it, as a staff is to a decrepit old man, that can't walk without one; or take away the virtue of it, so as though it might be had and eaten, yet not be nourishing; see ch. iv. 16: *and will send famine upon it;* by causing a drought, restraining rain, sending mildew, locusts, caterpillars, &c. to eat up the fruits of the earth: *and will cut off man and beast from it;* the latter for the sake of the former, and both through want of food.

Ver. 14. *Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it,* &c.] In the sinning land, and made intercession for it, that the famine might be removed, and the inhabitants of it be saved alive, this would not be granted; though they were men that found favour in the sight of God, and were eminent for prayer, and successful in it, and the means of saving many; as Noah his family, by preparing an ark according to the will of God; and Daniel was an instrument of saving the lives of his companions, and of the wise men of Chaldea; and Job, by his prayer for his friends, prevented the wrath of God, that was kindled against them, coming upon them; and yet, if they had been upon the spot at this time, their intercession for this people would have been of no avail; the decree was gone forth, and was not to be called in; it was unalterable, and God was inexorable: nor could it have been depended upon, if this declaration had not been made, that their prayers would have been effectual, had they been upon the spot, and put them up for this nation; since it might be observed, that the old world was not saved from a deluge in Noah's time, only he and his family; nor were the people of the Jews preserved from captivity in Daniel's time, nor even he himself; nor were Job's children saved, though he was greatly concerned for them: it may be observed from hence, that there was such a man as Job, as well as Noah and Daniel; and that the latter, though a young man, not above thirty years of age, at this time, yet was become very famous, not only for

his dignity and grandeur in Babylon, but for his religion and piety; and is placed between those two great men, Noah and Job; and being a person now living, precludes any argument being formed by the Papists, in favour of the intercession of departed saints; and which would not be conclusive from such a supposition as here made, had they been all such as had departed this life; see Jer. xv. 1. the design of the whole is only to shew that the prayers of the best of men would not have prevailed with the Lord to avert his judgments from a people that had so grievously sinned against him: *they should deliver* but *their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord;* as Noah was saved at the time of the flood; Daniel in the captivity; and Job amidst his great afflictions: this is to be understood not of the eternal salvation of the souls of these men, which is not, nor can it be, by works of righteousness done by the best of men; by these men cannot be justified in the sight of God, and so not saved; but of temporal salvation, of the salvation of their souls or lives from temporal calamities. Besides, these men had knowledge of another and better righteousness than their own, and believed in it, and trusted to it, even the righteousness of faith, the righteousness of Christ received by faith. Noah was both an heir and a preacher of the righteousness which is by faith; and Daniel knew that it was one branch of the Messiah's work to bring in everlasting righteousness; and Job was fully persuaded that his Redeemer lived, by whom he should be justified, Heb. xi. 7. 2 Pet. ii. 5. Dan. ix. 24. Job xix. 25. and xiii. 15, 16, 18.

Ver. 15. *If I cause noisome beasts to pass through the land,* &c.] Evil and hurtful ones; not so much those that are poisonous as pernicious; such as lions, tigers, foxes, wolves, and bears, that are very ravenous and devouring, and especially in a time of famine before threatened; though sometimes God makes use of lesser creatures to do damage to a land, and the fruits of it, as locusts, caterpillars, *&c.;* but the former seem to be intended here, which sometimes God threatens and sends to a people disobedient and rebellious; see Lev. xxvi. 22. 2 Kings xvii. 25: *and they spoil it:* or, *make it childless* *; they or I bereave the inhabitants of it of their children; or bereave it of other cattle that are tame, as sheep and oxen, as well as of men and women also, and even destroy the fruits of the earth: *so that it be desolate;* having neither men nor cattle, corn or tillage, or any other fruit; all being destroyed by the evil beasts, who have commission to pass through it, and lay it waste wherever they come, without control: *that no man may pass through because of the beasts;* for fear of them: not only the inhabitants of the land should be destroyed by them, but even travellers, such as come from other countries, would not choose to pass through it because of the beasts; so that it would on this account be destitute both of inhabitants and of travellers; and must be a most desolate place, where only wild beasts were to be seen, ranging about at pleasure.

Ver. 16. Though *these three men* were *in it,* &c.] Above named, Noah, Daniel, and Job; as they were not, two of them not being in the land of the living, and the other in Babylon; but if all three had been in a land so threatened, and used all the interest they had with God, by fervent prayer and supplication, to have called in the wild beasts, and chained them up, and to preserve the people from being destroyed by them, it would have been all in vain; the Lord was determined upon the destruction of them, and by means of these, as one of his sore judgments: *as I live, saith the Lord God;* or by my life; for it is an oath with which God swears by himself, who has life in himself, and is the author and giver of life to others, and can take it away when, and in what manner, he pleases; and this oath is used, to shew the unalterableness of the judgment threatened, it being decreed and sworn to: God's word or decree, and his oath, are two immutable things, in which he cannot lie, and from which he never departs: *they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters;* meaning not grown-up persons, but little ones, infant sons and daughters; such as had not been guilty of the actual sins and transgressions their parents were charged with; even these they should not deliver by their prayers and supplications from being destroyed by noisome beasts, God punishing the iniquities of the fathers upon the children; and much less should they deliver those that were adult, and had committed the same idolatries and other sins their parents had; no, not even their own sons and daughters; for no exception is made but of themselves, as follows: *they only shall be delivered;* as Noah with his family was in the ark, when amidst wild beasts; and Daniel in the lions' den; and Job, with whom the beasts of the field were at peace, Job v. 23.

Ver. 17. Or if *I bring a sword upon that land,* &c.] The land which had grievously sinned; the same land into which a famine should come, and through which evil beasts should pass; to which, if the Lord should add, as he would, a third judgment, the sword; suffer a foreign enemy to come in among them, and destroy them. So the Targum, "or if those that slay with "the sword I should bring upon that land;" the Chaldean army, as he did; the sword has its commission from God; war is not by chance; the invasion of a foreign enemy is from the Lord; and all the mischiefs and ravages of a tumultuous army are all by divine order: *and say, sword, go through the land;* not only enter the borders of it, or proceed far in it, but even go through it; which is terrible indeed! but if the Lord bids it go, it must go, and does; it is a servant of his, and punctually obeys his commands; that is, such are those that use it, however profane and wicked they may be in themselves, as generally armies consist of dissolute persons; yet these are under a divine direction, and are obedient to the will of God, though they may know it not. So the Targum, "and I say that they "that kill with the sword pass through the land:" *so that I cut off man and beast from it:* by the sword; the one being destroyed as an enemy, the other for food.

Ver. 18. *Though these three men* were *in it,* &c.] Before mentioned: as *I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters;* believe me no more, or be it so and so, if they do; it is in the form

* שכלתה orbaverit eam, Pagninus, Montanus; orbaturus eam, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; orbam fecero illam, Cocceius, Starckius.

of an oath, and in the same manner it is expressed in ver. 16, 20: *but they only shall be delivered themselves*: their own souls or lives, and by their righteousness, as in ver. 14.

Ver. 19. *Or if I send a pestilence into that land*, &c.] Or the *plague*, which is the destruction that wastes at noon-day; this is from the Lord, and a sore judgment it is: *and pour out my fury upon it in blood*: or, *by blood*[y]; by corrupting the blood, which is done when a man is seized with the pestilence. The Targum renders it, *with slaughter*; by slaying a great number of persons by that disease, as a token of fury and wrath, because of their transgressions. It may be rendered, *because of blood*[z]; and so express the cause and reason of the judgment, the shedding of innocent blood: *to cut off from it man and beast*: man by the pestilence, and beast by some contagious distemper or another.

Ver. 20. *Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it*, &c.] Who are again mentioned by name, as in ver. 14. and are the three men referred to in ver. 16, 18: as *I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter*; not so much as an only son, or an only daughter, no, not even a single child: the plural number is used before, as in ver. 16, 18. here the singular, to shew how resolutely determined the Lord was upon the destruction of the land; that even the prayers of the best of men among them should not prevail with him to save a single person, no, not a single infant: *they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness*; as in ver. 14. see the note there.

Ver. 21. *For thus saith the Lord God, how much more*, &c.] If the Lord would not be entreated by such good men as those mentioned, for a land that had sinned against him, to whom he only sends some one of the above judgments, either famine, or noisome beasts, or the sword, or the pestilence, how much more inexorable and deaf to all entreaties must he be; or if any one of those judgments makes so great a desolation in the land, then how much greater must that detruction be, *when I send my four sore judgments on Jerusalem*; or *evil*[a] ones; as they are to men, though righteously inflicted by the Lord; when all these four are sent together, what a devastation must they make! namely, *the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast*: three of them, it is evident, were sent upon Jerusalem at the time of its siege by Nebuchadnezzar, the sword, famine, and pestilence; and no doubt the other, even the noisome beasts; and if not literally, yet figuratively, for Nebuchadnezzar himself is compared to a lion, Jer. iv. 7, and l. 17.

Ver. 22. *Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant*, &c.] That is, in Jerusalem, on which God's four sore judgments should be sent: though in a sinful land, as before described, where only one judgment was sent, there was no escape, not so much as a son or a daughter were delivered; yet here, where four sore judgments came together, there is a remnant that are saved; and which being wonderful, and beyond all expectation, is introduced with a *behold*, not only as a note of attention, but of admiration: *that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters*; that is, which should be brought forth out of Jerusalem when taken, and should not be destroyed either by famine, or by noisome beasts, or by the sword, or by the pestilence; and these, many of them, both sons and daughters; some of each sex, that should be the means of propagating a posterity, that should return again, and repeople the land, and continue for many ages, as they have done: this is said with respect to ver. 16, 18, 20: *behold, they shall come forth unto you*; come out of Jerusalem, and their own land, into Babylon, to the captives already there; with whom Ezekiel now was, and to whom he is speaking: *and ye shall see their way and their doings*; their wicked course of life and evil actions; which now being convinced of, and humbled for, they shall ingenuously acknowledge and confess to their brethren in captivity: though some think this is to be understood of wicked and reprobate men, that should be not at all reformed by the judgments of God, but continue in their wicked course; which the godly captives seeing, would conclude from thence their manner of life before, and so the righteous judgment of God upon them; and their being a remnant preserved is thought not to be in a way of mercy, but judgment; who though they escaped each of the four sore judgments, yet had a worse inflicted on them, even captivity: *and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it*; that is, they should be satisfied with the justice of God, and be reconciled to the providence of God, in bringing destruction upon Jerusalem; which perhaps before they murmured at, or had hard thoughts of God concerning it; but now hearing the confessions of those that were brought from thence to them, or seeing their wicked lives and conversations, they would now be fully satisfied that God was righteous in all that he had done; and that, instead of being rigorous and severe, he had been kind and merciful.

Ver. 23. *And they shall comfort you, when ye see their ways and their doings*, &c.] Not that their sinful ways and doings would be comfortable to them, but either their acknowledgments of them, and repentance for them; or, seeing their dissolute manner of life, it would be a means of composing their minds, and making them easy under the providence; being now satisfied that God was just in bringing upon them all the evils he had, and that they were punished according to their deserts, and less than their sins deserved: *and ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord God*; that there was just reason for it; that he was sufficiently provoked to do it; and that it was necessary it should be done, for his own honour, and the good of others.

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[y] בדם per sanguinem, Piscator.
[z] Propter sanguinem, Vatablus.

[a] הרעים mala, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius; pessima, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

CHAP. XV.

THE destruction of Jerusalem is again prophesied of in this chapter, and is set forth under the simile of a vine-tree, which, for its uselessness, is committed to the fire. The simile is in ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. the application of it in ver. 6, 7, 8.

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] The destruction of Jerusalem had been represented under various types and similes before, as of a siege, and a sharp razor; and here of a fruitless and useless vine, only fit for the fire; which was delivered out by a spirit of prophecy. The Targum calls it the word of prophecy, as usual.

Ver. 2. *Son of man, what is the vine-tree more than any tree,* &c.] Or, *the wood of the vine than any wood*[b]; it is not better than other wood; it is not so good as any other wood; nay, it is good for nothing. The fruit of the vine-tree is good, but its wood is of no use: a vine-tree, if it bears fruit, is valuable; but if it does not, it is of no account. The people of the Jews are often compared to a vine, who, while they brought forth good fruit, were in esteem; but, when they became like an empty and fruitless vine, were rejected as good for nothing, Psal. lxxx. 8. Isa. v. 1, 2. Jer. ii. 22. Hos. x. 1. they were originally no better than others; what they had were owing to the grace and goodness of God; and when they degenerated, they were the worst of all people: or than *a branch which is among the trees of the forest?* a vine-tree that bears fruit is better than a tree of the forest, or than a branch of one that is unfruitful; but a vine-tree that does not bear fruit is not so good; because the wood of the one may be useful when the other is not; though the words may be better rendered, even *the branch* of a wild vine *which is among the trees of the forest*[c]; and so it explains what vine-tree is spoken of; not a fruitful one in the vineyards, but a wild and barren one in the forest. So Jarchi paraphrases the words, "not of the vine in the vineyards, which bears "fruit, speak I unto thee; but of the branch of the "vine which grows in the forests;" and so Kimchi, "I do not ask thee of the vine-tree which beareth "fruit, for that is valuable; but of the branch (of the "wild vine) which is among the trees of the forest, "and is as they that don't bear fruit, concerning that I "ask thee; for even it is not as the trees of the forest; "for the trees of the forest, though they don't bear "fruit, they are fit to do work of them, to make "vessels of them, and to floor houses with them; but "the wood of this vine is not so."

Ver. 3. *Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work?* &c.] The carpenter and joiner, the house or ship-builder, are employed in; as to build houses of, make beams, rafters, floors, *&c.* build ships with, make masts of, *&c.* or any vessel or utensil for the use of man? it never is; it is not fit for any such purpose. Pliny[d] speaks of some rarities made of the wood of vines, but not things of common use; and these not of any vines, but of some peculiar ones, favoured by the air and soil: *or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon?* it is not fit to make a peg of to hang a hat on; and much less for any thing that requires more strength.

Ver. 4. *Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel,* &c.] That is, a vine-tree when cut down, or a branch when cut off, it is good for nothing else; and that is the use it is generally put to; see John xv. 6. and this, 'tis suggested, would be the end of the Jewish nation; who were become by their sins like a wild vine, and were fit fuel for the fire of divine wrath: *the fire devoureth both the ends of it;* the branch cast into it, and so is quickly consumed. Kimchi explains this by Isa. ix. 12. *the Syrians before, and the Philistines behind, and they devour Israel with open mouth;* and Abendana of the ten tribes; but it seems only to design how soon the fire takes it; and how inevitable the consumption is when it is fired at both ends: *and the midst of it is burnt;* presently; it being dried, and reduced to a brand by the heat of the fire at both ends: this Kimchi interprets of the city of Jerusalem, which was in the midst of the land: *is it meet for* any *work?* no; for if it was not fit for any work when cut down, or cut off, much less when burnt in the fire.

Ver. 5. *Behold, when it was whole it was meet for no work,* &c.] Before it was cut into pieces, and cast into the fire, it was not fit to make so much as a pin of to hang any thing on; so Israel, when all together, before the ten tribes were carried captive, or the Jews before the captivity of Jeconiah, were useless and unfruitful, and to every good work reprobate: *how much less shall it be meet yet for any work when the fire hath devoured it, and it is burned?* as its wood is good for nothing before it is burned, its ashes are useless after.

Ver. 6. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Now follows the application of the simile: *as the vine-tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel;* to be burnt, as other trees of the forest are, and along with them: *so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem;* to be destroyed along with other nations by the Chaldeans; they being no better, but as bad, if not worse, like wild vines among forest-trees; and therefore must fare no better: this was the decree and determination of the Lord.

Ver. 7. *And I will set my face against them,* &c.] In wrath to destroy them; see ch. xiv. 8: *and they shall go out from* one *fire, and* another *fire shall devour them;* from one calamity to another; those that escaped the famine and pestilence in the city fell by the sword; and those that escaped famine, sword, and pestilence, were carried into captivity, and there passed from one hardship and affliction to another. The Targum is, "I will execute my vengeance on them, be- "cause of the words of the law, which were given out "of the midst of fire; they have trangressed, and

[b] עץ הגפן מכל עץ lignum vitis præ omni ligno, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Starckius.

[c] הזמורה surculus, Cocceius; surculus vitis, Starckius; vitis sylvestris, Munster. So Ben Melech interprets the branch, of a vine.

[d] Nat. Hist. l. 14. c. 1.

"people who are strong as fire shall consume them." Some, as Abendana observes, interpret the fire, out of which they went, of Sennacherib, out of whose hand the Lord delivered them; and the fire which devoured them, of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and it may be rendered, *they have gone out* [*], &c.: *and ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I set my face against them:* he is known by his judgments to be the Lord God omnipotent, holy, just, and true.

Ver. 8. *And I will make the land desolate,* &c.] The land of Judea uncultivated, men and beast being cut off; see ch. xiv. 15, 21: *because they have committed a trespass, saith the Lord;* acted a treacherous and perfidious part; apostatized from God, having committed idolatry, which was the cause of their ruin; and therefore it was not without a cause that the Lord did what he did in it; see ch. xiv. 23.

CHAP. XVI.

In this chapter the Jewish nation is represented under the simile of a female infant, whose birth, breeding, marriage, grandeur, and conduct, are described, in order to shew the wickedness and ingratitude of this people; who, on account thereof, are threatened with judgments; though mercy is promised to a remnant that should repent. The prophet is directed to make known to Jerusalem her abominable sins, ver. 1, 2. and, in order to this, is bid to take up the following parable of a female infant; whose descent, birth, and wretched condition, at the time of it, are pointed at, ver. 3, 4, 5. which are expressive of the low and forlorn estate of the Jews originally; and then follow the benefits and blessings of God bestowed upon them, both in their infant and adult state; the preserving them alive in Egypt, and their multiplication there; and afterwards the covenant made with them, when brought out from thence; and the Lord's espousal of them to himself, as his own people, having a strong affection for them, ver. 6, 7, 8. the large provision of good things he made for them, both in the wilderness, and especially in the land of Canaan; the riches he bestowed upon them, and the flourishing and prosperous kingdom he raised them to, which made them famous among all the nations round about them, ver. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. and yet, after all this, such was the ingratitude of this people, as to commit spiritual whoredom, that is, idolatry, to a very great degree, ver. 15. which is aggravated by their converting and applying the good things which the Lord gave them to idolatrous uses, ver. 16, 17, 18, 19. by sacrificing their sons and daughters to idols, which were the Lord's, ver. 20, 21. by not calling to mind the former wretched estate out of which they were brought, ver. 22. by building high places in every street and way, and there committing idolatries, ver. 23, 24, 25. by the various nations, whose examples they followed, and with whom they joined, as the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Chaldeans, ver. 26, 27, 28, 29. and by the great difference between them and all other harlots, whom they exceeded, ver. 30, 31, 32, 33, 34. wherefore, on account of all this, they are threatened to be dealt with as an adulterous woman; made a spectacle of; condemned to die, to be stripped, stoned, and burned, ver. 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43. and, that the Lord might appear to be just in executing such judgments on them, they are declared to be as bad as the Hittites and Amorites their parents; and worse than their sisters Samaria and Sodom; and therefore could expect to fare no better than they; and should become a proverb and a by-word, and bear their sins, shame, and punishment, in the sight of their neighbours, and be despised by them, ver. 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59. nevertheless, the covenant of grace made with his chosen people among them should stand firm; which being manifested to them, would be a means of bringing them to a sense of sin, shame for it, and an acknowledgment of the Lord's grace and goodness to them, ver. 60, 61, 62, 63.

Ver. 1. *Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] The word of prophecy from the Lord, as the Targum; the following representation was made to him under a spirit of prophecy.

Ver. 2. *Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations.*] That is, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, as the Targum; these are mentioned instead of the whole body of the people, because that Jerusalem was the metropolis of the nation, whose sins were very many and heinous: called *abominations*, because abominable to God, and rendered them so to him; particularly their idolatries are meant; which, though committed by them, and so must be known to them, yet were not owned, confessed, and repented of by them, they not being convinced of the evil of them; in order to which the prophet is bid to set them before them, and shew them the evil nature of them; and which he might do by writing to them, for he himself was now in Chaldea with the captives there. The Targum is, "son "of man, reprove the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and "shew them their abominations."

Ver. 3. *And say, thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem,* &c.] To the inhabitants of Jerusalem, as the Targum: *thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan:* here the Jewish ancestors for a time dwelt and sojourned, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and so the Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, interpret the first word, *thy habitation or sojourning* [t]: but whereas it follows, *and thy nativity*, this does not solve the difficulty; which may be said to be of the land of Canaan, because their ancestors were born here: for though Abraham was a Chaldean, he was called out of Chaldea into the land of Canaan, where Isaac was born; and so was Jacob, the father of the twelve tribes; besides, the Israelites were the successors of the Ca-

[*] יצאו exiverunt, Cocceius, Starckius.

[t] מכורתיך habitationes tuæ, Pagninus, Calvin; mansiones tuæ, Montanus; habitatio tua, Vatablus, Gratius; so R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 39. 1.

naanites in their land, and so seemed to descend from them; and it is not unusual for such to be reckoned the children of those whom they succeed; to which may be added, that they were like to the Canaanites in their manners, particularly in their idolatries; and so their children, as such, are said to be the offspring and descendants of those whose examples they follow, or whom they imitate: see the history of Susannah, ver. 56: *thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite;* Abraham and Sarah, who were, properly speaking, the one the father, the other the mother, of the Jewish nation, were Chaldeans; and neither Amorites nor Hittites; yet, because they dwelt among them, are so called; and especially since before their conversion they were idolaters, as those were; besides, the Jews who descended from Judah, and from whom they have their name, very probably sprung from ancestors who might be Amorites and Hittites; since Judah married the daughter of a Canaanite, and such an one seems to be Tamar, he took for his son Er, and by whom he himself had two sons, Pharez and Zarah, from the former of which the kings of Judah lineally descended, Gen. xxxvii. 2, 6, 29, 30. Matt. 1. 3. besides, the Jews were the successors of these people, and possessed their land, and imitated them in their wicked practices, Amos ii. 10. and ix. 7. and these two, the Amorite and Hittite, of all the seven nations, are mentioned, because they were the worst, and the most wicked, Gen. xv. 16. and xxvii. 46. The Jews[g] say Terah the father of Abraham, and his ancestors, came from Canaan.

Ver. 4. *And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born,* &c.] Which refers either to the time when Abraham was called out of Ur of the Chaldeans, who had before been an idolater; or rather to the time when the children of Israel were in Egypt, and there grew and multiplied, and became a numerous body of people; who, upon their coming out of it, were brought into some form, and became a nation or body politic, which may be called the day of their birth as a people; see Hos. ii. 3: *thy navel was not cut;* alluding to what is done to a new-born infant, when the midwife immediately takes care to cut the navel-string, by which the child adheres to its mother, and takes in its breath and nourishment in the womb; but now, being of no longer use that way, it is cut and tied up, for the safety both of mother and child, who otherwise would be in great danger; and this denotes the desperate condition the Israelites were in when in Egypt, where they were greatly oppressed and afflicted, and in very imminent danger of being destroyed; to which the Targum refers it: *neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee;* which also is done to an infant as soon as born, to cleanse it from the menstruous blood, to make the flesh sleek, and smooth, and amiable; which, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe, is done in hot water: *thou wast not salted at all;* which was done, either by sprinkling salt upon it, or using salt and water[h], as a detersive of uncleanness, to prevent putrefaction, to dry up the humours, and harden the flesh, and consolidate the parts: *nor swaddled at all;* to bring the several members of the body into form and shape; see Luke ii. 7. and these things being of necessity to be done immediately, were, as Kimchi observes, lawful to be done even on a sabbath-day, according to the traditions of the elders[i].

Ver. 5. *None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee,* &c.] Or, *one of these*[k]; not so much as one of them: sad must be the case of an infant, when it meets with no tender heart or kind hand from midwife, nurse, or mother, to do these things for it: this is expressive of the helpless, forlorn, and unpitied state of the Israelites in Egypt; who, when their lives were made bitter with hard bondage, had no mercy shewn them by Pharaoh and his taskmasters, Exod. i. 14. and v. 9, 14, 17. So the Targum, "the eye of Pharaoh did not spare you "to do one good thing for you, to give you rest from "your bondage, to have mercy on you:" *but thou wast cast out in the open field;* alluding to infants exposed by their unnatural parents, or unkind nurses, and left in an open field, or any desert place, to perish for want, unless some kind providence appears for them: this open field may design the land of Egypt, whither Jacob and his posterity were, being drove out of Canaan by a famine; and where, after the death of Joseph, they were exposed to the hardships and cruelties of the Egyptians; and who, commanding their male children to be slain, doubtless occasioned the exposing of many of them, as well as Moses, to which some reference may be had; and so the Targum paraphrases it, "and he (Pharaoh) decreed a full decree to cast your "male children into the river, to destroy you when you "were in Egypt:" *to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born;* the Israelites were loathsome to the Egyptians, as every shepherd was an abomination to them, and such were they, Gen. xlvi. 34. and all this may be applied to the state and condition of men by nature, even of God's elect, whose extraction is from fallen man; descend immediately from unclean parents; are conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; can have no communication of grace from their parents, or others; by whom they cannot be washed from their sins, or sanctified, or clothed, or made righteous; but are in a hopeless and helpless condition; and are loathsome and abominable to God, and to themselves too, when they come to see the state they are in.

Ver. 6. *And when I passed by thee,* &c.] Alluding to a traveller passing by where an infant lies exposed, and looks upon it, and takes it up; or it may be to Pharaoh's daughter walking by the river-side, when she spied the ark in which Moses was, and ordered it to be taken up, and so saved his life: *and saw thee polluted in thine own blood;* keeping up the simile of a new-born infant, that has nothing done to it, but is all over covered with menstruous blood; denoting the wretched and miserable estate the Jews were in when in Egypt: when they were not only loathsome and abominable to the Egyptians, and ill used and unpitied by them; but were in danger of being utterly destroyed,

[g] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 44. 2. & Gloss. in ib.
[h] Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 22.
[i] Vid. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 129. 2.

[k] אחת מאלה unum ex istis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; unum ex his, Pagninus, Montanus, Starckius.

and ready to expire. The word rendered *polluted* signifies *trodden under foot*[l]; like mire in the streets; and so denotes both pollution and distress; so the Israelites were trodden under foot by the Egyptians, when they made them to serve with rigour, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field; and so the Targum paraphrases it, "for it was manifest before me that you were afflicted in your bondage;" as they then sighed and cried because of their bondage, the Lord looked upon them with an eye of pity and compassion, and delivered them, Exod. i. 14. and ii. 23, 24, 25. and iii. 7, 8: *I said unto thee*, when thou wast *in thy blood, live: yea, I said unto thee*, when thou wast *in thy blood, live:* the Lord preserved them and saved them alive, when they were near to ruin, and delivered them by the hands of Moses, which was as life from the dead; and this he did of his own sovereign good will and pleasure, and not for any worth or merit in them, any goodness or righteousness of theirs: for this he did when they were in their blood, pollution, and guilt; and which, that it might be observed, is repeated. The word for *blood*, which is thrice mentioned, is in the plural number, *bloods;* and denotes not the blood of circumcision, and the blood of the passover: for, or by which, the Lord had mercy upon them, and redeemed them, as the Targum and Jarchi interpret it; but the abundance of it, as upon a new-born infant; and the great pollution and distress in which the Israelites were, through the many murders committed on them by their enemies. The whole is an emblem of the state and condition the elect of God are in, when they are quickened by him; who are by their first birth unclean; under the pollution, power, and guilt of sin; wallowing and weltering in it; deserving of the wrath of God, and liable to punishment for it; trodden under foot, quite neglected and despised in all appearance; and are both hopeless and helpless: when the Lord *passes* by them, not by chance, but on purpose, knowing where they are; and this he often does by the ministry of the word, under which they are providentially cast; and where he *sees* them, and looks upon them, not merely with his eye of omniscience, much less with an eye of scorn, contempt, and abhorrence; but with an eye of pity and compassion, and even of complacency and delight in their persons, though not in their sins; and when he speaks life into them, a principle of spiritual life; or quickens them by his word, so that they live a life of faith and holiness, which issues in everlasting life: this flows from divine love, and is the effect of divine power; it is of pure rich grace, and not of man's merit; as his case, being in his blood, and dead in sins, shew; see Ephes. ii. 4, 5.

Ver. 7. *I have caused thee to multiply as the bud of the field*, &c.] Or, *made thee millions*[m]; like the spires of grass in the field. This refers to the multiplication of the children of Israel in Egypt, especially after the death of Joseph, and even whilst they were sorely afflicted, and likewise in after-times. Jacob went down to Egypt with seventy-five persons only, but when his posterity returned from thence, they were above six hundred thousand that were able to go forth to war, Gen. xlvi. 27. Numb. i. 46. see Exod. i. 7, 12: *and thou hast increased and waxed great;* and became large families, kindreds, and tribes, as the Targum interprets it; as a child grows up, and becomes adult: *and thou art come to excellent ornaments;* or, *ornament of ornaments*[n]; as a young woman, when she is grown up, comes to wear better and finer clothes than in infancy; perhaps there is an allusion to the jewels the Israelites brought out of Egypt with them: this may be applied to the laws, statutes, and ordinances given them, which were an *ornament of grace* unto them, Prov. i. 9: *thy breasts are fashioned;* swelled and stood out; were come to a proper bigness and shape, as in persons grown and marriageable; see Cant. viii. 10: *and thine hair is grown;* an euphemism, expressive of puberty, which in females was at twelve years of age: *whereas thou wast naked and bare;* in a state of infancy. Jarchi and Kimchi interpret this of the Israelites being without the commandments. The whole of what is here said, may be applied to quickened and converted persons, who grow in grace, and increase in spiritual knowledge; and are adorned with the ornaments of grace and good works; and attend to the word and ordinances, which are the church's breasts; who, whilst in their nature-state, were naked and destitute of righteousness and grace.

Ver. 8. *Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee*, &c.] Which the Targum refers to the Lord's appearance to Moses in the bush; see the note on ver. 6: *thy time was the time of love;* which the Targum explains of the time of redemption of the people of Israel out of Egypt, which was an instance of the great love of God unto that people; and which time was fixed by him; and when it was come, at the exact and precise time, the redemption was wrought; see Gen. xv. 13, 14. Exod. xii. 40, 41. and so there is a set time for the calling and conversion of God's elect, who are therefore said to be called according to purpose; and, when that time comes, all means are made to concur to bring it about: and this is a time of love; for though the love of God to his people is before all time, yet it is manifested in time; and there are particular times in which it is expressed unto them; and the time of conversion is one of them; and indeed it is the first time that there is a manifestation and application of the love of God made to the souls of his people: and this is a *time of loves*[o]; as it is in the original text; denoting the large abundance of it which is now shewn forth; and the various acts of it now done; as bringing of them out of a most miserable condition, out of a horrible pit; plucking them as brands out of the burning; quickening them when dead in sin; speaking comfortably to them, and applying pardoning grace and mercy to their souls: and it may include both the love of God to his people, and their love to him; for now is the love of their espousals, and the kindness of their youth, Jer. ii. 2. the grace of love is

[l] מתבוססת conculcatam, Pagninus, Montanus, Starckius; proculcantem, conculcandum te, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator.

[m] רבבה decem millia dedi, Pagninus, Montanus; in multa millia, Tigurine version; in myriadem te auxi, Piscator; so Ben Melech.

[n] עדי עדיים ornamenta ornamentorum, Pagninus, Montanus; in ornamentum ornamentorum, Calvin; pulchritudinem pulchritudinum, Starckius; so Ben Melech; elegantiam elegantiarum, Cocceius.

[o] עת דדים tempus amorum, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.

now implanted, to God and Christ, to his people, word, worship, and ordinances, which before had no place in them: *and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness*: the Lord espoused the people of Israel to himself in the wilderness, after he had brought them out of Egypt, and took them under the wings of his protection; both which this phrase may be expressive of; see Ruth iii. 9. Some understand this of his giving them the spoils of the Egyptians, and also the law: it may very well be applied to the righteousness of Christ, which is often compared to a garment, for which the skirt, a part, is put; and this is put on as a garment, and answers all the purposes of one; and particularly covers the nakedness of men, which their own righteousness will not do; this the Lord spreads over his people, and covers them with; and being clothed with this, they shall not be found naked: *yea, I sware unto thee*; to his love expressed to his people, and to his covenant he entered into with them, neither of which shall ever be removed; and this makes to their abundant comfort; see Psal. lxxxix. 3, 35. Isa. liv. 9, 10. Heb. vi. 13—18: *and entered into covenant with thee, saith the Lord God*; as he did with the people of Israel at Horeb, and which was a sort of a marriage-contract with them; see Deut. xxix. 1. Jer. xxxi. 32. the covenant of grace was made from everlasting with Christ, and the elect in him; but is made manifest at conversion, when the Lord makes himself known unto them as their covenant-God; leads them to Christ the Mediator of it; sends his Spirit down into their hearts, to make them partakers of the grace of it; and shews them their interest in the blessings and promises of it; all which may be meant by the phrase here used: *and thou becamest mine*: as Israel did at the time before mentioned, became the Lord's peculiar people, and were avouched as such by him, Exod. xix. 5. so, in conversion, those who before were secretly the Lord's by electing and redeeming grace, become openly his by calling and sanctifying grace.

Ver. 9. *Then washed I thee with water*, &c.] Brought the Israelites out of the mean, abject, servile, and sordid state in which they were, when among the mortar, bricks, and pots, into a state of liberty; so the Targum, "and I redeemed you from the servitude of "the Egyptians; and I removed the strength of do-"minion from you, and brought you into liberty;" perhaps some reference may be had to the ceremonial ablutions enjoined them; they were washed before the covenant was made with them at Mount Sinai, just referred to; their priests, sacrifices, vessels, and all unclean persons, were to be washed, and purifications were prescribed them: *yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee*; as with an inundation overflowing; so the word[p] signifies; very fitly is this mentioned, since in ver. 6 they are said to be *polluted in* their *blood*, and now washed from it: all men are defiled with sin, originally, naturally, internally, and universally; nor can they cleanse themselves by any thing they can do, God only can; and this he promises to do; and this he does, not with water-baptism, which does not take away sin, original or actual; nor with the washing of regeneration, or by regenerating grace; though that is sometimes compared to water; which, among other things, is of a cleansing nature; and of which men are born again, and by it sanctified; and which is done by the spirit, who is a spirit of judgment and burning, by whom the filth of the daughter of Zion is washed away; and because this is done by the word and ordinances as means, hence these are called waters; see Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Isa. xliv. 3. and iv. 4. and lv. 1. yet hereby men are not *thoroughly* washed; though a clean heart is created in them, a new man is formed in righteousness and true holiness; yet the filthiness of the old man remains, which appears in thoughts, words, and actions; but the thorough washing is by the blood of Christ; that is the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness; with this men are washed by Christ from their sins; this has a purgative and cleansing nature; and it cleanses from all sin, and justifies from every one; so that hereby a man thoroughly washed is clear of all sin, none to be found or seen in him; he is without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; and has solid peace in his soul; his heart being sprinkled with this blood from an evil conscience, and, being purged, has no more conscience of sin; so that this is expressive of the fulness of justifying and pardoning grace: *and I anointed thee with oil*; alluding to the anointing oil, with which the priests, tabernacle, and vessels, were anointed; or to the land of Canaan, a land of oil-olive, into which the Israelites were brought; or to the custom of washing and anointing women before marriage; see Ruth iii. 3. Esth. ii. 10. and to the use of oil in baths, which was frequent: this may spiritually design the grace of the spirit, which, like the oil on Aaron's head, is exceeding *precious*, as are faith, hope, and love; and, like the *pure* oil for the candlestick, productive of purity of heart, lip, and life; of a delightful smell, as are the church's ointments she has from Christ, Cant. i. 3. and iv. 10. and very cheering and refreshing, and therefore called oil of gladness, Psal. xlv. 7. Isa. lxi. 3. and ornamental and beautifying, as all grace is; and oil will not mix with another liquor, as grace will not with sin and corruption, and is of an abiding nature: now it is God that anoints with this; this oil comes from the God of all grace; is from Christ the holy One, and out of his fulness; from him the head it descends to all his members, and is applied by the blessed Spirit; see 2 Cor. i. 21.

Ver. 10. *I clothed thee also with braidered work*, &c.] Or, *with needle-work*[q]; with garments of divers colours, like Joseph's coat; perhaps it may refer to the rich raiment borrowed of the Egyptians, when they came out from thence. So the Targum, "and I "clothed you with various garments, the desirable "things of your enemies;" and which, with their other clothes, waxed not old all the while they were in the wilderness; see Exod. xii. 35. Deut. viii. 4. this may be expressive, either of the various graces of the spirit of God, with which the saints are clothed and

[p] ואשטף דמיך ut inundans eluerem sanguinem tuum, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; inundavi sanguines tuos, Montanus; affundendo ablui, Cocceius.

[q] רקמה veste acupicta, Vatablus, Grotius; acupicto, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius.

adorned; and, when exercised by them, are said to be put on as a garment, Col. iii. 12. or rather of the righteousness of Christ, called raiment of needle-work, Psal. xlv. 14: *and shod thee with badgers' skin;* the same the covering of the tabernacle was made of, Exod. xxvi. 13. and though the word here used may not design the creature we so call, yet may intend one whose skin was fit for shoe-leather, and was very beautiful, and perhaps durable; reference may be had to the shoes of the Israelites in the wilderness, which waxed not old, Deut. xxix. 5. Some think only the hyacinth or purple colour is here meant; and so the Septuagint version renders the word; agreeably to which Bochart[r] gives this version of the words, *I shod thee with the purple;* that is, with shoes of a purple colour; and it is very probable that of this colour were the shoes wore by the Jewish women of the first rank; since, as the same writer has not only shewn from Procopius that great personages in other nations used to wear such, as the Persian and Roman emperors; who, in their own countries only, might wear them; but this was the custom of neighbouring provinces, particularly the Tyrian women, as Virgil[s] plainly suggests. Bynæus[t] is of opinion that they were of a red or scarlet colour; and that the words should be rendered, *I shod thee with scarlet;* that is, with scarlet-coloured shoes; which he observes have been in great esteem and use among persons of figure and quality; and, be they of what colour they will, they were, no doubt, made of skins of value, fine, soft, and pliable; as the Targum paraphrases it, "I put precious shoes (or shoes of value) upon your "feet:" and therefore can't be well thought to be made of badgers' skins, of which it was never known that shoes were made; with those indeed quivers and shields have been covered, and of those the harness of horses and collars of dogs have been made; but not men's shoes, and much less the shoes of delicate women. This may denote the agreeable walk of the saints, having their feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; or a conversation agreeable to the Gospel of Christ; which is very beautiful, and in which they are enabled to continue by the power and grace of God; see Luke xv. 22. Ephes. vi. 15. Cant. vii. 1: *and I girded thee about with fine linen;* as the high-priest was with the linen girdle of the ephod, Exod. xxviii. 8. So the Targum, "and I separated from you "the priests, that they might minister before me with "linen mitres, and the high-priest in garments of di- "vers colours;" all the saints are made priests to God, and art girt about with the girdle of love, which constrains them to fear and serve the Lord with all readiness and cheerfulness: and with the girdle of truth, which they cause to cleave and keep close unto them; see Ephes. vi. 14. Luke xii. 35: *and I covered thee with silk.* The Targum interprets this of the clothing of the high-priest; but, if respect is had to that, silk cannot be intended; for, as the Jews themselves say[u], the priests were not clothed for service, in the house of the sanctuary, but with wool and linen; and indeed, though the Jewish commentators in general, as Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Kimchi, and others[w], as well as our version, take the word here used to signify silk; yet, as Braunius[x] observes, it does not appear that this was known among the Jews in the times of Ezekiel, nor even before the times of Christ; nor was it known among the Romans before the times of Augustus. The word seems to be derived from an Arabic word[y], which signifies to colour or paint clothes; and may be rendered painted or coloured cloth, or garments; and so the Targum renders it died or coloured garments; and so Aquila translates it by ἀνθινῷ, a flowered garment, either painted or wrought with flowers; and so Jerom, and the Vulgate Latin, by *polymitum*, a garment of divers colours; and may signify, as before, the rich apparel of the Jews, and the plenty of good things enjoyed by them; see Luke xvi. 19. and, in a mystical sense, the beautiful clothing of the church, with the robe of Christ's righteousness, and the graces of the Spirit.

Ver. 11. *And I decked thee also with ornaments,* &c.] The Targum interprets this of the ornament of the words of the law; see Prov. i. 8, 9. but may be as well understood of good works done in obedience to them, from a right principle, and to right ends; which adorn professors of religion, their profession, and the doctrines of Christ, which they profess, 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10. Tit. ii. 10. or rather the graces of the Spirit, which are all of them very ornamental to the saints, as faith, hope, love, humility, &c.; and are in the sight of God of great price, 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4: *and I put bracelets upon thine hands;* which the Targum also explains of the law, written on two tables of stone, and given by the hands of Moses; the words of which, as Jarchi says, were put one against another, five against five; *hands* being the instruments of action may denote good works, which the Lord enables his people to perform; and which appear beautiful, as hands with bracelets on them, when they spring from love, are done in faith, and with a view to the glory of God: *and a chain on thy neck;* this the Targum understands of sanctification, paraphrasing it, "and with the holiness of my great "name I sanctified you;" and may be applied to the graces of the Spirit, which are as a chain, whose links are inseparably joined together; for, where one grace is, there are all the rest, faith, hope, charity, &c. see Cant. i. 10. and iv. 9. or else to the blessings of grace, which also are linked together, and can't be parted; where the one is, the other are likewise, Ephes. i. 3. Rom. viii. 30, 32. and both graces and blessings make the saint very beautiful.

Ver. 12. *And I put a jewel on thy forehead,* &c.] The same with the nose-jewel, which was hung upon the forehead, and reached down to the nose and mouth; and, however disagreeable it may seem to us, was reckoned very ornamental in the eastern countries, Isa. iii. 21. Gen. xxiv. 22, 47. and where now, as in Persia, as well as in all the Levant, the women put rings through

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[r] Hierozoicon, par. 2. l. 3. c. 31. col. 992.

[s] Virginibus Tyriis mos est gestare pharetram,
Purpureoque alte suras vincire cothurno. Æneid. l. 1.

[t] De Calceis Hebr. l. 1. c. 5. sect. 16.

[u] Misn. Celaim, c. 9. sect. 1.

[w] משי serico, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius. So Buxtorf, Stockius, &c.

[x] De Vestitu Sacerdot. Hebr. l. 1. c. 8. p. 168, 169.

[y] وشى coloravit, pinxitque pannum. Hinc موشى coloratus [illegible], pictusque pannus, Golius, col. 2678, 2679. Castel. col. 996.

their noses, which they pierce with needles, as Monsieur Thevenot [z] relates; so Dr. Shaw [a] says that nose-jewels are used still by the Levant Arabs. The Targum applies it to the ark, thus, "and I put the ark of my co-"venant among you;" but may be better applied to a public profession of religion, which every good man ought to make, and take up from principles of grace received; this is bearing the name of Christ and the name of his Father in their foreheads; which is very ornamental to the believer, and well-pleasing to Christ, Rom. x. 9, 10. Rev. xiv. 1. Matt. x. 32: *and ear-rings in thine ears.* The Targum is, "and the clouds of my "glory overshadowed you;" but it may be better interpreted of the spiritual ears God gives his people in conversion; by which they hear his word, so as to understand it; hear the voice of Christ, so as to distinguish it from the voice of a stranger; and hear his Gospel, so as to believe and receive it, approve of it, and love it, and act in conformity to it: *and a beautiful crown upon thine head.* The Targum paraphrases it thus, "and an angel, sent from before me, led at the "head of you:" referring to Exod. xxiii. 20. with which Jarchi compares Mic. ii. 13. but may be better illustrated by the beautiful crown of twelve stars, the doctrine of the twelve apostles of Christ, said to be upon the head of the church; and is upon the head of every believer that holds the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience; that holds fast the faithful word, and will not let it go, that so no man may take away his crown, Rev. xii. 1. and iii. 11.

Ver. 13. *Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver,* &c.] The Targum interprets it of the tabernacle adorned with gold and silver, and linen curtains, of various dies and colours; but it refers to the ornaments, bracelets, chain, ear-rings, and crown before mentioned; see Psal. xlv. 9, 13: *and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and broidered work;* see the note on ver. 10. with this compare Rev. xix. 8: *thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil;* which did not a little contribute to her beauty and comeliness; see Dan. i. 15. this the Targum explains of the manna with which the Lord fed the Israelites in the wilderness, and was good, like fine flour, and honey, and oil; and had, as Jarchi says, the taste of them all: but may be better applied to spiritual provisions believers are fed with; to the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, which are as nourishing and strengthening as bread of fine flour; as sweet as honey to the taste; and which make fat and plump, and cause the face to shine as oil: *and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom,* the Targum is, "and ye became rich, and "were greatly strengthened, and prospered, and ruled "over all kingdoms;" and had its accomplishment, as Kimchi observes, when the time of the kingdom of the house of David came; and is true of all believers, who are a kingdom of priests, a royal priesthood, kings and priests unto God; have a kingdom of grace now, which can never be moved, and lies in righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost; and are heirs of a kingdom of glory hereafter.

Ver. 14. *And thy renown went forth among the Heathen for thy beauty,* &c.] Which consisted of the above things: with this compare Deut. vi. 4. Psal. xlviii. 2. Lam. ii. 15. the church's beauty lies in the righteousness of Christ imputed to her; in the holiness of Christ reckoned unto her; in the blood of Christ being upon her, by which she is washed and cleansed, justified and pardoned; and in the graces of the spirit of Christ implanted in her; and in the salvation of Christ she is interested in; and in the presence of Christ, which is the beauty of the Lord upon her; and in being in Gospel order, and having Gospel ordinances; see Psal. xlv. 11, 13. and cxlix. 4. and xc. 17. Cant. vi. 4, 10: *for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God:* all the outward happiness and prosperity of the Israelites in the days of David and Solomon, or at other times, was not, as Kimchi observes, of themselves, but of the Lord: and so the comeliness of the saints and people of God is not of themselves; they are by nature black and deformed; they are defiled with original and actual sin; they are as an unclean thing; they are corrupt, abominable, and loathsome; and as they have not their comeliness by nature, so not by art; as it is not native to them, it is not acquired by them; they don't obtain it by their humiliation, repentance, and services; these can't remove their natural blackness and uncomeliness, or wash away their sins, and render them beautiful in the sight of God, Jer. xiii. 23. and ii. 22. Job ix. 30, 31. but they have their comeliness from another, from Christ, who is altogether lovely; and from his righteousness, which is put on them; and so they are in him, and, through that, perfectly comely, a perfection of beauty, all fair, and without spot, even the fairest in the whole creation, complete in Christ, and perfect in him, Psal. l. 2. Cant. i. 5, 8. and iv. 7.

Ver. 15. *But thou didst trust in thine own beauty,* &c.] As the Jews did in external gifts bestowed upon them; in their outward prosperity and grandeur; in their riches, wealth, and wisdom; and in the extent of their dominions, as in the days of David and Solomon; and in such things men are apt to put their trust and confidence, and to be elated with, and grow proud and haughty, as a woman because of her beauty: so some professors of religion trust in a form and profession of it; in speculative knowledge, and in outward duties and services; being unconcerned for inward purity and holiness; and not trusting in the righteousness of Christ, the real beauty of saints: *and playedst the harlot because of thy renown;* or *name* [b]; which the Jews got among the nations round about them, for their wisdom, riches, and power, which was a snare unto them, as a woman's beauty is to her; and they were admired and courted, and complimented by their neighbours, and so drawn into idolatrous practices, as women into fornication and adultery by the admirers of them: idolatry, which is here meant, is frequently signified by playing the harlot, or by fornication and adultery: or *thou playedst the harlot in thy name* [c]; al-

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[z] Travels, par. 2. B. 2. ch. 9. p. 94.
[a] Travels, p. 241. Ed. 2.
[b] על שמך propter nomen tuum, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator.

[c] In nomine tuo, V. L. Munster, Tigurine version. Grotius; super nomen tuum, Starckius; cum nomine tuo, Junius & Tremellius.

luding to the custom of harlots, notorious infamous ones, who used to set their names over their apartments, to direct men unto them; and so it may denote how famous and notorious the Jews were for their idolatries, and how impudent in them. Jarchi interprets this of the calf of the wilderness, and other idolatries which the tribe of Dan committed there; but it rather respects the idolatries committed from the times of Solomon to the captivity, which were many, and often repeated; and though sometimes a stop was put to them by pious princes, yet broke out again: so trusting in a man's own righteousness, or in any outward thing, is idolatry; and also false worship and superstitious observances: *and pouredst out thy fornication on every one that passed by:* which expresses the multitude of their idolatries; the measure of them, which ran over; the fondness they had for every idol of their neighbours, like a common strumpet, that prostitutes herself to every one, not only to the men of her own place and city, but to all strangers and travellers; so the Jews, not content with the idols they had, embraced all that offered, or their neighbours could furnish them with: *his it was; or to him it was:* her desire, her lust, her fornication; every one that passed by, that would, might enjoy her; so the Jews were ready to fall in with every idol and every idolatrous practice. The Targum renders this clause, "and "it is not right for thee to do so;" to commit and multiply idolatry.

Ver. 16. *And of thy garments thou didst take,* &c.] Which were made of fine linen, silk, and broidered work; which God had given them, and they were richly clad with: *and deckedst thy high places with divers colours*; that is, with garments of divers colours; either they erected tents on their high places, made with these; or they covered their altars with them, which were on their high places for the ornament of them, as harlots deck their beds to allure their lovers; see Prov. vii. 16, 17. or *thou hast made for thyself high places spotted*[d]; so the word is rendered in Gen. xxx. 32, 33, 35. alluding to garments spotted with the flesh by adulterers. The Targum is, *thou hast made for thyself high places covered with idols:* and so the Septuagint version renders it, *idols sewed together.* The word, in the Talmudic language[e], has the signification of sewing. These idols were decked as children's babies are; and so the Syriac version, *thou hast made for thyself babies;* images like babies, richly dressed with their garments above described, such as the Papists now have. *And playedst the harlot thereon:* committed idolatry on the high places; or *with them*[f]; that is, with the images and idols decked with their garments, which were set on those high places: the like *things shall not come, neither shall it be so;* the like idolatries shall not be committed any more; and after the Babylonish captivity worshipping of idols was not practised by the Jews; nor is it to this day: or such *things have not come* yet, and there *shall not be* the like[g]; the sense is, there never were such idolatries committed by this people before; and there never shall be, or will be, the like afterwards. Kimchi's note is, "the high places shall not come as these; as "if it was said these shall not be in futurity; and "there shall not be a man or a people that shall make "like these for multitude;" so Ben Melech; and במות, *high places*, does agree with באות, *come.* The Targum joins this with the preceding clause, "*and "playedst the harlot* with them, as is not right and "fit."

Ver. 17. *Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold, and of my silver, which I had given thee,* &c.] Or *thy glorious vessels of gold and silver*[h]; meaning either the vessels of gold and silver in the temple, as Jerom thinks, which they converted to idolatrous uses; or rather their own household vessels of gold and silver, which God had given them, as the bounties of his providence, and he had still a right unto, and which they made use of to the dishonour of his name; which argued great ingratitude in them: *and madest to thyself images of men;* images in the shape of men; some were in the shape of women, others in the shape of men; here only male images are mentioned, because the idolatrous Jews are represented by an adulterous woman committing adultery with men; and these were made by themselves, of their jewels of gold and silver; or of their golden and silver vessels, which they had to eat and drink out of; these they melted down, and made idols of them in the form of men, just as the molten calf was made of the ear-rings of the women, Exod. xxxii. 3, 4. to which some refer this passage: and as it was a piece of egregious folly in themselves to part with their jewels and plate for such purposes, and of great ingratitude to God, their benefactor, so of the grossest stupidity and ignorance to worship images so made; which was equally as stupid, or more so, than if a woman should embrace the image of a man, instead of a man himself, as it follows: *and didst commit whoredom with them;* the images: that is, idolatry, which is spiritual adultery.

Ver. 18. *And tookest thy broidered garments, and coveredst them,* &c.] The images of men, the idols they worshipped; see Jer. x. 4. so the Papists at this day cover their idols, the images of the Virgin Mary, and other saints, with rich apparel, to draw the attention, admiration, and reverence of the people to them: *and thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them;* the oil which the Lord gave them for food, the land of Canaan being a land of oil-olive; or which was to light the lamps in the temple with; or was used in sacrifice to the Lord, particularly in the meat-offerings; and the incense, which was offered unto him on the altar of incense; these were set upon the altars of idols, and before them, the male images before mentioned; see Hos. ii. 8.

Ver. 19. *My meat also which I gave thee,* &c.] Or *my bread*[i]; a general name for all eatables. The Tar-

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[d] ותעשי לך במות טלאות et fecisti tibi excelsa maculosa, Montanus; excelsa conspersa maculis, Calvin; latis maculis interstincta, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus.
[e] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 45. 2. Misn. Celim, c. 27. sect. 6.
[f] עליהם itaque, Ar. Interpr.
[g] לא באות ולא יהיה non ventura sunt tales scortationes, nec erit qui sic scortetur, Piscator.
[h] כלי תפארתך מזהבי ומכספי vasa gloriæ tuæ de auro meo, et de argento meo, Pagninus, Montanus; vasa tua insignioris & elegantiora, facta ex auro meo, Vatablus.
[i] לחמי & panem meam, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Starckius.

gum renders it, "my good things." The Jews apply it to the manna, which, they say, descended the same day the molten calf was made, and they set it before it. This interpretation Jarchi and Kimchi make mention of; it includes what follows: *fine flour, and oil, and honey*, wherewith *I fed thee*; for the land of Canaan was a land of wheat, of which fine flour was made; and of olives, from whence was the best oil; and a land flowing with milk and honey; and which was given by the Lord, and so he might be said to feed them with them: and instead of glorifying him, and being thankful for them, and using them in the manner they ought, they *set it before them for a sweet savour*; that is, they made a meat-offering of their fine flour, oil, and honey, and set it before their idols; to gain their favour and good will; to appease them, and render them propitious; supposing it would be acceptable unto them; all these things were used in meat-offerings and sacrifices unto the Lord, excepting honey, and that was forbid; but was in use among the Gentiles; see Lev. ii. 4, 11: and thus *it was, saith the Lord God*; all this idolatry, ingratitude, and folly, have been committed; 'tis most notorious, there's no denying it; I, who am the Lord God omniscient, affirm it. The Targum puts it by way of question, and even of astonishment and admiration, "are not all these "things done, saith the Lord God!"

Ver. 20. *Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters*, &c.] Their own flesh and blood; which were more than to take their clothes, and cover their idols with them, and their food, and set it before them: to part with them was much, but to part with these, and that in such a shocking manner as after mentioned, was so irrational and unnatural, as well as impious and wicked, as is not to be paralleled; and what increased their wickedness was, that these were not only their own, but the Lord's: *whom thou hast borne unto me*; for, though they were born of them, they were born unto the Lord, the Creator of them, the Father of their spirits, and God of their lives, and who had the sole right to dispose of them; nor was it in the power of their parents to take away their life at pleasure; for the Lord only has the sovereign power of life and death: and *these hast thou sacrificed unto them*; the male images before mentioned; one of which was Molech, who is here particularly designed: *to be devoured*; in the arms of that image; or to be consumed by fire, in which they were burnt, when sacrificed unto it. The Targum is, "for oblation and worship." Is this *of thy whoredoms a small matter*; which was so dreadfully heinous and inhuman, yet by some reckoned a small matter; this was not the least of their idolatries, but, of all, the most shocking, and the most aggravated: or the sense is, is it a small thing that thou shouldest play the harlot, or worship idols? is it not enough for thee to do so, but thou must sacrifice thy children also to them? and which are not only thine, but mine, as follows:

Ver. 21. *That thou hast slain my children*, &c.] By creation, as all born into the world are; and by national adoption, as all the Jewish children were; and particularly the first-born were eminently his, and which are here designed, as Jarchi interprets it; for they were the children that were slain and sacrificed to Molech; see Ezek. xx. 26: *and delivered them to cause them to pass through* the fire *for them?* for the sake of idols, for the worship of them; this they did before they were slain; they first caused them to pass through between two fires, and so dedicated them to the idol, and then slew them; or slew them by burning them in the fire, or by putting them into the arms of the *idol*, made burning hot.

Ver. 22. *And in all thine abominations and thy whoredoms*, &c.] Or idolatries, which were abominable to God, and were many; of which that just mentioned was not one of the least: *thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth*; the destitute and forlorn condition then in, and what favours were then bestowed: *when thou wast naked and bare*, and *wast polluted in thy blood*; see the notes on ver. 6, 7. which is mentioned to upbraid the Jews with their ingratitude; they forgetting the miserable condition they were in in Egypt, and what great things the Lord had done for them in bringing them out from thence, and the obligations they were laid under to him; and yet, after all this, to commit such abominable iniquities, and in the midst of them all never once call to mind what they had received from him; which might have been a check to their idolatries, but so it was not.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass after all thy wickedness*, &c.] This refers either to what goes before, so Kimchi; and the sense is, it shall be again as it was at first, after and because of all the above wickedness committed, thou shalt be left naked and bare, and destitute of all that is good: or rather to what follows in the next clause; and the meaning is, to all this wickedness before mentioned, which was so great that it might be thought nothing more could be added to it; and yet the following things were, as building an eminent place, and high places, in all streets and heads of ways: *woe, woe unto thee, saith the Lord of hosts*; which is repeated, to shew the indignation of the Lord against all this wickedness; to arouse their attention to their sin and punishment, and to shew the certainty of it; and it may be it denotes both their misery in this world, and in that to come. The Targum of the whole is, "what shall be in thine end for "all thy wickedness? the prophet said unto her, woe "unto thee, because thou hast sinned; woe unto thee, "because thou art not converted, saith the Lord God."

Ver. 24. That *thou hast also built unto thee an eminent place*, &c.] Or a *brothel*[k]; and so the Septuagint version, *a whoring-house*; not content to commit idolatry privately, they built a public place for idolatrous worship. The Targum renders it, *altar*. The word has the signification of a pit or ditch; with which compare Prov. xxii. 14. and xxiii. 27. *And hast made thee an high place in every street*; of Jerusalem, and other cities; it was usual to erect high places in streets, where altars were built, and idols set up to be worshipped: it denotes the public manner in which they committed idolatry, and the multitude of their idols; which shews their impudence and hardness of heart.

[k] גב οικημα πορνικον, Sept.; lupanar, V. L.; prostibulum, so some in Starckius.

Ver. 25. *Thou hast built thy high place at every head of the way*, &c.] Where two or more ways, or two or more streets, met; and so was most conspicuous, and was seen from different parts; which shews the same as before: *and hast made thy beauty to be abhorred*; by the Lord himself, who otherwise greatly desires and delights in the beauty of his people, when they worship him, Psal. xlv. 11. and by all good men, and such as fear the Lord, who cannot but abhor such idolatrous practices, and those that are guilty of them; and even by the Heathens themselves, to whom the Jews became mean and despicable, when they fell into idolatry, and under the displeasure of God, whom they forsook; as a common strumpet becomes, in process of time, loathsome to her quondam lovers: *and hast opened thy feet to every one that passed by*; an euphemism, signifying the exposing to view the privities or secret parts, in order to allure to impure embraces; and the meaning is, that the Jews were ready to receive any idol, and give into any idolatrous worship that offered to them, and even courted and solicited the Gentiles to join with them in all idolatrous practices: *and multiplied thy whoredoms*; or idolatries; the number of their idols being answerable to their cities, and even were as many as the streets and heads of ways in them.

Ver. 26. *Thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians*, &c.] By entering into leagues and alliances with them, and seeking to them for help and assistance against their enemies; from whose bondage they had formerly been delivered, and whose society they were cautioned against; and yet they forsook the Lord, and joined themselves to them by solemn covenant; and not only so, but fell into the worship of their idols, who were a people of all others the most superstitious, and given to idolatry; and many of their idolatrous rites and ceremonies were received and retained by the Jews, as the worshipping of Tammuz, and other idols: *thy neighbours, great of flesh*; being their neighbours, and full of power and strength to assist them, they courted their friendship and alliance; and their idolatries being many and monstrous, were the more courted by them: the allusion is to women of shameless impudence and insatiable lust, who covet men, whose flesh is as the flesh of asses, and their issue as horses, ch. xxiii. 20. flesh here signifies the privy parts of men; so Ben Melech. *And hast increased thy whoredoms, to provoke my anger*; multiplied their idolatries, which they learned of the Egyptians, a people much given thereunto; and which were abominable and highly provoking to God, 1 Pet. iv. 3. The Targum is, "thou hast increased thine idols."

Ver. 27. *Behold, therefore I have stretched out my hand over thee*, &c.] His chastising and correcting hand, to shew his resentment at their sins, and bring them to a sense of them, and repentance for them: *and have diminished thine ordinary food*; their stated allowances, the common mercies and blessings of life they had been indulged with, but now were lessened; and particularly a famine was brought upon them, as well as they were deprived of other favours for their sins; God dealing with them as husbands with their wanton wives, who keep them to straiter allowance, and closer confinement, in order to check and tame them: *and delivered thee unto the will of them that hate thee, the daughters of the Philistines*; which perhaps may refer to the times of Ahaz, when the Philistines invaded the cities of the low country, and of the south of Judah, and took many of their cities, and brought Judah low, 2 Chron. xxviii. 18, 19: *which are ashamed of thy lewd way*; of their inconstancy in changing their religion, relinquishing the worship of the true God, and embracing that of others, when they abode by their ancient religion and worship, Jer. ii. 10, 11. The Targum is, "to "whom if I had sent my prophets, they would have "been ashamed;" see Matt. xi. 21, 23.

Ver. 28. *Thou hast played the whore also with the Assyrians*, &c.] By entering into alliances with them, and worshipping their idols; which was done in the times of Ahaz, who sent to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria for help, and to Damascus for the fashion of the altar there, and built one according to it, 2 Kings xvi. 10, 11: *because thou wast unsatiable*; not content with the alliance and idolatries of the Egyptians: *yea, thou hast played the harlot with them*; with the Assyrians: *and yet couldest not be satisfied*; with their idols, and the worship of them, but sought out for new gods, and new modes of worship; like a lewd woman, who having prostituted herself to one, and to another, yet remains insatiable, and seeks out for other lovers.

Ver. 29. *Thou hast moreover multiplied thy fornication in the land of Canaan*, &c.] Or, *with the land of Canaan*[l]; with the inhabitants of it, doing the same evils, committing the same idolatries, as the old inhabitants of Canaan did; and so the Targum, "and thou "hast multiplied thine idols, that thou mightest be "joined to the people of Canaan:" or, *to the land of Canaan*[m]; like to the land of Canaan; according to the abominations of the Canaanites, doing as they did. Jarchi takes the word Canaan to signify a *merchant*, as it does in Hos. xii. 7, and the land of Canaan to be the same with the land of Chaldea, called a land of traffic, and Babylon the city of merchants, Ezek. xvii. 4. since it follows, *unto Chaldea*; but the sense is, that the Jews were not content with the idolatries in the land of Canaan, but sent even to Chaldea, a remote country, to fetch new idols from thence; see Ezek. xxiii. 14, 15, 16. The Targum is, "to walk in the laws of "the Chaldeans;" their religious ones, their rites and ceremonies respecting idolatrous worship: *and yet thou wast not satisfied herewith*; but still wanted other idols and modes of worship; not being content with the gods of the Egyptians, nor of the Assyrians, nor of the Canaanites, nor of the Chaldeans.

Ver. 30. *How weak is thine heart, saith the Lord God*, &c.] Through sin; and being destitute of the grace of God, and so unable to resist any temptation, or oppose any corruption or lust, but carried away with every one that offers; indulging every lust, and yet not satisfied; weak as water, unstable, fickle, and inconstant, seeking after new gods, and new kinds of worship. The Targum is, "how strong is the wicked- "ness of thy heart!" the stronger the wickedness of

[l] אל ארץ כנען cum terra Canaan, Munster; so some in Vatablus, Tigurine version, Noldius, p. 39. No. 208.

[m] Ad terram Canaan, so some in Vatablus. Approved by Kimchi and Ben Melech.

the heart, the weaker the heart is: *seeing thou doest all these things*; all the idolatries before mentioned; which was an argument not of her strength, but weakness, and yet of boldness, impudence, and resolution, to have her will: *the work of an imperious whorish woman*: a whore, as she is impudent, is imperious, is one that rules and governs. The Targum is, who rules over herself; does what she pleases, will have her will and way, and can't bear any contradiction; and who rules over others, such as are her gallants, obliging them to do as she commands. Jarchi's note is, "over whom "her imagination (or corruption) rules."

Ver. 31. *In that thou buildest thine eminent place in the head of every way*, &c.] Or brothel-house, as before: see the note on ver. 24. which shewed her to be a whore, and an imperious one: *and makest thine high place in every street*: see the note as before: *and hast not been as an harlot*: a common one, or as a harlot usually is: *in that thou scornest hire*; which they do not; for it is for hire they prostitute themselves; and have their names, both in our language, and in the Latin tongue, from thence.

Ver. 32. But as *a wife that committeth adultery*, &c.] Who has a husband, and is provided for with all the necessaries of life, with food and clothing: and so has no need to prostitute herself for a livelihood, as common strumpets do; but does it purely for the satiating of her lust: and such were the people of the Jews, they were married to the Lord, who took care of them, and provided every thing for them, and acted the part of a husband to them; so that it was the weakness of their hearts, and the strength of their corruptions, which led them to depart from him, and commit idolatry; which in them was adultery, whilst the sin of the Gentiles was as simple fornication: which *taketh strangers instead of her husband*: that takes other men into her bed instead of her husband, not for the sake of gain, but lust; and this was the case of the Jews, who were a wicked people, an idolatrous generation, who took strange gods to worship instead of the true God, who had been a husband to them, Jer. xxxi. 32.

Ver. 33. *They give gifts to all whores*, &c.] Gifts are usually given to whores, by those who commit whoredom with them; it is for the sake of these they prostitute their bodies, nor will they do this without gain: see Gen. xxxviii. 16, 17: *but thou givest thy gifts to all thy lovers*: the Jews gave the Egyptians and Assyrians money, to gain their friendship, and procure alliances with them; see 2 Kings xvi. 8. Isa. xxx. 6, 7. and were at great expenses with their idols, and in support of their idolatrous worship: *and hirest them, that they may come unto thee on every side for thy whoredom*: they courted the nations all around them for their favour and friendship, and bribed them into it, as the word[n] signifies.

Ver. 34. *And the contrary is in thee from* other *women in thy whoredoms*, &c.] Of which an instance is given before, and another is added, with the repetition of the former: *whereas none followeth thee to commit whoredoms*: the Jews followed the examples, customs, and practices of the Gentiles, in worshipping of their idols; but the Gentiles did not follow the Jews, they kept to their own gods, and did not worship the God of Israel; which with respect to their own gods would have been fornication; and whereas it is usual for men to follow after whorish women, and solicit them by gifts and presents, or promises, and not for them to follow the men, court and solicit them; on the other hand, the Jews, who are compared to a whorish woman, followed after their lovers, and not their lovers after them: or, *after thee there was not*, or *shall not be fornication*[o]; like to thine; it being such as never had been, nor never would be the like again: *and in that thou givest a reward, and no reward is given unto thee, therefore thou art contrary*; to all other lewd women, who take, but give no reward.

Ver. 35. *Wherefore, O harlot, hear the word of the Lord*.] The sentence about to be pronounced; adjudging to be slain with the sword, to be stoned and burned; the crime for which is to be read in the name of harlot, justly given to an apostate people; as it often is to the church of Rome in the book of the Revelation. The Targum is, "whose works are as an "harlot's; O congregation of Israel, receive the words "of the Lord;" which follow:

Ver. 36. *Thus saith the Lord God, because thy filthiness was poured out*, &c.] Or, *thy brass*[p]. The word is used by the Rabbins[q] for the bottom of a thing; and is here accordingly, by Kimchi and Ben Melech, interpreted of a woman's lower part, the same with her nakedness next mentioned; and from whence, by reason of her inordinate lust, and the frequent exercise of it, and that with many different persons, a gonorrhœa, as Jarchi explains it, or a filthy flux flowed, and was poured out on her lovers; from whence the filthy disease, the *lues venerea*: *and thy nakedness discovered through thy whoredoms with thy lovers*; which she discovered or exposed to view herself, in order to entice her lovers to lie with her, and for the sake thereof; see ver. 25: *and with all the idols of thine abominations*; or abominable idols, which were so in themselves, were abominable to God, and made the worshippers of them so likewise; these are distinguished from her lovers, the Egyptians and Assyrians, her confederates, and by means of whose alliance she fell into idolatry: *and by the blood of thy children, which thou didst give unto them*; the idols, to whom they were dedicated and sacrificed; and for whose sake, and for the worship of them, they were caused to pass through the fire, and were burnt in it; and by such shocking murders, as well as idolatrous practices, the depravity of their nature, the wickedness of their hearts, their hypocrisy, treachery, and infidelity, were discovered and made known.

Ver. 37. *Behold, therefore I will gather all thy lovers, with whom thou hast taken pleasure*, &c.] Or, *with*

[n] תשחדי אותם muneraris eos, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; & muneratis eos, Piscator; & largita es ipsis, Cocceius; donasti illis, Starckius.

[o] ואחריך לא זונה et post te non fornicatio fuit, Pagninus, Montanus; nec post te fuit sic fornicatum, so some in Vatablus; post te non erit fornicatio, Calvin.

[p] נחשתך τα χαλκεα σου, Sept.; æs tuum, Montanus, Vatablus, Calvin, Tigurine version, Starckius; virus tuum, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator, Grotius; ærugo tua, Cocceius.

[q] Misn. Celim, c. 8. sect. 3. Vid. T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 41. 2. & Gloss. in ib.

whom thou hast mixed[r]; in unlawful embraces, joined in sinful alliances, or in idolatrous practices: *and all them that thou hast loved;* the Egyptians and Assyrians, whose friendship and idolatrous customs they were fond of: *with all them that thou hast hated;* as the Philistines, Moabites, and Ammonites: *I will even gather them round about against thee;* as they were in the Chaldean army, which consisted of many nations: *and will discover thy nakedness unto them, that they may see all thy nakedness;* as a just retaliation for discovering it herself, as in the preceding verse; than which nothing can be more disagreeable to the sex. The Milesian virgins were restrained from self-murder by a law, which ordered that such should be drawn naked through the market-place. This is to be understood of the spoiling of the city and temple.

Ver. 38. *And I will judge thee as women that break wedlock,* &c.] The marriage-covenant, defile the marriage-bed, and were adulteresses, who by the law of Moses were to be punished with death, Lev. xx. 10. Deut. xxii. 22: *and shed blood are judged;* who also were punished with death according to the original law in Gen. ix. 6. the Jews were not only guilty of spiritual adultery, that is, idolatry; but also of murder, by sacrificing their infants to idols; and murder often follows upon adultery, as Kimchi observes; and these people were guilty of shedding innocent blood on other accounts; but the first mentioned is chiefly designed here: *and I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy;* by way of retaliation; blood being shed, blood is given, and that in wrath and vengeance; the allusion is to a jealous and abused husband, that avenges himself of the person that has injured him; see Rev. xvi. 6.

Ver. 39. *And I also will give thee into their hand,* &c.] Into the hand of their lovers and enemies that should be gathered against them, the Assyrians and Chaldeans, with others that joined them, as in ver. 37: *and they shall throw down thine eminent place, and shall break down thine high places;* the city of Jerusalem, the temple, and altars; and not only these, but even the high places and altars which were set up for idolatrous uses; all should be destroyed by the Chaldean army. The Targum is, "and they shall destroy thy "walls, and thy high places shall be destroyed:" *they shall strip thee also of thy clothes;* as persons commonly are when taken captives: *and shall take thy fair jewels;* or, *the vessels of thy glory*[s]; the vessels of the sanctuary of gold and silver, and their own household furniture, with all their riches and substance: *and leave thee naked and bare;* as at first when in Egypt; see ver. 7.

Ver. 40. *They shall also bring up a company against thee,* &c.] An army, so the Targum; the Chaldean army: *and they shall stone thee with stones;* cast out of their engines and slings, by which they battered the walls, as well as killed the inhabitants; and so the Targum renders it, with sling-stones; the allusion is to the stoning of adulterous persons, Deut. xxii. 24. John viii. 5: *and thrust thee through with their swords;* such as attempted to escape out of the city, or fell into the hands of the enemy when it was taken, were slain with the sword.

Ver. 41. *They shall burn thine houses with fire,* &c.] As the houses in Jerusalem were by Nebuchadnezzar's army, even the temple, the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and the houses of great men, even all the houses in the city, Jer. lii. 13. and as was commanded to be done to idolatrous cities, Deut. xiii. 16. and this also may be said in allusion to the burning of adulterous persons, Gen. xxxviii. 24: *and execute judgments upon thee in the sight of many women;* or provinces, as the Targum; meaning the Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, who would rejoice in their ruin; the judgments design those before mentioned: *and I will cause thee to cease from playing the harlot, and thou also shalt give no hire any more;* their idols, high places, and altars, being demolished, and they plundered of their substance; and after the Babylonish captivity the Jews never returned to idolatry any more.

Ver. 42. *So will I make my fury towards thee to rest,* &c.] When the Jews should cease from their idolatries, and no more worship the gods of the nations, then the fury of the Lord, and the effects of it, should cease: God no longer contends with a people than while they are sinning; when a reformation is brought about, by afflictions or judgments, his end is answered, and he puts a stop to the spread of his wrath and fury; or it is made to rest, because there is nothing left for it to work upon, a total consumption of people and substance being made by it: or it may be rendered, *I will make my fury to rest upon thee*[t]; and the sense be, that his wrath should abide upon them, and not remove until an utter end was made of them; though the first sense seems best to agree with what goes before, and follows after: *and my jealousy shall depart from thee;* as it does from a man when he has utterly rejected his wife because of whoredom, and is divorced from her; and his burning jealousy has satisfied itself, and there is no other way to operate and shew itself in; or when a woman returns to her husband and gives him satisfaction, keeps close unto him, and lives chastely with him, having relinquished her former lewd ways and practices: *and I will be quiet, and will be no more angry;* the effects of his anger cease, his judgments averted, and he at peace with them, and they with him; for he retains not his anger for ever: though some understand this of his being quiet and at ease in the destruction of the Jews; there being no more to wreak his vengeance upon.

Ver. 43. *Because thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth,* &c.] The low estate they were once in, and the great favours bestowed upon them, which laid them under great obligation to serve the Lord, and him only; but these they forgot, which highly provoked him, and caused him to do the things he did; see ver. 22: *and hast fretted me in all these things;* irritated, provoked him, moved him to wrath and anger, stirred up in his breast a tumult, speaking after the manner of men; this they did by their ingratitude, idolatry, and other sins: *behold, therefore, I also will*

[r] אשר ערבת עליהם quibus commixtuisti cum illis, Starckius.

[s] כלי תפארתך vasa decoris tui, V. L.; instrumenta ornatus tui, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; vasa ornatus tui, Piscator, Starckius.

[t] והנחתי חמתי בך et requiescere faciam iram meam in te, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Cocceius.

recompense thy way upon thine head, saith the Lord God: retaliate their evils, punish them according as their sins deserved, and in a way which they led unto: *and thou shalt not commit this lewdness above all thine abominations;* or add to all thine abominable idolatries this shocking piece of wickedness, the sacrificing of their children to their idols: or rather the words may be rendered, *for thou hast not taken this thought* (or counsel) *upon* or *concerning all thine abominations* *; to repent of them, and turn from them. So the Targum, " and thou hast not taken counsel to thyself, to turn " from all thine abominations." Or, as Jarchi, " thou " hast not taken counsel to put thy heart upon thine " abominations to turn from them;" and he observes, that the word here used always signifies counsel, either good or evil. There is a double reading of this clause; we follow the Keri, or marginal reading; but the Cetib, or textual writing or reading, is, *and I have not done according to this lewdness above all thine abominations:* and so expresses the mercy and long-suffering of God *.

Ver. 44. *Behold, every one that useth proverbs,* &c.] That affects a proverbial way of speaking; that is witty and facetious, and has a talent at satirizing and scoffing, as some have had; such were Lucian and others: *shall use this proverb against thee:* signifying that the sins of the Jews should be well known and exposed, and they should become the subject of the gibes and jeers of men: *saying, as is the mother, so is her daughter;* an ancient and common proverb, used to express a likeness and agreement between persons in their nature and disposition, in their behaviour, conduct, and conversation. So the Targum, " as are the " works of the mother, so those of the daughter;" the mother is the land of Canaan, and the daughter the congregation of Israel, as Kimchi. The Jews were the successors of the old Canaanites, and they imitated them in their practices; and, because both of their succession and imitation, they are called the daughter of them; a bad daughter of a bad mother.

Ver. 45. *Thou art thy mother's daughter,* &c.] Exactly like her; they that have known the one must know the other. The Targum is, " wherefore art " thou become the daughter of the land of Canaan, to " do according to the works of the people?" *that loatheth her husband and her children;* a true character of an adulteress; and which agrees both with the mother the Canaanites, and with the daughter the Jews; who both despised, rejected, and forsook God their husband, Creator, and lawgiver, and sacrificed their children to idols; see ver. 20, 21. and Lev. xviii. 21, 24: *and thou art the sister of thy sisters;* the true genuine sister of them, Samaria and Sodom after mentioned; being not only allied to them in blood, more nearly to the one, more remotely to the other, but exceedingly alike in manners, religion, and worship: *which loatheth their husbands and their children;* as before: *your mother was an Hittite, and your father an Amorite;* these the Israelites succeeded in their land, and followed their customs; see the note on ver. 3. The Targum is, " was not your mother Sarah among " the Hittites? and she did not do according to their " works; and your father Abraham was among the " Amorites, and he walked not in their counsels."

Ver. 46. *And thine elder sister is Samaria,* &c.] The metropolis of the ten tribes; *sister* to the Jews, because of the same descent, having one and the same father; the *elder* or *greater* *, because more in number and power; the kingdom of Israel consisted of ten tribes, and the kingdom of Judah but of two; and the ten tribes also were the first in the apostacy from the true worship of God: *she and her daughters that dwell at thy left hand;* as Samaria the sister was the metropolis of the ten tribes, her daughters are the other cities and towns belonging thereunto; and so the Targum renders it, she and her villages; these were situated to the north of the land of Israel, as Judah was to the south, which with the Jews were left and right; as a man standing with his face to the east has the north on his left and the south on his right side: *and thy younger sister, that dwelleth at thy right hand,* is *Sodom and her daughters;* where Lot the kinsman of Abraham lived, and from whom sprung the Ammonites and Moabites. Sodom was a lesser kingdom than that of Judah, and which lay to the south; that is, to the right of it; even that and the other cities, which perished with it, called her daughters, as Admah, Zeboim, &c.

Ver. 47. *Yet hast thou not walked after their ways,* &c.] But in ways more evil; were not content to keep pace with them, and do as they did; but outwent them, outstripped them in wickedness: *nor done after their abominations;* but committed greater abominations than they did; sins of a more heinous nature, and attended with more aggravated circumstances; having more power and wealth, more wisdom and understanding; the means of grace, the word and ordinances of God: *but, as* if that were *a very little* thing; to commit the sins that Samaria and Sodom did: or, *it was loathing* to thee *as a little thing* *; they despised and loathed their sins as too mean and little, and not flagitious and enormous, or bold and daring enough to be committed; and looked upon them with contempt, as sneaking sinners, that had no soul nor spirit in them, or taste for sinful pleasures, in comparison of them: or the sense is, it would have been a little thing, comparatively speaking, had they only walked after the ways and abominations of Samaria and Sodom, and stopped there; but they had greatly exceeded them; and so the Targum, " if thou hadst walked in their " ways, and done according to their abominations, " thy sin had been small." Kimchi interprets it of a small time that the Jews continued in the ways and worship of God, after the captivity of the ten tribes, which were carried away in the sixth year of Hezekiah; so that there were but three-and-twenty years left of his reign, when his son Manasseh succeeded him, and was more wicked than all before him; and these three-and-twenty years are the little time here spoken of:

* ולא עשית את זמה על כל תועבתיך et non fecisti cogitationem super omnibus abominationibus tuis, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin; nec tamen fecisti, &c. Vatablus, Grotius.

* This is followed by the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Luther, Starckius, and others.

* הגדולה major, V. L. Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.

* כמעט קט tanquam parvum, fastidio fuit hoc, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; velut parum fastidii, Starckius.

and within a very little time, and thou wast corrupted more than they in all their ways; this explains what is meant by not walking after their ways and abominations; they were greater sinners than they; more corrupt in their principles and practices; more hardened in them, and more difficult to be reclaimed from them; see Matt. xi. 23, 24.

Ver. 48. *As I live, saith the Lord God,* &c.] This is an oath, which the Lord God swore; who, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, by his life; and this he did to confirm what he had and was about to say, that the sins of Judah were greater than those of Samaria and Sodom; which might not be easily believed, but it was as true as he was the living God: *Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters;* that is, the inhabitants of Sodom, and of the villages adjacent, as the Targum, had not committed such gross iniquities as the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of the towns and villages about it, and of other cities of Judah.

Ver. 49. *Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom,* &c.] Namely, the first after mentioned, the source and spring of the rest; the causes and means of which are declared; and the same, as is suggested, was the sin of Jerusalem: namely, *pride;* which was the sin of the devils, and the cause of their ruin; the sin of our first parents, by which they fell, and destroyed themselves, and their posterity; and is the prevailing, governing, sin of human nature: it has been the ruin of kingdoms and states, of cities and particular persons; a sin hateful to God, and destructive to man: *fulness of bread;* the land of Sodom was very fruitful before it was destroyed; it was like the garden of the Lord, Gen. xiii. 10. it brought forth plentifully, so that there was great fulness of provision, of all sorts of food, which is meant by bread: this, considered in itself, was not sinful, but a blessing; it was the Lord's mercy and goodness to them that they had such plenty; but it was their sin that they abused it; luxury and intemperance, eating and drinking to excess, are here meant; which led on to that sin, and kindled the flames of it, and were the fuel to it, which has its name from them; and, besides, this fulness of good things enjoyed by them was the source of their pride, and served to increase that, as before mentioned: *and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters;* or, *peace of rest*[a]; prosperity and ease, security and quietness, at leisure, and without labour; two words are used to express the same thing, and to denote, as Kimchi observes, the abundance of it: sloth and idleness, as they often arise from the goodness and fruitfulness of a country, and fulness of provision, so they are the cause of much sin and wickedness; for, if persons are not employed in some business or another, either of the head or hand, they will be doing evil: *neither did she strengthen the hands of the poor and needy;* though she had such abundance of food to supply them with, and so much leisure to attend to their distress; but her pride would not suffer her to do it; and she was too idle and slothful to regard such service; perhaps more is intended than is expressed; that she weakened the hands of the poor and needy, and cruelly oppressed them; which is often done by proud men, in great affluence and at leisure, which they abuse to bad purposes.

Ver. 50. *And they were haughty,* &c.] Sodom and her daughters, the inhabitants of that place, and the cities adjacent; they lifted up themselves above God and man; they were above regarding the poor and needy; and were elated and swelled with their plenty and prosperity, and behaved very insolently, both to fellow-citizens and strangers; see Gen. xix. 4, 5, 9: *and committed abomination before me;* perhaps referring to that sin, which has its name from them; a sin abominable to God, and scandalous to human nature; and which they committed openly and publicly, neither fearing God, nor regarding men; and are said to be sinners before the Lord, Gen. xiii. 13: *therefore I took them away as I saw good;* both as to time and manner, as he in his sovereignty thought most fit and proper, by raining fire and brimstone on them, and setting them forth as an example of the vengeance of eternal fire: or, *when I saw*[b]; their sin and wickedness, as soon as he saw it; see Gen. xviii. 20, 21. The Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions render it, *as thou sawest,* or *hast seen;* appealing to the Jews themselves, who were very well acquainted with the fact; for the destruction of Sodom was notorious and flagrant.

Ver. 51. *Neither hath Samaria committed half of thy sins,* &c.] The sins of Samaria, or the ten tribes, of which Samaria was the metropolis, were the worshipping of the calves at Dan and Beth-el; but the gods of Judah were according to the number of their cities, and they even set up their idols in the temple of Jerusalem, Jer. ii. 28. and vii. 30. Ezek. viii. 5, 10, 14, 16. and, besides, their sins were aggravated by the benefits and privileges they enjoyed; having the temple, the right place of worship, among them; the priests of the Lord to officiate for them; the prophets to instruct and teach them; and many good kings to rule over them, who encouraged them in the pure worship of God, and set them examples; as also by their not taking warning at the captivity of the ten tribes, which were some years before; so that they were guilty of great ingratitude and obduracy: *but thou hast multiplied thine abominations more than they;* than Samaria and her daughters, or the ten tribes; or than Sodom and Samaria, since both are intended in the next clause: *and hast justified thy sisters in all thine abominations which thou hast done;* justified them in what they did; countenanced them in their wickedness, by doing the same abominations, and more, and much greater; saying, in effect, that they did right in what they did; and, by exceeding them in sin, made them to appear righteous in comparison of them; and gave them an opportunity of saying, in excuse for themselves, that the men of Judah had been guilty of more and greater sins than they, and yet had not been punished as they had been.

Ver. 52. *Thou also which hast judged thy sisters,* &c.] Sodom and Samaria, by censuring and condemning

[a] ושלות השקט quies otii, *vel* otium quietis; so some in Vatablus; resperitas otii, Castalio; tranqu illitas quietis, Starckius.

[b] כאשר ראיתי cum vidi, Cocceius; so some in Vatablus; postea quam, Tigurine version, Piscator, Starckius.

them for their sins; see 2 Chron. xiii. 8, 9, 10. in which sense Jarchi and Kimchi interpret the word; or by defending and patronizing them, acquitting and absolving them, by committing the same sins, and more heinous ones: *bear thine own shame for thy sins that thou hast committed more abominable than they*: look upon thy sins, and blush at them; confess them with shame and confusion of face; take shame to thyself for them, in that thou hast censured and condemned these sins in others thou hast been guilty of thyself; and the rather, since thy sins are greater, and attended with more aggravating circumstances, than those thou hast blamed in others; or this is a prophecy of their punishment for their sins, when they should be carried captive, and be put to shame before their neighbours: or, *thou shalt bear*[e]; shame is the fruit of sin, sooner or later: *they are more righteous than thou*: in comparison of her; though neither of them were righteous in the sight of God, yet comparatively one was more righteous than another, having committed fewer sins, and lesser abominations: *yea, be thou confounded also, and bear thy shame, in that thou hast justified thy sisters*; this is repeated in stronger expressions, and with the reasons of it, to shew the great confusion they should be brought unto, and the certainty of it, the more to strike and affect their minds with it.

Ver. 53. *When I shall bring again their captivity*, &c.] The captivity of Sodom and Samaria, as after mentioned: *the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters*; which some understand as what never will be, as it never yet has been: Sodom remains to this day a dead sea, and the ten tribes are not returned: *then* will I bring again *the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them*: that is, it shall never be brought again, according to the above sense; but rather this is to be understood of the calling of the Gentiles, comparable to Sodom for their wickedness, as the great city of Rome is, Rev. xi. 8. and of the calling of God's elect among the ten tribes, scattered up and down among the Gentiles, by the preaching of the apostles; and when the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in, then will follow the conversion of the Jews, and all Israel will be saved, Rom. xi. 25, 26. for 'tis certain those sisters, Sodom and Samaria, were to be restored, and received into the church, and given to her for daughters, ver. 61, thus the conversion of the Gentiles is signified by bringing again the captivity of Moab and Ammon, in Jer. xlviii. 47. and xlix. 6.

Ver. 54. *That thou mayest bear thine own shame*, &c.] So long as the captivity remains; even until Sodom and Samaria, the Gentiles, and the ten tribes, are called and converted: *and mayest be confounded in all that thou hast done*: or, *for all that thou hast done*[f]; for and because of all the abominable sins they had been guilty of: *in that thou art a comfort to them*: to Sodom and Samaria; countenancing them in their sins; justifying their iniquities, and strengthening their hands in their wickedness, by doing the same, and greater abominations; or in partaking of the same punishment with them, captivity; this being a kind of solace to them, that they were not punished alone; so Jarchi.

Ver. 55. *When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate*, &c.] The Jews, as Jerom says, are of opinion, that in the days of their vainly-expected Messiah Sodom will be restored to its ancient state, and be as the garden of God, and as the land of Egypt; and Jarchi interprets the bringing again the captivity of Sodom, in ver. 53, by the Lord's healing the land of brimstone and salt, and placing inhabitants in it; and it is asserted by the Jews[g] that Sodom and Gomorrah shall be rebuilt in future times, in the times of the Messiah, according to the sense of this passage: but this is not to be understood in a literal sense, of the rebuilding of Sodom and cities adjacent, and of restoring them to their former fruitfulness and fertility, and of the inhabitants to their former prosperity, and much less to their former state of wickedness; but spiritually, of the conversion of Gentile sinners to their ancient and happy estate in Christ: *and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate*; to the knowledge of the Messiah, and the pure worship of God: *then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate*: the conversion of Judah, and of Israel or the ten tribes, here meant by Samaria, is frequently prophesied of, as what will be at the same time, Jer. xxiii. 6. and l. 4. Hos. v. 11.

Ver. 56. *For thy sister Sodom was not mentioned by thy mouth*, &c.] Or, *was not for a hearing*, or *a report, in thy mouth*[h]; the destruction of Sodom, though it was such an awful judgment of God, so flagrant and notorious, was visible and just at hand; yet it was not taken notice of, nor talked of; it was not the subject of conversation among friends; it was not reported from father to son, or heard of the one by the other; it was not regarded, nor was warning taken by it, which might have been, had it been more frequently mentioned; but they did not care, or neglected to speak of it; though it was *an ensample to those that should after live ungodly*; yet it was not *for instruction* to them, as the Targum paraphrases it; they learned nothing by it; or Sodom was so infamous for sin and punishment, that they scorned to make mention of its name; and yet they were as great or greater sinners, and deserving of sorer punishment: *in the day of thy pride*; or *prides*, or *excellencies*[i]; in the time of their prosperity, in the days of David and Solomon, and other kings of Judah. Prosperity is apt to make men proud, and to lift them above themselves; and to forget what they have been, and what they may be; and to neglect observing the judgments of God on others, and to take warning by them.

Ver. 57. *Before thy wickedness was discovered*, &c.] By the punishment of it, by the judgments of God brought upon them; then they were humbled, who before were proud and haughty; and might speak and think of the vengeance of God on Sodom, which before

[e] שאי את imperat. pro fut. i. e. confunderis, Vatablus.

[f] מכל אשר עשית propter omnia quæ fecisti, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator.

[g] Shemot Rabba, sect. 15. fol. 101. 3.

[h] לשמועה בפיך in audita in ore tuo, Pagninus, Montanus; in auditum, Vatablus.

[i] ביום גאוניך in die superbiarum tuarum, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin; in die excellentiarum tuarum, Piscator; in die erectionum tuarum, Cocceius, Starckius.

they made no mention of. It is a sad thing only to know sin, and to have it discovered only by the punishment of it: *as at the time of thy reproach of the daughters of Syria, and all* that are *round about her, the daughters of the Philistines*; this seems to refer to the times of Ahaz, when the Syrians smote the men of Judah, and carried many of them captive; and the Philistines invaded the cities of the low country, and southern parts of Judah, and took many of them, 2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 18. at which time the wickedness of the Jews was discovered; and it was a plain case they had sinned against the Lord, by his suffering their enemies to come upon them, and prevail over them; which was to their reproach. The Syrians reproached them, and so did the Philistines: *which despise thee round about*: they spoiled and plundered them on all sides; and treated them with scorn and contempt, who before were formidable and terrible to them: thus it is with a people when they are left of God, they are despised by men.

Ver. 58. *Thou hast borne thy lewdness and thine abominations*, &c.] Openly and publicly; their abominable iniquities were written as it were upon their foreheads, and were to be seen of all men; their sin was to be read in their punishment, which is meant by bearing their lewdness and abominations; namely, the punishment due unto them: *saith the Lord*; who always speaks what is just and true; this is added to denote the truth of what had been, and the certainty of what would be, as follows:

Ver. 59. *For thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] And what he says may be depended upon as truth, and what will certainly come to pass: *I will even deal with thee as thou hast done*: reward them according to their works; or execute the law of retaliation upon them; and reject them, as they had rejected him; and cast them off from being his people, since they had forsook him as their God; they being the aggressors and transgressors of the covenant, he was under no obligation by virtue of that to bless and protect them: *which hath despised the oath by breaking the covenant*; the covenant at Mount Sinai; or which was made in the plains of Moab, which had an oath annexed to it, Deut. xxix. 12. but by breaking the covenant, which they did by their many abominations, they despised the oath by which they were sworn to keep it; and therefore it was but just with God to do with them as they had done with him and his covenant. The words are by some rendered, *I might even deal with thee as thou hast done*[1], &c. I should be justified in so doing, and you could not justly complain of me; but I will not, as follows:

Ver. 60. *Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth*, &c.] The covenant made with them at Sinai, quickly after they came out of Egypt, when they were, both as a body politic and ecclesiastical, in their infant state; for, as Kimchi says, all the while they were in Egypt, and until they came into the land of Canaan, were called the days of their youth; and to this covenant, which had the nature of a matrimonial contract, the prophet refers when he speaks of the *love* of their *espousals*, and the *kindness* of their *youth*, Jer. ii. 2. this covenant the Lord remembered, and made good his part, though they neglected theirs; and it was particularly remembered when Christ was made under this law, and became the fulfilling end of it to his people; yielding perfect obedience to it, and bearing the penalty of it in their room and stead; for here begins a declaration of the grace and mercy of God to the remnant, according to the election of grace, which were among this degenerate people, and whom the Lord had a special regard unto: *and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant*; the covenant of grace, made with the Messiah and his spiritual seed; which is confirmed of God in Christ; ordered in all things and sure; whose promises are yea and amen in Christ; and the blessings of it, the sure mercies of David; a covenant that shall never be broken, made void, or removed; but will continue for ever. This is the new covenant, or the covenant of grace, as exhibited and administered under the New Testament; see Heb. viii. 8—13.

Ver. 61. *Then thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed*, &c.] When covenant-grace is manifested and applied, it brings persons to a sense of their sins, and to an ingenuous acknowledgment of them, with shame and blushing; they remember their evil ways in which they have walked, and blush at the thoughts of what they have been guilty of; and how they have sinned against a God of love, grace, and mercy; and what vile ungrateful creatures they have been: *when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger*; Samaria and Sodom, ver. 46. the ten tribes, or Benjamin and Simeon, whose part was in Judah, as Ben Melech; rather the Gentiles, even of all nations, ancient and modern, great and small, where the Gospel should come, and such of them as are called and converted by it; these, according to this prophecy, should be received into the communion of the church, to participate of all the privileges and ordinances of it, under the Gospel dispensation. The passage respects the calling of the Gentiles, and the incorporating of them into the Gospel church-state. The Syriac version renders it, *when I shall receive thy sisters*, &c. which the Targum interprets of greater and lesser provinces: *and I will give them unto thee for daughters*; to be nursed up by the church, through the ministry of the word and ordinances, where they have a place, and a name better than that of sons and daughters; become members of the church, and so daughters of Jerusalem, the mother of us all, Gal. iv. 26. to the laws, rules, and ordinances of which they submit, and yield an obedience, as daughters to their mother. The Targum is, "I will "deliver them unto thee for obedience." The Septuagint renders it, *for edification*; to be built up on their most holy faith: *but not by thy covenant*: made with the Israelites at Sinai, which genders to bondage, and under which the Jewish church with her children were in bondage, Gal. iv. 24, 25. but by virtue of the covenant of grace made with Christ; one article of which is, *I will* be their *father*, and they *shall be my sons and daughters*, 2 Cor. vi. 18. or not on condition of observing the rites and ceremonies of the law, under which the former covenant was administered, the Gen-

[1] ועשית אותך כאשר עשית ego quidem agerem tecum, quemadmodum fecisti mecum, Tigurine version.

tiles being freed from that, the ceremonial law being abrogated by Christ; or, not because thou hast kept the covenant made with thee, therefore I give thee those (for that thou hast broken), but of my own mere grace and favour, so Jarchi: or I will give daughters to thee, which are not of thy covenant, of thy law, so Kimchi; who are not of the same religion, meaning the Gentiles; and so the phrase is the same with that in John x. 16. *which are not of this fold.* There is an ancient exposition of the Jews, mentioned by Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbinel, which renders it, *but not of thy patrimony;* and explains it of the inheritance which God gave to Abraham between the pieces; as if the persons intended by those who are given for daughters did not belong thereunto.

Ver. 62. *And I will establish my covenant with thee,* &c.] See on ver. 60. and which is repeated for the comfort of the Lord's people, being ashamed upon the remembrance of their evil ways; and to shew the certainty of it, as well as because it is a matter of the greatest importance: *and thou shalt know that I am the Lord;* a covenant-keeping God; true and faithful to my promises, and able to make them good: this is a principal blessing of the covenant of grace, to know the Lord, Jer. xxxi. 34.

Ver. 63. *That thou mayest remember, and be confounded,* &c.] The more souls are led into the covenant of grace, and the more they know of God in Christ, and of him as their covenant God and Father, the more they remember of their former evil ways, and reflect upon them with shame and confusion: *and never open thy mouth any more;* against God, and the dispensations of his providence; against his Gospel, truths, and ordinances; against his people, the followers of Christ, and particularly the Gentiles; seeing they'll now see themselves as bad and worse than ever they were; for this may have a special regard to the conversion of the Jews in the latter day, when they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn, Zech. xii. 10. and remember the evil ways of their ancestors, and their own stubbornness and infidelity, and be ashamed thereof; and say not one word by way of complaint of the judgments of God that have been upon them as a nation so long: *because of thy shame;* because they will now be ashamed of their opposition to Christ and his Gospel; of their rejection and treatment of him; and of the evil things they have been guilty of: *when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God;* God may be said to be *pacified,* or *propitious,* when he is at peace with men, his anger is turned away, his law and justice are satisfied, reconciliation and atonement are made for sin, and he signifies that for Christ's sake; and especially when his pardoning love and grace is manifested and applied: and this pacification is made, not by men themselves, by their obedience, or repentance, or faith; but by the blood and sacrifice of Christ; which, when made known to the conscience; or when this atonement, propitiation, and pacification is received by faith; or there is a comfortable sense of pardon, through the blood of Christ, for all sins and transgressions that have been committed in heart and life; it has such an effect, as to cause men to remember and call to mind their former evil ways, and to fill them with shame for them, and to put them to silence, so as never more to open their mouths to excuse their sins; or commend themselves and their own righteousness; or to murmur against God, or censure others. This is the nature of pardoning grace and mercy.

CHAP. XVII.

UNDER the simile of two eagles and a vine are represented the kings of Babylon and Egypt, and the condition of the Jews, who are threatened with ruin for their perfidy; and yet a promise is made of the raising up of the house of Judah, and family of David, in the Messiah. The prophet is bid to deliver a riddle or parable to the house of Israel, ver. 1, 2. The riddle or parable is concerning two eagles and a vine, which is delivered, ver. 3—10. and the explanation of it is in ver. 11—15. and then the destruction of the Jews is threatened for their treachery to the king of Babylon, ver. 16—21. and the chapter is closed with a promise of the Messiah, and the prosperity of his kingdom, ver. 22, 23, 24.

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] After the prophet had been sent to charge the Jews with breaking the covenant with God, he is sent to rebuke and threaten them for breaking covenant with men, even with the king of Babylon; by whom they were in part carried into captivity, and another part remained in the land, as will be hereafter seen.

Ver. 2. *Son of man, put forth a riddle,* &c.] A dark saying, but a smart one: *whet a whetting* [*], as in the Hebrew; something at first sight difficult to be understood, yet amusing and entertaining; and, when solved, very useful and instructive: *and speak a parable unto the house of Israel;* or, *concerning the house of Israel* [†]; as the Targum and Syriac version; something relating to them, and what would aptly describe and represent their case; for the prophet was bid to take such a method, not to hide things from them, but rather the more strongly to represent them to them; seeing hereby their attention would be excited, and things would be more fixed in their memories, and they would be put upon studying the meaning of them; and when explained to them, and understood, which was quickly done, they might be the more affected with them.

Ver. 3. *And say, thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] The

[*] חוד חידה, Heb.; acue acumen, Piscator.

[†] אל בית ישראל de domo Israelis, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.

riddle is not the prophet's, nor the parable his, but the Lord God's; and exceeding beautiful and apt it is, to signify the things designed by it; the wisdom of God is greatly displayed in it: *a great eagle*: which is Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, as it is explained, ver. 12. who is compared to an eagle for his power and authority, that being the king of birds, and for his swiftness and voracity in conquering and subduing kingdoms; see Jer. xlviii. 40: *with great wings*: so the Babylonish monarchy is signified by a lion with eagle's wings, Dan. vii. 4. and the two parts of the Roman empire, into which it was divided at the death of Theodosius, are called two wings of a great eagle, Rev. xii. 14. and so here it may denote the large kingdoms and provinces which belonged to the Babylonian monarchy; see Esth. i. 1: *long-winged*; or having a *long member*[m]; meaning the body of the wing, which was long; and so, as the wings spread, may signify the breadth of his dominion, this the length of them, and both their extensiveness: *full of feathers*: of cities, towns, people, armies, wealth, and riches: *which had divers colours*; or an *embroidery*[n]; like that of the weaver, only needle-work, consisting of various colours; and so it alludes to such eagles as are called the golden eagle, and *asterias*, from their golden colour, and their being spotted like stars, and which are said to be of the largest size, as Bochart, from Ælianus[o], observes; and may signify people of divers languages, customs, manners, and circumstances, subject to the government of the king of Babylon: *came unto Lebanon*: the northern border of the land of Judea, and invaded it; where were the mountain and forest of Lebanon, famous for the cedars that grew there, from whence the whole land may here take its name, as being more apt for the allegory used: or the city of Jerusalem, where were the temple built of the cedars of Lebanon, as many of its palaces and houses also were; whither the king of Babylon came, and took it, and who came northward, as Babylon was: *and took the highest branch of the cedar*: by the *cedar* is meant, either the nation in general, or the royal family in particular; and by the *highest branch* the then reigning king, Jeconiah, with the princes and nobles of the land, who were taken and carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar; see 2 Kings xxiv. 14, 15, 16.

Ver. 4. *He cropped off the top of his young twigs*, &c.] By which are meant the princes of the land, or the several branches of the royal family; the top of which was King Jeconiah, who was but young and tender, being but eighteen years of age when he began his reign, and this was within three months after; and who was no more able to withstand the force of the king of Babylon, than a tender twig so ravenous a bird as an eagle, 2 Kings xxiv. 8. whose superior power and strength is signified by the cropping off of a tender twig: *and carried it into a land of traffic*: not into the land of Canaan, as the Septuagint, and some other versions, literally render it; but into Babylon, which was become a place of great merchandise, through the great concourse of people to it, and the large additions made to the empire: *he set it in a city of merchants*; meaning the city of Babylon, perhaps in particular, as distinct from the country before mentioned: the word for *merchants* signifies *apothecaries* or *druggists*[p]; and may design such merchants as traded in sweet spices and aromatic drugs. The words may be rendered, *and brought it out of the land of Canaan*[q]; out of which Jeconiah and his nobles were carried by the king of Babylon; so the particle אל sometimes signifies *from*, or *out of*, as in 1 Kings viii. 30. and others[r], *and in a city of merchants he set it*; in Babylon, famous for merchants; whom the Jews, being captives, were obliged to attend in a servile manner.

Ver. 5. *He took also of the seed of the land*, &c.] Of the land of Judea, a native of it, not a stranger; not one of another country, a Babylonian; not one of his own nobles or princes, did Nebuchadnezzar, the eagle, take and set upon the throne of Judea, but one of their own, even one of the king's seed, of the blood-royal, as it is explained, ver. 13. Mattaniah, the uncle of Jeconiah, whom the king of Babylon called Zedekiah, and made him king in his room: *and planted it in a fruitful field*; in the land of Judea, and in Jerusalem the royal city: *he placed it by great waters*: many people, Rev. xvii. 15. over whom he ruled, and by whom he was supported in his royal dignity: *and set it as a willow-tree*: which loves moist places, and grows up thick: unless it should be rendered, *he set it with great circumspection*[s]; took a great deal of care and caution in placing him upon the throne; he made a covenant with him, took an oath of him, and hostages for the performance of it, ver. 13. The Targum is, "a "planted vine he set it," to make it agree with what follows; but the word in the Chaldee and Arabic languages signifies a kind of willow, as we render it, as Ben Melech observes[t].

Ver. 6. *And it grew*, &c.] King Zedekiah reigned and prospered, and the kingdom flourished under him: *and became a spreading vine of low stature*: not so flourishing as it had been heretofore, in former reigns; it did not rise up to a cedar, as it had been, but was like a vine, which, though flourishing, does not rise up high, but runs upon the ground, and is dependent on something else; so the king and kingdom of Judah, though in tolerable circumstances, yet were humble and dependent on the king of Babylon: *whose branches turned towards him*: the eagle, Nebuchadnezzar, to whom the people of the Jews were tributary: *and the*

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[m] ארך האבר longa corpore, Castalio; longa membris, Munster, Grotius; longo membrorum ductu, Pradus.

[n] אשר לו הרקמה, Heb; opus phrygionicum, Piscator.

[o] Ælian. Hist. Animal. l. 2. c. 39.

[p] רוכלים aromatariorum, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus. So Stockius, p. 1017.

[q] אל ארץ כנען e terra Chanaan, Texelius, Phoenix, l. 3. c. 4. sect. 6. p. 295.

[r] Vid. Noldii Concord. Part. Ebr. p. 56.

[s] צפצפה שמו circumspectissime posuit illud, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; cum magna circumspectione, Piscator; circumspecte, Coccius, Starckius.

[t] And so it does; see Castel, col. 3220, 3221. and in this way Jarchi and Kimchi interpret the word, in which they are followed by many; so R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 73. 1. nevertheless, the sense of it here is disapproved of by Castel, who observes, what has a willow to do with a vine? col. 3222. and commends the Greek version, which renders it, ἐπιβλεπόμενον, conspicuous, to be seen; and so others translate it, in superficie, V. L. Grotius; yet the *safsaf* of the Arabs is a tree by which they understood the *abele* or poplar-tree; see Shaw's Travels, p. 421. Ed. 2.

roots thereof were under him; they were rooted and settled in their own land, yet under the power, and at the dispose, of the Babylonish monarch: *so it became a vine;* a flourishing kingdom in some measure, though attended with some degree of weakness and dependence as a vine: *and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs;* increased in people and in riches; particularly the king had many children, so that there was a prospect of a succession, and of a more flourishing estate, and a continuance of it, Jer. lii. 10.

Ver. 7. *There was also another great eagle,* &c.] Hophra king of Egypt, a very powerful prince, whom Herodotus[x] calls Apries; and says he was the most happy and fortunate, after Psammitichus, of all the kings that were before; though not so mighty as the king of Babylon; therefore all the same things are not said of the one as of the other: *with great wings and many feathers;* had large dominions, but not so extensive as the former, and therefore is not said to be *long-winged* as he; and had *many feathers,* but not *full* of them, nor had it such a variety; he had many people, and much wealth, and a large army, but not equal to the king of Babylon: *and, behold, this vine did bend her roots towards him;* Zedekiah, and the people of the Jews under him; inclined to an alliance with the king of Egypt, and gave him some private intimations of it: *and shot forth her branches towards him;* sent ambassadors to acquaint him with it, ver. 15: *that he might water it by the furrows of her plantation;* Nebuchadnezzar had planted this vine, and made furrows for the watering of it, and by his means it was become prosperous and flourishing; but Zedekiah, not content with the greatness and glory he had raised him to, sought to the king of Egypt to help him with horses and people, in order to free himself from subjection to the king of Babylon, and to increase his lustre and glory: the allusion is thought to be to the trenches and canals of the river Nile, by which the land of Egypt was watered: the words may be rendered, *out of the rivulets of her plantation*[y] which best agrees with watering.

Ver. 8. *It was planted in a good soil, by great waters,* &c.] As is expressed in ver. 5. this was done by the king of Babylon, who had raised Zedekiah from a low estate to a high one, and set him on the throne of Judah, over many people; and put him in such a condition, and in such circumstances, that he and his people might have been very happy, could they have been content: for his view was, *that he might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine;* that he and his people might grow numerous and rich, and be a prosperous and flourishing kingdom; this is mentioned to aggravate the ingratitude of Zedekiah, and the people of the Jews, in rebelling against the king of Babylon, who had used them well, and of whom they had no reason to complain.

Ver. 9. *Say thou, thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Tell Zedekiah and his people, in the name of the Lord, what will be the issue of his ingratitude and treachery to the king of Babylon, and his vain confidence in the king of Egypt: *shall it prosper?* the vine, the kingdom of Judah, and Zedekiah the king of it; can it be thought that prosperity will attend such conduct as this? was is it ever known that persons guilty of such vices ever succeeded? *shall he not pull up the roots thereof;* the first eagle, Nebuchadnezzar, being provoked by the rebellion of the king of Judah and his people; will he not come against them, and utterly destroy them, and root them up from being a people and a nation? *and cut off the fruit thereof, that it wither?* the sons of the king, and of the nobles, and people of the land; so that the kingdom shall be ruined, and no hope left of its ever being restored again; which is the case of a vine when withered: *it shall wither in all the leaves of her spring;* whereas it had been a spring-time with this vine, under the influence of the king of Babylon, its leaves were green and flourishing; but now should wither, not as leaves do in autumn, which is to be expected, but in spring, which must be fatal; signifying, that in the midst of their prosperity, and when there was the greatest hope and expectation of a continuance and increase of it, utter ruin should come upon them: *even without great power or many people to pluck it up by the roots thereof;* signifying with what ease the king of Babylon would take Jerusalem, and the land of Judea, its king and its princes, and utterly destroy them; he would have no need of a large army, or to employ all his forces, a few were sufficient to do it; even as it does not require many hands to pluck up a vine by the roots, a single person is equal to it.

Ver. 10. *Yea, behold, being planted,* &c.] Supposing it ever so well planted, as first by Nebuchadnezzar; and still put into a better condition by the assistance of the king of Egypt, as was imagined: *shall it prosper?* it shall not; their own strength, with the help of the king of Egypt, will not be able to protect them from the rage of the king of Babylon: *shall it not utterly wither, when the east wind toucheth it?* which is very hurtful to vines, and by which is meant the Chaldean army; for Babylon, as Kimchi observes, lay north-east of the land of Israel; and it signifies how easily the destruction would be brought about, it would be only a touch of the east wind, and this vine would wither away at once: *it shall wither in the furrows where it grew;* notwithstanding its being watered by Egypt, or the help and assistance that could afford it; or amidst all its prosperity, and the means of it, and the springing growing hope it had; or in the very country itself where it had been planted, and had flourished; Zedekiah and his princes were taken in the plains of Jericho, and his children and princes were put to death in Riblah, Jer. lii. 8, 9, 10.

Ver. 11. *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] Here follows the explanation of the above riddle and parable, which the prophet from the Lord had orders to deliver.

Ver. 12. *Say now to the rebellious house,* &c.] It had been a rebellious house to God, and to his prophets, before; see ch. ii. 5, 6. and the notes there; and now,

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[x] L. 2 sive Euterpe, c. 161.

[y] מערגות מטעה ex rivulis loci in quo plantata est, Gussetius, p. 642. such as run between beds in gardens, of which this word is sometimes used; hence some render it ex areolis, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, so Ben Melech; or ditches and canals, such as were made out of the river Nile to water the land; e fossa plantarii sui, Texelius, ut supra, p. 209.

besides this, was rebellious to the king of Babylon, to whom they were in some measure subject, ver. 15: *know ye not what these things* mean? the riddle and parable concerning the two eagles and the vine; suggesting that they must be very inattentive, and very stupid, if they did not know the meaning of them; for though the things intended were delivered in an enigmatical and parabolical way, yet they were easily to be understood by all that knew the affairs of the Jewish nation; being things that were lately transacted there, and were obvious to every one's view; but if they were so stupid and blockish as not to understand them, the prophet had the following order to explain them to them: *tell them, behold, the king of Babylon is come to Jerusalem;* so that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon is meant by the first *eagle*, and the land of Judea, and particularly Jerusalem, by Lebanon, it came unto, ver. 3. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read this and the following verses in the future; as if these were things that were yet to come to pass, whereas they are related as things already done; and so the Targum renders all in the past sense, as the history of them requires it should: *and hath taken the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and led them with him to Babylon;* the king of Judea, and the princes of it; Jeconiah and his nobles, who had been carried captive into Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar; for Ezekiel was among these captives, ch. i. 2. see 2 Kings xxiv. 12—16. so that it appears that by the *twigs* of the cedar the princes of the land are designed; and by the *top* of them King Jeconiah; and by *the land of traffic* the land of Chaldea; and by the *city of merchants* the city of Babylon, ver. 4, whither they were carried.

Ver. 13. *And hath taken of the king's seed*, &c.] One of the royal family, signified by the *seed of the land*, ver. 5. Mattaniah, son of King Josiah, and uncle to King Jeconiah; whom Nebuchadnezzar took and made king of Judea, and called him Zedekiah, which signifies the *justice of the Lord;* to put him in mind of doing justly, by observing the covenant and oath after mentioned, or that he must expect vengeance: *and made a covenant with him, and hath taken an oath of him;* he gave him the throne and kingdom upon certain conditions to be performed, and for the performance of which he made him swear by the God of Israel; see 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13: *he hath also taken the mighty of the land;* or, *the rams of the land*[x]; the principal men of it for wisdom, riches, and valour, the princes and nobles of it; which he did, as to weaken the nation, that it might not be so capable of rebelling against him, so to be hostages for the performance of the covenant entered into; and this is meant by planting the seed with circumspection, ver. 5.

Ver. 14. *That the kingdom might be base*, &c.] Low or humble; its king but a viceroy, a tributary to the king of Babylon; and the subjects obliged to a tax, payable to him; and this is intended by the vine being of *low stature*, ver. 6: *that it might not lift up itself;* above other neighbouring kingdoms and states; and particularly that it might not rebel against Nebuchadnezzar, but be kept in a dependence on him, and subjection to him: *but that by keeping of his covenant it might stand;* continue a kingdom, and Zedekiah king of it; so that it was for their good that such a covenant was made, and it was their interest to keep it; for, had it not been made, it would have ceased to have been a kingdom, and would have become a province of the Babylonian monarchy, and have been put under the government of one of Nebuchadnezzar's princes or captains; and, should they break it, would endanger the ruin of their state, as the event shewed. In the Hebrew text it is, *to keep his covenant, to make it stand;* or, *to stand to it*[y]; that is, as it should seem, to make the covenant stand firm. The Targum is, "that it might keep his covenant, and serve him;" Nebuchadnezzar.

Ver. 15. *But he rebelled against him*, &c.] Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon, broke the covenant he entered into, and violated his oath: *in sending his ambassadors into Egypt;* to form an alliance with the king of it, and obtain help from him to break off the Babylonian yoke; this is signified by the vine *bending* its *roots*, and *shooting forth* its *branches* towards *another great eagle*, the king of Egypt, ver. 7: *that they might give him horses and much people;* with both which Egypt abounded, 1 Kings x. 28. Isa. xxxi. 1, 3. but in Judea there was a scarcity, as of horses, so of men, by means of the multitude of captives which the king of Babylon had carried away; wherefore Zedekiah sent to Egypt for both, for recruits of men, and for horses to form a cavalry, to free himself from the king of Babylon, and defend himself and people against him: *shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such things?* that is guilty of breaking an express law of God, which forbids the kings of Israel multiplying horses, and sending to Egypt for them, Deut. xvii. 16. and placing confidence in an arm of flesh, Isa. xxxi. 1, 3. and xxxvi. 9. and of such base ingratitude to the king of Babylon, who had set him upon the throne, and put him in a comfortable and flourishing condition: *or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered?* shall one guilty, as of the other crimes, so of breach of covenant, and of perjury, escape the vengeance of God and man? he shall not.

Ver. 16. *As I live, saith the Lord God*, &c.] This is the form of an oath, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe; the Lord swears, in his wrath, by himself, by his life; this shews how much he resented what Zedekiah had done, and how sure and certain his ruin was: *surely in the place* where *the king* dwelleth *that made him king;* in Babylon, where Nebuchadnezzar dwelt, that made Zedekiah king of Judah; which is mentioned, to point out the ingratitude of that prince to the king of Babylon: *whose oath he despised, whose covenant he broke;* the oath of fealty and allegiance, which Zedekiah took to Nebuchadnezzar; and the covenant entered into between them, by which the former held the kingdom of Judea of the latter: the oath he made light of, though solemn, one made by the God of Israel; and the covenant he broke, though ratified by an oath; in which things were given to him he could not claim, at least possess, but by the

[x] אילי הארץ arietes terræ, Montanus.
[y] לשמר את בריתו לעמדה ad custodiendum pactum ejus, ad astandum ei, Montanus; ad servandum fœdus suum, ad consistendum, Starckius

courtesy of the conqueror; these sins were displeasing to God: oaths and covenants, though made with conquerors, and with Heathen princes, are to be kept: *even with him*: that is, with Nebuchadnezzar: *in the midst of Babylon he shall die*: when first taken he was had to Riblah, and there his eyes were put out: and after that he was carried to Babylon, and put in prison, and there died, Jer. lii. 9, 10, 11.

Ver. 17. *Neither shall Pharaoh, with his mighty army and great company, make for him in the war*, &c.] The king of Egypt, to whom Zedekiah applied for horses and men to help him; though he should come with a great army, and a large multitude of people, yet should be of no use to Zedekiah, nor do any hurt to Nebuchadnezzar, or hinder him from taking Jerusalem: *by casting up mounts, and building forts, to cut off many persons*: that is, when Nebuchadnezzar should besiege Jerusalem, and raise mounts, and build fortifications, in order to take the city, and destroy its inhabitants, as he did, Jer. lii. 4. the Egyptian army should not be able to hinder him going on with the siege, and taking the city; for though the siege was broke up for a time, upon the approach of Pharaoh's army, yet Nebuchadnezzar, having conquered the Egyptians, returned again to the siege of Jerusalem, and took it; see Jer. xxxvii. 5—10.

Ver. 18. *Seeing he despised the oath, by breaking the covenant*, &c.] This is repeated again, to shew the heinousness of the sin Zedekiah had been guilty of, and what was the cause of his ruin: *when, lo, he had given his hand*; to the king of Babylon, to testify his hearty agreement with him, and that he might depend upon the oath and covenant being sacredly observed by him. This was a rite or custom frequently and early used in different nations, when covenants and agreements were entered into; we find it used in the times of Homer[z]; and among the Romans. When Antoninus, Lepidus, and Octavius made peace, the historian says[a], they joined their hands together. Virgil[b] speaks of the same ceremony used by Anchises to Achæmenides, for confirmation of friendship. Though some understand this of his giving the hand to Pharaoh king of Egypt, and entering into an alliance with him, and broke the covenant and oath made to the king of Babylon; and so the Targum, "and, lo, "he stretched out his hand to Pharaoh:" *and hath done all these things*; been guilty of such and so many crimes, as ingratitude, perjury, covenant-breaking, and vain confidence: *he shall not escape*; divine vengeance, just and proper punishment for his sins.

Ver. 19. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, as I live*, &c.] A repetition of the oath of God as before, expressing his indignation at the king of Judah, and the certainty of his ruin: *surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken*; the Lord calls it his oath, because it was made and taken in his name, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13. and his covenant, because it was agreeable to his will, and was made in his sight, and he was solemnly appealed to at the making of it; all which were an aggravation of Zedekiah's sin in violating them, and made his punishment the heavier: *even it will I recompence upon his own head*; he shall personally bear the punishment due to such crimes. The Targum is, "I will revenge "his way upon his head." Jarchi thinks this refers to the putting out of hise yes; and Kimchi takes notice of the same sense.

Ver. 20. *And I will spread my net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare*, &c.] See the note on ch. xii. 13. where the same words are used, and of the same person: *and I will bring him to Babylon*; though, as it is said in the place referred to, he should not see it, his eyes being put out before he was brought thither: *and will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against me*; for though it was breaking covenant and oath with a Heathen prince, yet it was a trespass against God, in whose name they were made; and his being laid in prison at Babylon, and kept there to the time of his death, was the Lord's pleading with him, and judging of him; it was a reproof for his sins, and a condemnation of him and them.

Ver. 21. *And all his fugitives with all his bands shall fall by the sword*, &c.] So those of his army that fled, and attempted to make their escape, when the city of Jerusalem was taken, as many as fell into the Chaldean army, which was round about the city, at least a great number of them, fell by the sword of the Chaldeans, Jer. lii. 7, 8: and *they that remain shall be scattered towards all winds*; and so it was, that such that escaped the sword were either carried captive into Babylon, or fled some one way, and some another, even into all parts, east, west, north, and south: *and ye shall know that I the Lord have spoken it*; the Targum adds, by my word, and will do it; who is the Lord God omniscient and omnipotent, just and righteous; faithful and true, as to his word of promise, so of threatening.

Ver. 22. *Thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Lest it should be thought, by the above prophecies, that the tribe of Judah should be utterly lost, and the family of David extinct, and the promise to him void, that he should have one of his seed to sit upon his throne for evermore, Psal. cxxxii. 11, 12. it is here in a figurative manner signified, that of his seed the Messiah should be raised up, by whom the church and kingdom of God would be brought into a flourishing state and condition: *I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar*; Nebuchadnezzar had took one of the family of David, and set him upon the throne, signified by taking of the seed of the land, and planting it, ver. 5. but without success; wherefore the Lord here promises that he will *also* take one and plant it, which should thrive and prosper: by the *high cedar* is meant the Jewish nation, which the Lord chose and set on high above all nations of the earth, distinguishing it with peculiar blessings and favours; for which reason it may be compared to the high and spreading cedar; see Numb. xxiv. 5, 6. Deut. vii. 6, 7. and xxviii. 1. and by *the highest branch* of it

[z] Χεῖράς τ' ἀλλήλων λαβέτην καὶ πιστώσαντο. Iliad. 6.
[a] Florus, Hist. Rom. Gest. l. 4. c. 5.

[b] Ipse pater dextram Anchises, haud multa moratus,
Dat juveni atque animum præsenti pignore firmat.
Æneid. l. 3. prope finem.

the tribe of Judah, who prevailed above his brethren, because from him came the chief ruler, 1 Chron. v. 2. and from whence the Messiah was to come, and did, Gen. xlix. 10. Heb. vii. 14. Rev. v. 5: *and set it*; namely, the slip taken from the highest branch of the high cedar; or one that should descend from the Jewish nation, and particularly from the tribe of Judah, more fully described in the next clause: *I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one*: and by the *top* and *young twigs* of the highest branch of the cedar, or of the chief tribe in Israel, are meant the house and family of David, the royal family, and the descendants of it, the chief of the tribe of Judah; and by the *tender one* is designed the Messiah; and so Jarchi interprets it; and which interpretation is mentioned by Kimchi, though he would have Zorobabel intended; and owns it to be the sense of the Targum, which is this, "I will bring one of the kingdom "of the house of David, which is like to a high "cedar, and I will raise him up an infant from his "children's children:" and so Abendana observes, that from Shealtiel, the son of Jeconiah, comes forth the King Messiah, who shall rule over all the world, and under whom every bird of wing shall dwell. The Messiah is often called a *branch* in prophecy, Isa. iv. 2. and xi. 1. Jer. xxiii. 5. Zech. iii. 8. and vi. 12. and here a *tender twig* or branch, as in Isa. liii. 2. a *tender plant*: which is expressive of the meanness of his descent, David's family being very low at the time of his birth, and of the contemptible appearance he made in the form of a servant; having also all the sinless infirmities of the human nature on him, as well as was attended with poverty, griefs, and sorrows of various kinds; and so made a very unpromising appearance of being the great Prophet, Priest, and King in Israel: and now by the *cropping off* of this tender twig seems to be designed not the incarnation of the Messiah, but his sufferings and death; whereby he was cut off, not for himself, but for the sins of his people, and in which his divine Father had a considerable hand, Isa. liii. 8, 10. and to which is owing the great fruitfulness of his kingdom and interest, John xii. 24. moreover, this may respect not only the person of the Messiah, and his mean appearance in the world; but also his church and interest, which were at first like a little stone cut out of the mountain, and like a grain of mustard-seed, the least of all seeds, Dan. ii. 34, 35. Matt. xiii. 31, 32. the Gospel, which was the instrument of raising the church of God, was very contemptible, because of its subject, a crucified Christ; and the first preachers of it were mean and illiterate persons; those that received it were the poor of this world, and those but a few, and they the offscouring of all things. *And will plant it on a high mountain and eminent*: which may be expressive not of the incarnation of Christ, but rather of his ascension to heaven after his death, and resurrection from the dead; and the constitution of him upon that as Lord and Christ, or the setting of him up as King over God's holy hill of Zion, the church of God: and no doubt but there is an allusion to Mount Zion, and to Jerusalem, from whence the Gospel first went forth, and where the first Gospel church was planted; and being said to be on a mountain high and eminent, may denote both the visibility and stability of the church of Christ.

Ver. 23. *In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it*, &c.] In the highest part of the land of Israel, as Jerusalem is said to be by the Jewish writers; the land of Israel, they say, particularly Kimchi upon the place, was higher than all other lands, and Jerusalem was the highest part of that land; here the Messiah preached and wrought his miracles, even in the mountain of the Lord's house, the temple; and here the first Christian church was planted and established: *and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar*; that is, the tender twig or branch cropped off, set and planted as before described: by the *boughs* or *branches* it brings forth may be meant believers, who are as branches in Christ; are of the same nature with him, united to him; have a communication of life and grace from him; are supported and strengthened by him; and so, abiding in him, persevere to the end; see John xv. 4, 5. and the same may be said of particular churches; and by *fruit* it is said to bear may be designed the persons of the chosen, redeemed, and called; who are the fruit of Christ's death, and of the ministration of his Gospel, John xii. 24. and xv. 16. or the blessings of grace which are in him, come from him, and are communicated by him; even all spiritual blessings, as justification, pardon, adoption, sanctification, and eternal life; in short, both grace and glory; and thus he becomes and appears to be a *goodly cedar*, in his person, office, and grace, to his people, to whom he is altogether lovely, being full of grace and truth, Cant. v. 16. John i. 14. and in his kingdom and interest, especially in the latter day, when the kingdoms of this world shall become his: *and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell*; by whom are designed converted sinners of all sorts, and of all nations, Jews and Gentiles; compared to *birds*, because weak, defenceless, and timorous; exposed to danger, and wonderfully delivered; are subject to wander and go astray; and for their chirping and warbling notes: now these may be said to *dwell* under the *shadow* of the *branches* of this *goodly cedar*, Christ and his church; that is, under the ministration of the word and ordinances, which is a very delightful and refreshing shadow, a very safe and fruitful one, Cant. ii. 3. Hos. xiv. 7. Isa. iv. 6. and xxv. 4. and here saints choose to dwell, and determine to abide and continue, as it is their interest and happiness so to do; and what a flocking and tabernacling of these birds here will there be in the latter day, where they will chirp and sing in the height of Zion? Isa. lxvi. 4, 8. Jer. xxxi. 12. compare with this Matt. xiii. 31, 32. where our Lord is thought by some to allude to this passage.

Ver. 24. *And all the trees of the field shall know*, &c.] All the nations of the world, and the great ones, and the mighty men of the earth, shall know, own, and acknowledge, when the above things are accomplished: *that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish*: some by the *high* and *green tree* understand Zedekiah, who was brought low; and by the *low* and *dry tree* Jeconiah, who was

raised by the king of Babylon, Jer. lii. 11, 31, 32. this is Jarchi's sense, and is mentioned by Kimchi: others, by the former, think Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonish monarchy are intended, which were brought down; and, by the latter, the house of David, and kingdom of Judah, which were exalted: though rather by the one are meant the people of the Jews, once the people of God, but now cast off; and by the other the Gentiles, called by the grace of God, and received by him: though it seems best of all to interpret the *high and green tree* of the mighty kingdoms of this world, which will be put down by Christ; and the *low and dry tree* of his kingdom and interest, which shall flourish and spread abundantly, and be an everlasting kingdom; see Dan. ii. 44: *I the Lord have spoken and have done it*; because the prophecy of it is sure, and because of the certainty of the fulfilment of it, it is said to be done as soon as it was spoken of.

CHAP. XVIII.

THIS chapter contains an answer to an objection of the Jews to the dealings of God with them in a providential way. The objection is expressed in a proverb of common use among them, and complained of as being without cause, ver. 1, 2. however, for the future, no occasion should be given them to use it; for, though God could justify his proceedings upon the foot of his sovereignty, all souls being his; yet he was determined none but the sinner himself should suffer, ver. 3, 4. and puts various cases for the illustration and vindication of his proceedings; as that a just man, who is described by his proper characters, as abstaining from several sins specified, and doing what is right and good, should surely live, ver. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. but that the son of such a just man, being the reverse of his father's character, should surely die, ver. 10, 11, 12, 13. and again, the son of such a wicked man, observing the heinousness of his father's sins, and abstaining from them, though his father should die in his iniquities, he should not die for them, but live, ver. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. by which it appears that the dealings of God with the Jews were not according to the proverb used by them, but quite agreeable to his resolution; that the sinner, be he a father or a son, shall die for his own sins; and that the righteous man's righteousness shall be upon him, and the wicked man's sin upon him, and accordingly both shall be dealt with, ver. 19, 20. which is further illustrated by a wicked man's turning from his sinful course, and doing righteousness, and living in that righteousness he has done; which is more agreeable to God that he should live, and not die in sin, ver. 21, 22, 23. and by a righteous man turning from his righteousness, and living a vicious life, and dying in it, ver. 24. from both which instances this conclusion follows, that God is to be justified; and that his ways are equal, and the Jews' ways were unequal, and their complaint unjust, ver. 25. and the same instances are repeated in a different order, and the same conclusion formed, ver. 26, 27, 28, 29. upon which the Lord determines to judge them according to their own ways, their personal actions, good or bad; and exhorts them to repentance and reformation; and closes with a pathetic expostulation with them, ver. 30, 31, 32.

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto me again, saying.*] The word of prophecy from the Lord, as the Targum; and its being mentioned as coming from the Lord is to give it weight and authority. This is a distinct sermon or prophecy from the former, and was sent and delivered out at another time.

Ver. 2. *What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, &c.*] This is spoken to the Jews in Babylon, who used the following proverb concerning the land of Israel; not the ten tribes, but the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, concerning the desolation of the land, and the hardships the Jews laboured under, since the captivity of Jechoniah, and they became subject to the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar: this expostulation with them suggests that they had no just cause, or true reason, to make use of the proverb; that it was impious, impudent, and insolent in them, and daring and dangerous; and that they did not surely well consider what they said. The proverb follows: *saying, the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?* that is, as the Targum explains it, "the fathers have sinned, and the "children are smitten," or punished, as the ten tribes for the sins of Jeroboam, and the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin for the sins of Manasseh; hereby wiping themselves clean; and as if they were innocent persons, and free from sin, and were only punished for their forefathers' sins, and so charging God with injustice and cruelty; whereas, though the Lord threatened to visit the iniquity of parents upon their children, and sometimes did so, to deter parents from sinning, lest they should entail a curse, and bring ruin upon their posterity; yet he never did this but when children followed their fathers' practices, and committed the same sins, or worse; so that this was no act of unrighteousness in God, but rather an instance of his patience and long-suffering; see Jer. xxxi. 29, 30.

Ver. 3. *As I live, saith the Lord, &c.*] This is a form of an oath; the Lord here swears by his life, by himself, because he could swear by no greater, Heb. vi. 13. and it expresses how displeased he was with the above proverb, and how much he resented it, as well as the certainty of what follows; which, it might be depended on, would be assuredly done, since the Lord not only said it, but swore unto it: *ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel*; signifying that he would no longer defer the execution of his judgments, but immediately bring them upon them; so that, for the future, there would be no use of the proverb; no occasion to make mention of it in the next generation; and, moreover, that he would make it so manifest to themselves and others, by his dealings with them, that it should be seen, and known, and acknowledged by all, that it was for their own sins and trangressions that they were visited and corrected.

Ver. 4. *Behold, all souls are mine*, &c.] By creation; they being the immediate produce of his power; hence he is called *the Father of spirits*, or the souls of men: these he has an apparent right unto; a property in; a dominion over; they are accountable to him, and will be judged impartially by him: *as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine*; and therefore must be thought to have as great a respect and affection for the one as for the other; for the soul of a son as for the soul of a father; and not deal partially in favour of the one, and cruelly and unrighteously with the other: *the soul that sinneth, it shall die*: the soul that continues in sin, without repentance towards God, and faith in Christ, shall die the second death; shall be separated from the presence of God, and endure his wrath to all eternity: or the meaning is, that a person that is guilty of gross sins, and continues in them, shall personally suffer; he shall endure one calamity or another, as the famine, sword, pestilence, or be carried into captivity, which is the death all along spoken of in this chapter; the Lord will exercise no patience towards him, or defer punishment to a future generation, his offspring; but shall immediately execute it upon himself.

Ver. 5. *But if a man be just*, &c.] Not legally, as to be wholly free from sin, for there is no such just man, Eccl. vii. 20. but evangelically, through the imputation of the righteousness of Christ unto him; and who has a principle of grace and holiness wrought in him; a man of a just principle and good conscience; who is disposed by the grace of God to that which is just and right; for this seems to refer to the inward frame of the mind, as distinct from actions, and as the source of them, as follows: *and do that which is lawful and right*; or *judgment*[c] and *justice*; true judgment and justice, as the Targum; that which is just and right by the law of God, and is so between man and man; the particulars of which follow:

Ver. 6. *And hath not eaten upon the mountains*, &c.] Where temples and altars were built for idols, and sacrifices offered up to them; and where feasts were kept to the honour of them, and the sacrifices to them eaten; see ch. vi. 13. for otherwise it was not unlawful to eat common food on mountains, as well as on other places; but here it denotes idolatrous practices; and the Targum is, "and hath not served idols on the "mountains:" *neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel*; their *dunghil-gods*[d], as the word signifies; as not to the idols of the Gentiles, so not to those of Israel, as the calves at Dan and Beth-el; these he does not worship, nor pray unto, or invoke, nor even give a pleasant and favourable look unto; but turned from them with abhorrence and contempt: *neither hath defiled his neighbour's wife*; been guilty of adultery, by lying with another man's wife; or by marrying one divorced, not having committed fornication; which divorces were common among the Jews, and marrying such so divorced, Matt. xix. 9: *neither hath come near to a menstruous woman*: a woman in her monthly courses, even his own wife; who, according to the law, was set apart for her uncleanness for a certain term of time; during which she was not to be touched, nor any thing she sat or lay upon; and all conjugal acts to be abstained from, Lev. xv. 19—24. and xviii. 19. and xx. 18.

Ver. 7. *And hath not oppressed any*, &c.] By fraud or force, particularly the poor, to the great grief and hurt of them: *but hath restored to the debtor his pledge*; which was pawned; not embezzling it, or keeping it beyond the time fixed by the law of God, Deut. xxiv. 12, 13. Exod. xxii. 26: *hath spoiled none by violence*; has not committed theft and robbery, or done injury to any man's person and property: *hath given his bread to the hungry*; which was his own; what he had laboured for, and come by honestly, and so had a right to dispose of; and being merciful, as well as just, eats not his morsel alone, but distributes it to the poor and hungry, Isa. lviii. 7: *and hath covered the naked with a garment*; as Job did, as well as the former, and for which Dorcas is commended, Job xxxi. 17—20. Acts ix. 39.

Ver. 8. *He that hath not given forth upon usury*, &c.] Money, victuals, or any other thing, which was forbidden the Jews to take of their brethren, though they might of strangers, Deut. xxiii. 19, 20: *neither hath taken any increase*; or interest; or rather something over and above the interest-money or use, as a gratuity for lending it upon the said interest: *that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity*; not only that now mentioned, but all others; who, having inadvertently engaged in that which is sinful, as soon as it appears to him to be so, gets out of it, and abstains from it as soon as possible: *hath executed true judgment between man and man*; whether in office as a judge, who sits on the bench for that purpose; or as an arbitrator chosen to decide matters in controversy between one man and another, and that does every thing just and right between man and man.

Ver. 9. *Hath walked in my statutes*, &c.] Respecting the worship of God and true religion; being observant of all laws and ordinances relating thereunto: *and hath kept my judgments to deal truly*; in things moral and civil among men; regarding all such laws of God as oblige to such things: *he is just*; such a man is a just man, at least externally; and if he does all these things from a right principle, without trusting to them for justification before God, and acceptance with him, but looking to the righteousness of Christ for these things, he is truly, and in the sight of God, a just man: *he shall surely live, saith the Lord God*; spiritually and comfortably here, and an eternal life hereafter; or rather he shall not be distressed with famine, sword, or plague, or go into captivity; but shall live in his own land, and eat the good things of it; and this shall be his case, let his father have been what he will, ever so great a sinner.

Ver. 10. *If he beget a son* that *is a robber, a shedder of blood*, &c.] But if this just man beget a son that is a thief and a murderer, as he may; for grace is not conveyed by natural generation, though sin is: a good man has often bad children, even such as are guilty of

[c] משפט וצדקה judicium & justitiam, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

[d] אל גלולי ad stercoreos deos, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; ad stercora, Piscator, Cocceius.

capital crimes, as a *robber*, a *highwayman*, a *breaker up*, or *through*, as the word[e] signifies; one that breaks through walls, and into houses, and breaks through all the laws of God and man; and sticks not to shed innocent blood in committing his thefts and robberies, as these sins often go together; such an one was Barabbas, whose name signifies the son of a father, and perhaps his father might be a good man: *and* that *doeth the like to any one of these things*; or that does any one of these things, whether theft or murder.

Ver. 11. *And that doeth not any of those duties*, &c.] Before mentioned, which his father did, but the reverse of them; and so the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, *and in the way of his righteous father does not walk*; does not tread in his steps, and work righteousness as he did: *but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife*; has been guilty of idolatry and adultery; see the note on ver. 6.

Ver. 12. *Hath oppressed the poor and needy*, &c.] Who are weak, and have none to help them, and stand by them; and so are oppressed by such a man. This serves to explain the clause in ver. 7: *hath spoiled by violence*; his neighbour's goods; taken them away from him by force: *hath not restored the pledge*; to the borrower before sunset, but kept it for his own use; taking the advantage of the poverty of him that borrowed of him: *and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols*; whether of the Gentiles, or of the house of Israel: *hath committed abomination*; either idolatry, the sin just before mentioned, which was an abomination to the Lord; or else approaching to a menstruous woman, since this follows the other in ver. 6. and is not mentioned, unless it is designed here; and so Kimchi interprets it; but Jarchi understands it of the abominable and detestable sin of sodomy: it may regard any and every sin that is abominable in the sight of God.

Ver. 13. *Hath given forth upon usury, and hath taken increase*, &c.] Contrary to the law of God; see the note on ver. 8: *shall he then live?* by virtue of his father's righteousness and goodness, free from calamities, and in the quiet possession of the land of Israel, and the good things of it: *he shall not live*; but go into captivity, and be destitute of the good things of life he has enjoyed; and, without repentance, shall never have eternal life: *he hath done all these abominations*; before mentioned; theft, murder, idolatry, adultery, oppression of the poor, and usury, sins against both tables of the law: *he shall surely die*; the death of affliction, or undergo temporal punishment; and not only die corporeally, but eternally too, if grace prevent not: *in dying he shall die*[f]; as in the Hebrew text; he shall die both the first and second death; his father's goodness shall not save him from either: *his blood shall be upon him*; or *bloods*[g]; the innocent blood he has shed, which he must answer for being guilty of, and shall not escape righteous judgment, and his own blood, the destruction of himself; he shall be the cause of his own ruin, and bring just punishment on his own head.

Ver. 14. *Now, lo, if he beget a son*, &c.] That is, the wicked man before mentioned; if he begets a son who proves a good man, which sometimes is the case, as Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, and Josiah the son of Amon: *that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done*; not every particular action, but the principal of them; however, the several sorts and kinds of sin he was addicted to, and which were done publicly enough, and obvious to view; and yet does not imitate them, as children are apt to do: *and considereth*; the evil nature and tendency of them; how abominable to God; how contrary to his law; how scandalous and reproachful in themselves, and how pernicious and destructive in their effects and consequences. The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions, read, *and feareth; and doeth not such-like*; he fears God; and because the fear of God is before his eyes, and on his heart, which was wanting in his father, therefore he cannot do the things he did; the fear of offending him, the fear of his goodness, and of his judgments, both have an influence to restrain from sin.

Ver. 15. *That hath eaten upon the mountains*, &c.] See the note on ver. 6. where the same things are mentioned as here, and in the same order; only that clause, *neither hath come near to a menstruous woman*, is here omitted.

Ver. 16. *Neither hath oppressed any*, &c.] See the note on ver. 7: *hath not withholden the pledge*; or, *hath not pledged the pledge*[h]. The meaning is, not that he had not given one, but had not taken one. So the Targum, "the pledge he hath not taken;" or, if he did, he did not keep it beyond the time the law directs, but restored it to him whose it was. The rest of the verse is the same with ver. 7.

Ver. 17. *That hath taken off his hand from the poor*, &c.] When he perceived it lay heavy upon him, withdrew it from hurting him, and forbore to do it when it was in his power, and perhaps eased him of the hardships his father had laid upon him; which was very kind and humane: *that hath not received usury nor increase*; see the note on ver. 8: *hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes*; had not only negative, but positive holiness: not only abstained from things sinful, but did that which was just and right, both with respect to God and man; observed the worship of God, and did justice to mankind: *he shall not die for the iniquity of his father*; or be punished for his father's sins, with sword, famine, pestilence, or captivity; shall not die a corporeal death, and much less eternal death, on that account: *he shall surely live*; in his own land, and in the enjoyment of the good things of life; and having the grace and fear of God, and acting from gracious principles, with a view to the glory of God, he shall live eternally, though the son of a wicked man.

Ver. 18. *As for his father*, &c.] It shall be otherwise with him: *because he cruelly oppressed*; or, *oppressed an oppression*; or, *with an oppression*[i]; oppressed the poor, and had no mercy on them, but used them in the most rigorous manner: *spoiled his brother by violence*; took away the spoil of his brother; spoiled

[e] פריץ effractorem, Montanus, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator, Grotius.

[f] מות יומת moriendo morietur, Pagninus, Montanus.

[g] דמיו sanguines ejus, Montanus.

[h] חבל לא חבל pignus non pignoravit, Vatablus; pignus non acceperit in pignus, Pagninus; pignori, Montanus.

[i] עשק עשק oppressit oppressionem, Pagninus, Montanus; oppressit oppressione, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius.

him of his substance; did injury to his person and property, and all the mischief that lay in his power: *and did that which is not good among his people*: neighbours, citizens, and countrymen; did nothing which was good, as he ought to have done; but every thing that was bad, which he should not have done: *lo, even he shall die in his iniquity*: and for it; it shall not be forgiven him; he shall be punished for it with death, with the death of affliction; and with corporeal death, as a punishment for sin; and with eternal death, dying in his sins, and in a state of impenitence. These instances, put every way, most clearly shew the equity of God; the justness of his proceedings in providence; and how inapplicable the proverb in ver. 2 was to them; and that such that sin, and continue therein, shall die for their own iniquities, and not for the sins of others.

Ver. 19. *Yet say ye, why?* &c.] Why do you say so? why do you go on to assert that which is not fact, or which is contrary to fact, contrary to what we feel and experience every day, to say that children are not punished for their parents' sins? these are the words of the murmuring, complaining, and blaspheming Jews, quarrelling with the prophet, and with the Lord himself: *doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father?* han't we proof of it every day we live? are not our present case and circumstances a full evidence of it? or the words may be rendered, *why does not the son bear the iniquity of the father?* so the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions; or, as the Targum, "why is not the son punished for the sins of "the father?" and so they are an objection, which is foreseen might be made, and is here anticipated, to which an answer is returned; and so the Syriac version introduces it, *but if they say*, &c.: then adds, *tell them*, as follows: *when*, or *because the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them*: this is the reason why he shall not bear his father's sins, or be punished for them; intimating that they had not done these things that made the complaint, or put the question; but had committed the same sins their fathers had, and so were punished, not for their fathers' sins, but their own: for otherwise the man that does what is just and right with God, and between man and man, *he shall surely live*; see the note on ver. 17.

Ver. 20. *The soul that sinneth, it shall die*, &c.] This is repeated from ver. 4, for the further confirmation of it: *the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son*; that is, as the Targum paraphrases it, "the son shall not "be punished for the sins of the father, nor shall the "father be punished for the sins of the son." This is to be understood of adult persons, and of actual sins; for of such only the prophet speaks throughout the whole chapter, or of temporal, and not of eternal punishment: *the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him*; he shall be rewarded with temporal good things in this life, according to his righteousness; which, as the Targum says, shall *remain* upon him; see Psal. cxii. 9. he shall eat of the fruit of his own doings, Isa. iii. 10. this is true of a man that is evangelically righteous, or is so through the imputation of Christ's righteousness to him; which is upon him as a robe to clothe him, and will always remain on him, being an everlasting righteousness, and will answer for him in a time to come: *and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him*; and not another; his sin shall remain on him unatoned for, unexpiated, not taken away or forgiven: the punishment of it shall be on him, and abide upon him.

Ver. 21. *But if the wicked*, &c.] So far is the Lord from punishing the sins of one man upon another, that he will not punish a man for his own sins: if he *will turn from all his sins that he hath committed*; if he truly repents of them, and thoroughly forsakes them; for it must not be one sin only, but all; every sin is to be loathed and mourned over, and sorrow expressed for it, and to be forsaken; not one sin is to cherished and retained, but all to be relinquished; or the repentance and conversion may be justly questioned whether they be sincere: *and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right*: as the repentance and turning from sin must be general, so also obedience to the commands of God, both moral and positive; respect is to be had to all his ordinances, which are all of them to be esteemed as right and lawful, and to be observed: this is bringing forth fruits meet for repentance: *he shall surely live, he shall not die*: he shall live in his own land, and not go into captivity. Kimchi's note is, he shall live in this world, and not die in the world to come; so Ben Melech.

Ver. 22. *All his transgressions that he hath committed*, &c.] Before his repentance, conversion, and obedience: *they shall not be mentioned unto him*: they shall not be charged upon his conscience, or brought against him in providence; he shall not be upbraided with them, or punished for them; but they shall be forgiven him, at least in such sense as to prevent temporal calamity and ruin: *in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live*; he shall live *in* it, though not *for* it; this will be the fruit and consequence of his obedience and righteousness, that he shall live and not die, in the sense that has been already given, according to the tenour of the law, Lev. xviii. 5.

Ver. 23. *Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God*, &c.] Perish by sword, famine, or pestilence, or go into captivity; this, though the Lord's will and work, yet is his strange work; mercy is his delight. This is to be understood not absolutely; for the Lord does take pleasure in these things, as they fulfil his word, secure the honour of his truth and holiness, and glorify his justice, and especially when they are the means of reclaiming men from the evil of their ways; but comparatively, as follows: *and not that he should return from his ways, and live?* that is, it is more pleasing to God that a man should repent of his sins, and forsake his vicious course of life, and enjoy good things, than to go on in his sins, and bring ruin on himself, here and hereafter.

Ver. 24. *But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness*, &c.] This is to be understood, not of a truly righteous man; for no man can be so denominated from his own righteousness; but from the righteousness and obedience of Christ; and such a man can't turn from his righteousness; for that is the righteousness of God, and can never be lost; and is an everlasting one, and will always endure; and with

which eternal life is inseparably connected: but this is to be interpreted of one that is reckoned so from his own righteousness, what he himself has done, and not from another, from the righteousness of Christ, which he has wrought out; he is one that is righteous in his own esteem, and in the account of others; who is outwardly righteous before men; who trusts in himself that he is righteous, and trusts to his own righteousness; see Ezek. xxxiii. 13. whose righteousness is not an evangelical one, but either a ceremonial righteousness, or at most a mere moral one, consisting of some negative holiness, and a few moral performances, as appears from ver. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and from such a righteousness as this a man may turn, commit iniquity, sin and die; see 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21. and is no proof or instance of the apostacy of real saints, true believers, or truly righteous men; besides, this man is represented as a transgressor, or *prevaricator*, as the word signifies; a hypocrite, a man destitute of the truth of grace, and of true righteousness: *and committeth iniquity;* makes a trade of sinning; goes into a vicious course of life, and continues in it; which a truly gracious man, one that is born again, and has true faith in Christ's righteousness, by which he is justified, can never do, 1 John iii. 8, 9: *and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth;* such as theft, murder, adultery, idolatry, oppression of the poor, and giving upon usury, ver. 10, 11, 12, 13: *shall he live?* in his own land, in peace and prosperity, enjoying all manner of good things? he shall not; much less shall he live an eternal life, so living and dying: *all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned;* or, *all his righteousnesses*[k]; all the good works which he has done will never come into any account, or be of any avail; as they merited nothing, they will meet with no reward; they'll not preserve him from present calamity, which his now sinful life exposes him to, nor secure him from eternal ruin; these may be mentioned and pleaded by himself, but to no purpose; God will not mention them, nor take any notice of them, nor the Judge at the great day of account, Matt. vii. 22, 23: *in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die;* or, for his hypocrisy, *prevarication*[l], and vicious course of life he now lives in, a death of affliction shall come upon him; great calamities and distresses in this world; and, if grace prevent not, eternal death in the other; if he dies in his trespasses and sins, he'll die the second death.

Ver. 25. *Yet ye say,* &c.] Notwithstanding these plain instances, which shew the equity of God in his proceedings, and vindicate his justice in the dispensations of his providence; yet such was the blindness and stupidity of these people, or rather their stubbornness, obstinacy, and impudence, that they still insisted upon it that *the way of the Lord is not equal;* just and right; is not even, according to the rules of justice and equity; or is not ordered aright, is not steady, and firm, and consistent with himself, and the declaration of his will; a very bold and blasphemous charge, and yet the Lord condescends to reason with them about it: *hear now, O house of Israel;* the ten tribes that were now in captivity; or the Jews that were carried captive with Jeconiah, with those that were still in Jerusalem and Judea; these are called upon to hear the Lord, what he had to say in vindication of himself from this charge, as it was but just and reasonable they should: *is not my way equal?* plain and even, constant and uniform, according to the obvious rules of justice and truth? can any instance be given to the contrary? what is to be said to support the charge against me? bring forth your strong reasons if you can, and prove what is asserted: *are not your ways unequal?* it is plain they are; your actions, your course of life, are manifest deviations from my law, and from all the rules of righteousness and goodness; it is you that are in the wrong, and I in the right.

Ver. 26. *When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness,* &c.] This is repeated for the further confirmation of it, and to raise their attention to it; to make it more plain and manifest to them, and to fix it upon their minds: *and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them;* or, *he shall die for them*[m]; both for his turning away from his righteousness, and for his committing iniquity: *for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die;* in both respects. This is repeated to denote the certainty of it.

Ver. 27. *Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed,* &c.] Repents of his sins, and forsakes the vicious course of life he has lived: *and doeth that which is lawful and right;* or *judgment* and *righteousness*[n]; that which is agreeable to the law and will of God, and is just and right between man and man: *he shall save his soul alive;* from famine, pestilence, the sword, or captivity; he shall be preserved, and not be involved in calamities and distress: or, *shall quicken his own soul*[o]; which, in a spiritual sense, is only done by the spirit and grace of God, and not by man himself; nor is the enjoyment of eternal life by the works of men, but through the grace of God, and righteousness of Christ.

Ver. 28. *Because he considereth,* &c.] Being come to himself, and in his right mind, he considers the evil of his ways; what they lead to; what they deserve at the hand of God; and what he may expect, should he continue in them; see ver. 14: *and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed;* not only repents of them, but reforms from them; and that not from one, or a few of them, but from them *all;* which shews the truth, reality, and sincerity of his repentance; there being a change of mind, a change of actions and conversation follows: *he shall surely live, he shall not die;* see the note on ver. 21. Jerom interprets the just man turning from his righteousness, of the Jews leaving the author of righteousness, denying the son of God, and smiting the heir; and the wicked man turning from his wickedness, of the Gentiles, and of their conversion of faith.

[k] כל צדקותיו omnes justitiæ ejus, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus, Montanus, Coccejus.

[l] במעלו propter prævaricationem ipsius, *vel* suam, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus.

[m] עליהם propter illa, Pagninus, Piscator, Grotius, Coccejus; so some in Vatablus.

[n] משפט וצדקה judicium & justitiam, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Coccejus.

[o] הוא את נפשו יחיה animam suam vivificabit, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin; vivificat, Coccejus.

Ver. 29. *Yet saith the house of Israel, the way of the Lord is not equal,* &c.] Though the case was put so many ways, and the thing was made so clear and plain, by the instances given; as, if a man was a just man, let his father be what he would, he should live; but, if his son was a wicked man, he should die; yet, if his son should do well, he should not die for his father's sins, his father only should suffer for his iniquity; and then again, on the one hand, if a seemingly righteous man become an apostate, he should be treated as such; but, on the other hand, if a wicked man repented and reformed, things would go well with him; by all which it most clearly appeared that God did not, and would not, punish children for the sins of their fathers, unless they themselves were guilty of the same; and that the methods of Providence in dealing with men in this world, as they were good or bad, were equal and right, and to be justified: *O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?* This is an appeal to their own consciences, upon the evidence before given.

Ver. 30. *Therefore will I judge you, O house of Israel,* &c.] The case being fairly stated, the charge removed, instances to the contrary given, the Lord, as Judge, proceeds to bring the controversy to an issue, and to pass the definitive sentence, and to deal with them in the way of his providence as they deserved: *every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God;* not according to the ways of their father, but according to their own ways: this refers, not to the last and general judgment, but to some sore temporal punishment, which God, as the righteous Judge, would inflict upon them for their sins, according to the just desert of them; but whereas, notwithstanding all their wickedness, insolence, and blasphemy, the Lord was desirous of shewing mercy to them, rather than proceed to strict justice; he exhorts and advises them to the following things: *repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions;* this is to be understood of a national repentance for national sins, to prevent national judgments, being an address to the whole house of Israel; and not of evangelical repentance, which is the gift of God, and of an external reformation, as the fruit of it; and not of the first work of internal conversion, which is by the powerful and efficacious grace of God; though, were both exhorted to, it would not prove that these are in the power of men, only shew the want and necessity of them, and so be the means of God's bringing his chosen people to them. The phrase, *yourselves,* is not in the original; both words used signify *to turn;* and may be rendered and explained thus, *turn* yourselves, and *cause* others *to turn*[p]; let every man turn himself from his evil courses, and do all he can to turn his brother, or his neighbour, from the same; so Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech interpret them. The Targum is, "turn you to my worship, and remove from you the worship of idols:" *so iniquity shall not be your ruin;* meaning temporal ruin, as it deserved, and they were threatened with; and which might be prevented by repentance and reformation: or, *shall not be a stumbling-block to you*[q]; an hinderance, an obstruction in the way of their enjoyment of temporal blessings.

Ver. 31. *Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby ye have transgressed,* &c.] As unprofitable and pernicious, to be abhorred and abstained from, and to be cast off, as loads and burdens upon them. Kimchi interprets it of the punishment of their sins, which might be cast off, or escaped, by repentance; perhaps it is best to interpret it of the casting away of their idols, by which they transgressed; see ch. xx. 7, 8: *and make you a new heart and a new spirit;* which the Lord elsewhere promises to give, and he does give to his own elect; see the note on ch. xi. 19. and if here to be understood of a regenerated heart and spirit, in which are new principles of light, life, and love, grace and holiness, it will not prove that it is in the power of man to make himself such a heart and spirit; since from God's command, to man's power, is no argument; and the design of the exhortation is to convince men of their want of such a heart; of the importance of it; and which, through the efficacious grace of God, may be a means of his people having it, seeing he has in covenant promised it to them. The Targum renders it, "a fearing heart, and a spirit of fear;" that is, a heart and spirit to fear, serve, and worship the Lord, and not idols; and so the amount of the exhortation is, yield a hearty reverential obedience to the living God, and not to dumb idols; or that they would be hearty and sincere in their national repentance and reformation they are here pressed unto: *for why will ye die, O house of Israel?* which is to be understood, not of an eternal death; since the death here spoken of was now upon them, what they were complaining of, and from which they might be recovered, ver. 2, 23. but temporal calamity and affliction, as in 2 Cor. i. 10. and xi. 23. and so in the following words.

Ver. 32. *For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth,* &c.] Which is not to be interpreted simply and absolutely, and with respect to all persons afflicted and punished by him; for he does take delight in the exercise of *judgment* and *righteousness,* and *laughs* at the *calamity* of wicked men, Jer. ix. 24. Prov. i. 26. but comparatively, as in Hos. v. 6. The sense is, that he takes no pleasure in the afflictions, calamities, and captivity of men, which are meant by death here; but rather that they would repent and reform, and live in their own land, and enjoy the good things of it; which shews the mercy and compassion of God to sinners: *wherefore,* he renews his exhortation, *turn yourselves, and live ye;* or, *ye shall live*[r]; I take no delight in your present death, your captivity; it would be more agreeable to me would you turn from your evil ways to the Lord your God, and behave according to the laws I have given you to walk by, and so live in your own land, in the quiet possession of your goods and estates.

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[p] שובו והשיבו convertimini & facite converti, Pagninus, Montanus, sub. proximos; so some in Calvin; quisque suum fratrem, Munster, Vatablus.

[q] ולא יהיה לכם למכשול & non erit vobis in offendiculum, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator.

[r] וחיו & vivetis, Pagninus, Montanus.

CHAP. XIX.

THE subject-matter of this chapter is a lamentation for the princes and people of the Jews, on account of what had already befallen them, and what was yet to come, ver. 1. The mother of the princes is compared to a lioness, and they to lions: who, one after another, were taken and carried captive, ver. 2—9. again, their mother is compared to a vine, and they to branches and rods for sceptres, destroyed by an east wind, and consumed by fire, ver. 10—14.

Ver. 1. *Moreover, take thou up a lamentation,* &c.] These words are directed to the Prophet Ezekiel, to compose a doleful ditty, a mournful song, such as was used at funerals; and by it represent the lamentable state of the nation of the Jews and their governors, in order to affect them with it, with what was past, and present, and yet to come: *for the princes of Israel;* or, *concerning them* *; the princes meant are Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah, who were kings, though called princes, these words being synonymous; or, if so called by way of diminution, the reason might be, because they were tributary, either to the king of Egypt, or king of Babylon.

Ver. 2. *And say, what is thy mother?* &c.] That is, say so to the then reigning prince, Zedekiah, what is thy mother like? to what is she to be compared? by whom is meant, not the royal family of David only, or Jerusalem the metropolis of the nation, but the whole body of the people; and so the Targum interprets it of the congregation of Israel. The answer to the question is, *a lioness;* she is like to one, not for her strength and glory, but for her cruelty and rapine; for her want of humanity, mercy, and justice: *she lay down among lions;* that is, kings, as the Targum interprets it. Heathen princes, the kings of the nations about them, as of Egypt and Babylon, Jer. l. 17. so called for their despotic and arbitrary power, tyranny, and cruelty: now this lioness, the people of the Jews, lay down among them, joined with them in leagues and marriages, and learned their manners, and became of the same temper and disposition: *she nourisheth her whelps among young lions;* princes, as the Targum explains it; either the princes of Judah, who were become like young lions, fierce and cruel; or the princes of other nations, among whom the children of the royal family were brought up; or, however, they were trained up in the principles of such, even of arbitrary and despotic power, and were taught to oppress their subjects, and not execute justice and mercy among them.

Ver. 3. *And she brought up one of her whelps,* &c.] Or sons, as the Targum: or, *made him to ascend* †, as the word signifies; to mount the throne; this was Jehoahaz, whom the people of the land took and anointed him, and made him king in the stead of Josiah his father, 2 Kings xxiii. 30: *it became a young lion;* that is, a king, as the same Targum explains it, and a tyrannical and arbitrary one: *and it learned to catch the prey:* being instructed by evil counsellors, he soon learned to oppress his subjects, to get their substance from them, and do many evil things, as he is said to do, 2 Kings xxiii. 32: *it devoured men:* or a man, Adam, the people of Israel, so called, Ezek. xxxiv. 31. as the Jews frequently observe; it ate up and destroyed their liberties, privileges, and property.

Ver. 4. *The nations also heard of him,* &c.] The neighbouring nations, particularly the Egyptians; the fame of his behaviour reached them; they were informed how he used his own subjects, and what designs he had formed, and what preparations he was making against his neighbours; wherefore they thought it proper to oppose his measures in time, and to hinder him from proceeding and putting his projects into execution, by coming out against him, and fighting with him, as they did: *he was taken in their pit;* alluding to the manner of hunting and taking lions, and suchlike beasts of prey; which was done by digging pits, and covering the mouths of them with straw, as Jarchi observes, into which in their flight they fell unawares: so Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt came out against Jehoahaz, and took him, and put him in bonds at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might reign no more in Jerusalem, after he had been on the throne but three months, 2 Kings xxiii. 31, 33: *and they brought him with chains into the land of Egypt;* or, *with hooks* *; in his nose, as in Isa. xxxvii. 29. or with a bridle, as the Septuagint; or with barnacles, as the Syriac version, in his jaws; the Targum renders it in chains, as we do: it is certain that Jehoahaz was put in bonds or fetters, and carried into Egypt, where he died, 2 Kings xxiii. 33, 34.

Ver. 5. *Now when she saw,* &c.] That is, his mother, as the Syriac version expresses it; not his natural mother; as the mother of Sisera looked out and waited for him; but the congregation of Israel, as Jarchi interprets it, the body of the Jewish people: *that she had waited;* for the return of Jehoahaz out of Egypt, which was expected for some time: or, *that she was become sick;* or *weak* *, and feeble, and brought to a low estate by his captivity, and by the tax the king of Egypt put upon her: and *her hope was lost;* of his return to her any more, and so of being eased of the tribute imposed, and of being restored by him to liberty and glory; for the Lord had declared that he should return no more to his native country, but die in the place where he was carried captive, Jer. xxii. 10, 11, 12: *then she took another of her whelps;* or sons, as the Targum: *and made him a young lion;* a king, as the same Targum paraphrases it; that is, Jehoiakim, the brother of Jehoahaz, who before was called Eliakim, but his name was changed by Pharaoh-necho;

* אל נשיאי ישראל de principibus Israel, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, Starckius; so Ben Melech.

† ותעל et ascendere fecit, Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version.

* בחחים in, vel cum hamis, Montanus, Tigurine version, Cocceius, Starckius.

* כי נוחלה quod infirmatus esset, Cocceius, Starckius.

and though he is said to make him king, yet it was by the consent of the people of the Jews.

Ver. 6. *And he went up and down among the lions, &c.*] The kings, as the Targum; kings of neighbouring nations, as Pharaoh king of Egypt, and Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and sometimes he was subject to the one, and sometimes to the other: and his going up and down among them may denote his continuance as a king; for whereas his brother reigned but three months, he reigned eleven years: *he became a young lion;* an oppressive prince, a cruel and tyrannical king: *and learned to catch the prey, and devoured men:* he was notorious for his acts of injustice and arbitrary power; for the detaining the wages of workmen, and for his oppression, violence, and rapine, and shedding of innocent blood, Jer. xxii. 13, 17.

Ver. 7. *And he knew their desolate palaces, &c.*] He took notice of the palaces or seats of the richest men of the nation, and pillaged them of their treasure and wealth, and so they became desolate; it may be rendered, he *knew their widows*[*]: or, *his own widows;* whom he made so; he slew the men to get their substance into his hands, and then defiled their widows: *and he laid waste their cities;* by putting the inhabitants to death; or obliging them to leave them, and retire elsewhere, not being able to pay the taxes he imposed upon them, partly to support his own grandeur and luxury, and partly to pay the tribute to the king of Egypt: *and the land was desolate, and the fulness thereof, by the noise of his roaring;* by his menaces and threatenings, edicts and exactions, he so terrified the inhabitants of the land, that though it was full of men and riches, it became in a great measure destitute of both; the people left their houses, both in city and country, and fled elsewhere with the remainder of their substance that had not fallen into his hands: his menacing demands being signified by *roaring* agrees with his character as a lion, to which he is compared, Prov. xix. 12.

Ver. 8. *Then the nations set against him, &c.*] Or, *gave against him*[†]; that is, their voice, as Kimchi; they called to one another, to gather together against him; they gave their counsel against him; they joined together, agreed, and combined against him, and disposed their armies, and set them in array against him: *on every side from the provinces;* Nebuchadnezzar and his auxiliaries, which consisted of the people of the provinces all around, who were brought together, and placed round about Jerusalem, at the siege of it; particularly the bands of the Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites, 2 Kings xxiv. 1, 2: *and spread their net over him;* which may be expressive both of the policy, crafty and secret contrivances and designs, of Jehoiakim's enemies; and of their external force and hostile power against him: *he was taken in their pit;* which they dug for him, or by the means which they contrived for his ruin, and which they put in execution and effected: the metaphor of a lion is carried on, and the manner of taking one is alluded to, which is commonly in pits, as Pliny[*] says; and the Arabs now dig a pit where lions are observed to enter, and covering it over slightly with reeds, or small branches of trees, they frequently decoy and catch them[†].

Ver. 9. *And they put him in ward in chains, &c.*] Or *in an enclosure; or in a collar with hooks*[‡]; put a collar of iron, as is said, about his neck, which had hooks in it, and to those hooks chains were put, in which he was led a prisoner; and it is certain that he was bound in fetters, in order to be carried to Babylon; though it is thought he never reached thither, but died by the way, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6: *and brought him to the king of Babylon;* to Nebuchadnezzar, who came up against him with his army of many nations, he having rebelled against him; and, being taken by his soldiers, was brought to him in chains, wherever he was, whether without the gates of Jerusalem, or at any other place; for it is not certain where he was: however, *they brought him into holes;* places of confinement, one after another, in his way to Babylon; where, it seems, before he came thither, he died, and was cast out on a dunghill, and had no burial, as Jeremiah foretold, ch. xxii. 18, 19: *that his voice should no more be heard in the mountains of Israel;* in the kingdom of Israel, to the terror of its inhabitants, threatening them with death, if they did not answer his exorbitant demands; nor was it ever heard any more: the allusion still is to a lion traversing the mountains, and roaring after its prey, to the terror of other creatures.

Ver. 10. *Thy mother is like a vine in thy blood, &c.*] Another simile is here made use of, relating to the same persons; the same that were compared to a lioness are here compared to a vine, as the people of the Jews frequently are, Psal. lxxx. 8. Isa. v. 1. and xxvii. 3. Jer. ii. 21. Ezek. xv. 2. and xvii. 6. the same person is here addressed, the then reigning prince, Zedekiah, whose mother, the Jewish people, from whence he sprung, had been in times past, and still was like a vine; and especially with respect to his blood, the royal family from whom he descended: the allusion is to the use of blood laid to the roots of vines, by which they became more fruitful. It may have regard, as Calvin thinks, to the original of the Jewish nation, who, when in their blood, or as soon as they were born, that is, as soon as they became a nation, were at first like a flourishing vine. Some render the words, *in thy likeness;* so Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech; to which the Targum agrees, "the congregation of Israel, "when it did according to the law, was like to a "vine," &c.: *planted by the waters;* for in those hot countries vines required water, and throve the better for being near unto them, or for being in watery places; this may denote the many privileges, blessings, laws, and ordinances, which were for the advantage of the Jewish people, both in their civil and ecclesiastical state: *she was fruitful and full of branches, by reason of many waters;* grew populous, rich, and wealthy.

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[*] וידע אלמנותיו et cognovit viduas ejus, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius; viduas earum, Vatablus, Starckius; so R. Joseph Kimchi. Which sense is approved by Gussetius, Ebr. Comment. p. 212. R. Jonah interprets it, *he broke their palaces*; so Calvin, and some in Vatablus, and R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 96. 1.

[†] ויתנו עליו et ediderunt vocem, Vatablus.

[*] Capere eos ardui erat quondam operis, foveisque maxime. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 16.

[†] Dr. Shaw's Travels, p. 172. Ed. 2.

[‡] בסוגר בחחים in claustro uncis adhibitis, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; in claustrum in hamis, Montanus; in claustro in hamis, Starckius; in cavea hamis, Cocceius.

Ver. 11. *And she had rods for the sceptres of them that bear rule*, &c.] That is, many sprung from her, and rose up in that nation, who were fit to hold sceptres, to be kings, rulers, and governors, and were such. So the Targum, "and there were in her strong rulers, "kings that were mighty to subdue kingdoms;" such as David, Solomon, and others after them: or this may refer to the times of Josiah, and at his death, who left behind him several sons, who became kings, besides other princes of the blood; as his brother Mattaniah, who also was king: and some even carry this to Zedekiah himself, who had many children, who seemed to be strong rods, fit for sceptres, or sceptre-bearers; that is, to be kings. The allusion seems to be to the sceptres of the ancients, which were no other than walking-sticks, cut off of the stems or branches of trees, and decorated with gold, or studded with golden nails. Thus Achilles is introduced by Homer[c] as swearing by a sceptre; which, being cut off of a trunk of a tree left on the mountains, and stripped of its bark and leaves, should never more produce leaves and branches, or sprout again: and such an one, he observes, the Grecian judges, εν παλαμης φορεουσι, carry in their hands. Sometimes they were made of the *oleaster*[d], or wild olive, the same as a shepherd's staff; for what shepherds were to their flocks, that were kings to men. *And her stature was exalted among the thick branches*; as the body and trunk of a tree rises up higher than the branches, which are thickest about the middle of it, and so more eminent and conspicuous; thus it was with the nation of the Jews, and the royal family in it, that appeared more glorious and excellent among the nobles and princes of it; or, as the Targum expresses it, "it was lifted up in its strength above its "own kingdom;" or rather the sense is, that in the days of David and Solomon, and some others, it greatly exceeded all the kingdoms of the nations round about it: *and she appeared in her height with the multitude of her branches*; was seen and taken notice of for the multitude of her people, and the grandeur of her state.

Ver. 12. *But she was plucked up in fury*, &c.] This vine being turned into a degenerate plant of a strange vine; or the people of the Jews becoming wicked, disobedient to God, and disregarding his laws and ordinances, the wrath of God came upon them, and let in the Assyrians among them, who carried off ten tribes at once; and the tribes of Judah and Benjamin not taking warning hereby, but continuing and increasing in sinful courses, great part of them were carried captive into Babylon, with their king Jeconiah, who succeeded Jehoiakim before mentioned; when the kingdom seemed to be utterly ruined and destroyed, and is what is here referred to: *she was cast down to the ground*; a phrase expressive of the entire overthrow of the nation; for a vine, though plucked up, yet, if immediately planted again, might grow; but being plucked up, and left on the ground, and there lie, there is no hope of it; so that this denotes the desperate case of this people at this time, being in captivity. So the Targum paraphrases both clauses, "and it was "rooted up with strength out of the land of the house "of the Shechinah, and translated into another land." *And the east wind dried up her fruit*; Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and the Chaldean army, compared to an east wind, because hurtful and pernicious, as that is to trees and fruit, and because Babylon lay north-east of Judea; the people of the land are meant by the fruit of the vine, with their wealth and riches, which were seized upon and wasted, or carried into Babylon. So the Targum, "and a king strong as the east wind slew "her people." *Her strong rods were broken and withered*: or, *strong rod*; the singular for the plural; which may design King Jeconiah particularly, who with his mother, wives, princes, and officers, and the mighty of the land, even all the mighty men of valour, with the craftsmen and smiths, were taken and carried captive, 2 Kings xxiv. 14, 15, 16. *The fire consumed them*; the wrath of God, which is often compared to fire, the same with *fury* in the beginning of the verse; which shews that it was for sin, which had provoked the Lord to wrath and anger, that all this ruin came upon the Jewish nation. The Targum is, "her strong "governors removed, and were carried captive; and "the people which are strong, as fire consumed them."

Ver. 13. *And now she is planted in the wilderness*, &c.] In the land of Babylon, which though a very fruitful country, yet, because of the hardships and miseries which the Jews were exposed unto in it, was a wilderness to them: *in a dry and thirsty ground*; which is a periphrasis or description of a wilderness, Psal. lxiii. 1. and designs the same place as before; where the Jews were deprived of their liberties, and had not the opportunities of divine worship, the word and ordinances; and were destitute of the comforts both of civil and religious life. Unless this is to be understood of the land of Judea, which by the devastation made in it by the king of Babylon, and the multitudes that were carried captive by him out of it, it became like a desert, a dry and thirsty land; and so the vine planted in it signifies the remainder of the people left in it, after this great destruction; when it looked like a vine plucked up, and thrown down, and left on the ground, dried up with the east wind, and burnt with fire; and thus it fared with the remnant in a little time after, as the next words shew.

Ver. 14. *And fire is gone out of a rod of her branches*, &c.] By *her branches* are meant the rest of the Jews left in the land; and by the *rod* of them King Zedekiah, now on the throne, when this prophecy was given out; the *fire* said to go out of him signifies his rebellion against the king of Babylon, his breaking covenant and oath with him, which greatly provoked the Lord, and brought down the fire of his wrath upon him, 2 Kings xxiv. 20: *which hath devoured her fruit*; destroyed the people by sword, famine, pestilence, and captivity; yea, the city and temple of Jerusalem, with the palaces and houses therein, were burnt with material fire; their king was taken, and his eyes put out; his sons were slain, and all the princes of Judah: *so that she hath no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule*; none to be king, or succeed in the kingdom; and there never was a king after of the family of David, or of the tribe of Judah, till Shiloh the Messiah came; though there

[c] Iliad. 1. l. 234, &c.

[d] Paschal. de Coronis, l. 6. c. 19. p. 406, 407.

were princes and governors, yet no sceptre-bearer, no king. The Targum of the whole is, "and there came "people who were strong as fire, and, because of the "sins of her pride, slew her people; and there were "not in her strong rulers, kings that are mighty to "subdue kingdoms." *This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation*: that is, this prophecy, as the Targum, is a lamentation, or matter of lamentation; what of it had been already fulfilled occasioned lamentation; and, when the rest should be fulfilled, it would be the cause of more. Lamentable was the case of the Jews already, but it would be still more so when all that was foretold of them should be accomplished. It denotes the continuance of the sad estate of that people; and perhaps may refer to their present condition, which will continue till they are turned to the Lord.

CHAP. XX.

THE prophecy in this chapter is occasioned by some of the elders of Israel coming to inquire of the Lord; when the prophet is bid to tell them that he would not be inquired of by them. The reason of which were their abominations he is ordered to make known unto them, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. and then proceeds the narration of them; first of what their fathers committed in Egypt; of God's goodness to them, and their ingratitude; how that though he promised and swore that he would bring them from thence, when he charged them to abstain from the idolatry of that people where they were, nevertheless they did not, for which he threatened them with his wrath to consume them; yet such was his goodness as to spare them, and bring them out of that land, ver. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. being brought out of Egypt into the wilderness, the Lord gave them statutes and ordinances to observe, particularly sabbaths, as a sign between him and them, but these they despised and broke; wherefore the Lord threatened to consume them in the wilderness, and not bring them into the land of Canaan; yet such was his kindness and mercy to them, that he did not make an utter end of them in the wilderness, ver. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. and whereas he exhorted their posterity not to imitate their parents, but to walk in his statutes and judgments, and observe his sabbaths, yet they would not; which drew out his resentment against them, and he threatened to scatter them among the Heathens; but, for his name's sake, that that might not be polluted among the heathen, he spared them, and did not cut them off, only gave them up to do things very pernicious to them, ver. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26. and even when they were brought into the land of Canaan, they were guilty of blasphemy against God, and of idolatry on every high hill they saw, ver. 27, 28, 29. but whereas it might be objected, what is all this to the present generation? it is observed, that they imitated their fathers, and were guilty of the same idolatries, and therefore the Lord would not be inquired of by them, ver. 30, 31. and threatens to rule them with fury, and plead with them, as he had pleaded with their fathers in the wilderness, ver. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36. nevertheless he suggests that there would be a remnant among them, when he should have purged the rebels and transgressors from them, that he would deal graciously with in a covenant-way; who should serve him in his holy mountain, where he would require and accept their sacrifices, in whom he would be sanctified; and who should know him, and loathe themselves, when made sensible of the distinguishing favours bestowed upon them, ver. 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44. and the chapter is closed with a prophecy dropped against Jerusalem, denouncing utter destruction on it, ver. 45, 46, 47, 48, 49.

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass in the seventh year*, &c.] Of Zedekiah's reign, and of the captivity of Jeconiah; from whence the dates of Ezekiel's visions and prophecies are taken, ch. i. 2. and viii. 1. two years, one month, and five days, after Ezekiel began to prophesy, and eleven months and five days after the preceding prophecy: *in the fifth month, the tenth day of the month*; the month Ab, which answers to our July and August; on this day afterwards Jerusalem was twice destroyed, first by the Chaldeans, and then by the Romans: that *certain of the elders of Israel came to inquire of the Lord*; by the prophet; these were either some of the elders that were carried captive, who came to inquire how long they should continue in this state; or what methods they should use to free themselves from it; or what they should do whilst they were in it; whether it would be advisable that they should conform to the customs of the Heathens among whom they were; or what would be the case of those that were left in Judea: or else these were sent by Zedekiah to pay the king of Babylon his tax, or to negotiate some affair with him relating to the captives; and who took this opportunity of consulting the Lord by the prophet what methods should be taken to throw off the yoke, and to know what was the mind of God in it: but these things are uncertain, as are also the persons the inquirers; though the Jews say* they were Ananias, Azarias, and Misael; which is not probable, since they were good men, whereas these seem to be hypocritical persons: *and sat before me*; with great seriousness and devotion seemingly, waiting for an answer.

Ver. 2. *Then came the word of the Lord unto me*, &c.] While the elders were sitting before him, by an impulse upon his mind, dictating things unto him: *saying*: as follows:

Ver. 3. *Son of man, speak unto the elders of Israel, and say unto them*, &c.] Give them this for an answer from me: *thus saith the Lord God, are ye come to inquire of me?* no; not seriously, heartily, and in good earnest, determining to abide by the advice and counsel that might be given; or how can you have

* Seder Olam Rabba apud Abarbinel in loc.

the face to inquire of me, when guilty of such abominations? *as I live, saith the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you*; knowing their wickedness and hypocrisy, which were detestable to him, and therefore would not hear what they had to say, nor give them any answer, or direct them what they should do. Sad is the case of persons when the Lord will not be inquired of by them! it is plain he has no favours to bestow upon them; for, when he has, he'll put them upon inquiring of him for them, to do them unto them, ch. xxxvi. 37. this was the case of Saul, whom God, when he inquired of him, would not answer in any of his usual ways, 1 Sam. xxviii. 6.

Ver. 4. *Wilt thou judge them, son of man?* &c.] Excuse them, patronise them, defend their cause, and plead for them? surely thou wilt not; or rather, wilt thou not reprove and correct them, judge and condemn them, for their sins and wickedness? this thou oughtest to do: *wilt thou judge them?* this is repeated, to shew the vehemency of the speaker, and the duty of the prophet: *cause them to know the abominations of their fathers*; the sins they committed, which were abominable in themselves, and rendered them abominable unto God, and what came upon them for them: by which they would be led to see the abominable evils which they also had been guilty of, in which they had imitated their fathers, and what they had reason to expect in consequence of them.

Ver. 5. *And say unto them, thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Here begins the account of their fathers; of God's unmerited goodness to them, and of their sins and transgressions against him, and how it fared with them: *in the day when I chose Israel*; to be his peculiar people, above all people on the face of the earth; when he declared his choice of them, and made it appear that he had chosen them, and distinguished them, by special blessings and favours bestowed on them: *and lifted up mine hand to the seed of the house of Jacob*; the posterity of Jacob or Israel, to whom the Lord swore that he would do such and such things for them; of which the lifting up the hand was a token; it is a gesture used in swearing, Dan. xii. 7. and so the Targum, "and I swore unto them by my "word:" *and made myself known unto them in the land of Egypt*; by his name Jehovah; by the prophets he sent unto them, Moses, Aaron, and Miriam; and by the miracles he wrought among them: *when I lifted up mine hand unto them, saying, I am the Lord your God*; making promise of it, declaring it unto them, confirming it with an oath; see Heb. vi. 17, 18.

Ver. 6. *In the day that I lifted up my hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt*, &c.] Not only promised and swore to it, but exerted his power in the miracles he wrought, by bringing plagues upon the Egyptians, to oblige them to let them go forth from thence: *into a land that I had espied for them*; which he had in his eye and in his heart for them; which he had in his mind provided for them, and was determined in his purposes to bring them to; and which he, as it were, looked out for them, and singled out as the best and most suitable for them: *flowing with milk and honey*; a phrase often used, to express the fruitfulness of the land of Canaan, and the great plenty of provisions in it: *which is the glory of all lands*; that is, either which fertility, signified by milk and honey, is the glory of all lands, or makes all countries desirable where they are found; or else, which land of Canaan, being so fruitful, is more glorious or desirable than any other country; it greatly surpassing all others in its situation, soil, and climate. The Targum is, "which "is the praise of all provinces;" that is, was praised and commended by the inhabitants of all other provinces for the plenty in it; which must needs be very great, to support so large a number of inhabitants in it, and yet its compass but small.

Ver. 7. *Then I said unto them*, &c.] Having promised and swore to do such great and good things for them; which must lay them under an obligation to regard what he should command them; promises and blessings of goodness are great incentives to duty, and lay under great obligation to it: *cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes*; which should be so, meaning idols; but which his eyes were taken with, and were lifted up unto, as his gods; though they ought to have been rejected with the utmost abhorrence, as abominable: *and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt*; their *dunghil-gods*, as the word [f] signifies; which to worship, as it was an abomination to God, was defiling to themselves; yet these they were fond of, and prone to worship them; their eyes and their hearts were after them; and they needed such cautions and instructions as these, backed with the following strong reason against such idolatry: *I am the Lord your God*; their Creator and Benefactor, their covenant-God; the only Lord God, and whom only they ought to serve and worship; to whom they were under ten thousand obligations; and who was infinitely above all the idols of Egypt.

Ver. 8. *But they rebelled against me*, &c.] All sin is rebellion against God, an act of hostility, especially idolatry; it is refusing homage and casting off allegiance to him: *and would not hearken unto me*; to his word by his prophets; so the Targum, "they rebelled "against my word, and would not receive my pro-"phets:" *they did not every man cast away the abominations of his eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of the Gentiles*; whence it appears that there were some among them that did give in to the idolatry of the Egyptians; and could not be prevailed upon to relinquish it, notwithstanding the favours shewn them, and the promises made unto them. The Jewish writers, Jarchi and Kimchi, say that there were many of these wicked men among the Israelites when Moses was sent to them; and that they died in the time of the three-days' darkness, so that the Egyptians did not see their fall, and rejoice at it. *Then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them*; he threatened them, by his prophets, that he would bring down deserved wrath upon them, like a mighty shower of rain: *to accomplish mine anger against them*; to bring it upon them to the utmost, and consume them with it: *in the midst of the land of Egypt*; and so not bring them forth from thence, as he had promised; but cut them off in it, for their sins and rebellions.

[f] בגלולי stercoreis diis, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; stercoribus, Piscator, Cocceius.

Ver. 9. *But I wrought for my name's sake, &c.*] In a way of grace and mercy; did well by them, did what he promised to do; not for any merits of theirs, but for his own honour, and the glory of his name: *that it should not be polluted before the Heathen, among whom they were*; be spoken evil of, which is a polluting it; saying, either that he was not true to his word, in not doing what he promised; or else that it was not in his power to perform; either of which would reflect dishonour on his name, and so defile it: *in whose sight I made myself known unto them*; by the wonders he wrought; and who, by one means or another, became acquainted with the promises of God to Israel, that he would bring them out of Egypt, and settle them in the land of Canaan: wherefore for the honour of his name he exerted his power, *in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt*; as he did, as follows:

Ver. 10. *Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, &c.*] It was the Lord that brought them out from thence with a mighty hand and stretched-out arm; that obliged Pharaoh to let them go, and gave them favour in the eyes of the Egyptians, that they went out unmolested by them: *and brought them into the wilderness*; before they went into the land of Canaan; here they had freedom from their bondage, and were in a wonderful manner provided for by the Lord, guided, supported, preserved, and at last brought to the promised land.

Ver. 11. *And I gave them my statutes, &c.*] The precepts of his law, the law on Mount Sinai, of which there were not the like among other nations; nor were they given unto them, but were a special gift unto Israel, and greatly to be valued, Deut. iv. 8. Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20. and xix. 8, 9, 10: *and shewed them my judgments*; the nature, use, and excellency of them, the necessity and advantage of observing them: the same as before, called *statutes*, because appointed, fixed, and certain, being of inviolable and lasting obligation; and *judgments*, being according to strict justice and equity: these, though they were originally written on man's heart, yet so obliterated by sin, that there was need not only of their being afresh written and published, but of their being taught and made known; or of pointing out the use of them, and obligation to them: *which if a man do, he shall live in them*; or *by them*[g]; in the land of Canaan, enjoying all the blessings of a long and happy life: reference seems to be had to Lev. xviii. 5. The Targum adds, "in "eternal life;" but eternal life is not to be obtained by the works of the law, since no man can perfectly obey or fulfil it, but is the pure gift of the grace of God.

Ver. 12. *Moreover, also, I gave them my sabbaths, &c.*] The Targum is, "the days of the sabbaths;" or sabbath-days, the seventh-day sabbaths, which recurring throughout the year are many; but, besides these, there were the year of remission, or the seventh-year sabbath; and the jubilee year, the great sabbath of all, once in fifty years; yea, Kimchi thinks the feasts, such as the passover, *&c.* are included: now these are distinguished from the statutes and judgments, or the precepts of the law, which were of a moral nature; these being ritual and ceremonial, and were peculiar to the Jews, and continued but for a while; however, they were gifts, and valuable ones, of considerable use and significancy: *to be a sign between me and them*: of his being their God, and they being his people; of his favour and good will to them, and of the obligations they were under to him; of his having separated and distinguished them from all other nations of the world; these sabbaths being only given to them as a memorial of their deliverance out of Egypt, and as a pledge of their entering into the land of rest; and of the future rest to be enjoyed by Christ, and in heaven, to all eternity; for these were shadows of things to come, Col. ii. 16, 17: *that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them*; separate them from other nations, and, by such means and opportunities, begin and carry on the work of sanctification in them; for the sabbaths, and the services of them, were useful to such purposes; as Lord's-days, and the work of them, are now.

Ver. 13. *But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness, &c.*] Where they were wholly at the mercy of God, entirely dependent upon him; and miracles were wrought every day for the sustentation and preservation of them from famine, wild beasts, and enemies; yet they rebelled against the Lord; provoked him bitterly by their manifold transgressions, their ingratitude, unbelief, and idolatry; and this not a few of them only, but the whole body of the people, the house of Israel, the whole family, and that for the space of forty years, Psal. xcv. 9, 10: *they walked not in my statutes*; did not make them the rule of their walk and conversation, and steer the course of their lives and actions by them, as they ought to have done: *and they despised my judgments*; as not worthy their notice and regard, as useless and unprofitable; nay, had an aversion to them, and a loathing of them, as the word[h] signifies; such is the corrupt and wicked heart of man; it is enmity against God and his law, and all that is good: *which if a man do, he shall even live in them*; see the note on ver. 11: *and my sabbaths they greatly polluted*; or *profaned*, or made them *common*[i]; that is, with other days; by going out for manna on them; by gathering sticks upon them; by doing their own work, speaking their own words, and seeking their own pleasure, and worshipping false deities: *then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness to consume them*; that they should not enter into the land of Canaan; as the generation that came out of Egypt were consumed in the wilderness, excepting two; as the Lord threatened, Numb. xiv. 35.

Ver. 14. *But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the Heathen, &c.*] See the note on ver. 9. who would be ready to say it was for want of power, or faithfulness, or goodness, that he did not bring them into the promised land; or there was no such land to bring them to. God's own glory was concerned, and that is his ultimate end in all he does; and is of more weight with him than any other argument whatever; *in whose sight I brought them out*;

[g] בהם per ea, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator; propter ea, Paguinus.

[h] מאסו abjecerunt, Pagninus; reprobaverunt, Montanus.

[i] חללו prophanarunt, Vatablus, Piscator, Cocceius.

from Egypt, into the wilderness; this was done publicly in the sight of the Egyptians, they urging them to be gone.

Ver. 15. *Yet also I lifted up mine hand unto them in the wilderness*, &c.] Swore unto them, as in ver. 5, 6: *that I would not bring them into the land which I had given* them; by promise to their fathers, and to them. This is to be understood of the generation that came out of Egypt, that received the ill report the spies made, and murmured against the Lord; wherefore he swore in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest; or he would not bring them into the land of Canaan, save Caleb and Joshua; and accordingly none else entered but them, though their posterity did; and so both his oath to them, that they should not enter, and his oath to Abraham, that he would give to his seed the land, had their accomplishment, Numb. xiv. 23, 24. 30: a land *flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands*: see the note on ver. 6.

Ver. 16. *Because they despised my judgments, and walked not in my statutes, but polluted my sabbaths*, &c.] Which were just causes of divine resentment and anger; see the note on ver. 13: *for their heart went after their idols*; which they had served in Egypt; and that led them off from the true worship and service of God; no man can serve two masters; if he holds to the one, and his heart is towards him, he'll despise the other: and yet these idols were no other, as the word signifies, than dunghil-gods, as in ver. 17. and such are all worldly things, in comparison of God, that the heart of man is going after.

Ver. 17. *Nevertheless, mine eye spared them from destroying them*, &c.] Utterly, so as to leave neither root nor branch; for though the whole generation died excepting two, either by the immediate hand of God in wrath, or else by ordinary deaths; yet there was a generation raised up in their stead, to whom mercy was shewn: *neither did I make an end of them in the wilderness*: that they should be no more a nation and people; though the carcasses of them that believed not fell in the wilderness, and never saw the good land, yet their posterity was spared to see it, and did.

Ver. 18. *But I said unto their children in the wilderness*, &c.] Or, *then I said*[*]; his judgments and statutes being neglected and despised by them, and good instructions and kind providences being of no use unto them, the Lord turns to their posterity whilst yet in the wilderness: what follows seems to refer to those directions, instructions, and exhortations given in the book of Deuteronomy by Moses, in the plains of Moab, a little before the children of Israel went over Jordan into the land of Canaan: *walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments*: they were not only not to imitate their parents in their open sins and transgressions of God's law; but they were not to follow them in the observance of such rules of worship, which were of their own devising, and they had formed into a law: this makes greatly against such who think it a very heinous sin to relinquish the religion of their ancestors, or that in which they were brought up: but if this does not appear to be according to the word of God, the statutes and judgments of our fathers should stand for nothing, yea, should be rejected: *nor defile yourselves with their idols*: idolatry, as it is abominable to God, is defiling to men, and renders them loathsome to him; and it being what their fathers practised will not excuse them; for, as it was defiling to their fathers, it is no less so to their childen.

Ver. 19. *I am the Lord your God*, &c.] Not only that had made them and preserved them, but had chose them above all people to be his people; who had made a covenant with them, and had distinguished them by his favours from all others: *walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them*; which he had given unto their fathers, and they had neglected and despised; those contained in the decalogue, and in the whole book of Deuteronomy, and elsewhere.

Ver. 20. *And hallow my sabbaths*, &c.] Or keep them holy, by abstaining from worldly business on them; by observing all the duties of religion, private and public, to be performed on such days: *and they shall be a sign between me and you*; of present and future good; see the note on ver. 12: *that ye may know that I am the Lord your God*; not only acknowledge him to be the Lord their God, by observing his laws, and sanctifying his sabbaths; but also have a larger experience of his grace and goodness, as their covenant-God.

Ver. 21. *Notwithstanding the children rebelled against me*, &c.] After the death of their fathers, when they were come into the plains of Moab, and just going to enter the land; they rebelled against the Lord, and greatly provoked him, by joining themselves to Baal-peor, the idol of Moab, they worshipped, Numb. xxv. 3: *they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them*; they did as their fathers before them; though they saw with their eyes the judgments of God upon them, yet this did not deter them from following their evil ways: *which if a man do, he shall even live in them*; see the note on ver. 13: *they polluted my sabbaths*; just as their fathers had done, taking no warning by them, and what befell them: *then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish mine anger against them in the wilderness*; twenty and four thousand died on account of the idolatry of Baal-peor, Numb. xxv. 9.

Ver. 22. *Nevertheless I withdrew mine hand*, &c.] When it was stretched out against them, as in the above instance, and did not utterly consume them. The Targum is, "and I turned away the stroke of my "might:" *and wrought for my name's sake*, &c. see the notes on ver. 9, 14.

Ver. 23. *I lifted up mine hand also to them in the wilderness*, &c.] Swore unto them, as in ver. 5, 6, 15: *that I would scatter them among the Heathen, and disperse them through the countries*; after they came to be settled in the land of Canaan, they sinning against the Lord; which was fulfilled in the times of the Babylonish captivity, and in their destruction by the Romans; but was threatened and foretold whilst they were in the wilderness, Lev. xxvi. 33. Deut. xxxii. 26. with this compare Psal. cvi. 26—30.

[*] ואמר postea dixi, Piscator.

Ver. 24. Because they had not executed my judgments, &c.] Had not done that which was right and just, as the Lord commanded them: *but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths*; as their fathers had done: *and their eyes were after their fathers' idols*: which they had learned to serve in Egypt, or brought with them from thence; these the eyes and the hearts of their children were after, as theirs had been; and they were more desirous, encouraged, and emboldened to serve them, because they were their fathers'; but this would not excuse their sin; yea, it was rather an aggravation of it, that they should follow them in such practices, for which they had been often reproved and punished.

Ver. 25. Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, &c.] Yea, were very bad: not the moral law, and the statutes of it; for that is holy, just, and good, though the killing letter and ministration of condemnation and death to the transgressors of it: indeed those laws were both good and bad to different persons, as Abendana observes; good to those that observed them, but not good to those that transgressed them, the issue of which was death: rather these were the statutes and rites of the ceremonial law, which were not in their own nature good; nor did they arise from the nature and holiness of God, but from his will; and though very good and useful under the legal dispensation, until the Messiah came, especially when attended to by faith, and with a view to him; yet had the sanction of death to many of them, that a man could not live by them: but it may be, the punishments inflicted on them for their sins, by the plague, by fire, and by serpents, are meant; which may be called *statutes* and *judgments*, because ordered and appointed by the Lord, and according to justice: or, as many, both Jews and Christians, think, the idolatrous laws, usages, and customs of other nations, the traditions of their fathers, their wicked laws and statutes, and their own; which, being left to a reprobate mind, they were suffered to walk in, to their hurt and ruin; which is sometimes the sense of the word *give*: and so here, he *gave*, that is, he permitted them to observe such statutes; and this sense is countenanced and confirmed by the following verse; to which agrees Jarchi's note, "I delivered them into the hand of their "imagination (or corrupt nature) to stumble at their "iniquity;" see Rom. i. 28. Kimchi interprets them of laws, decrees, tribute, and taxes, imposed upon them by their enemies that conquered them. The Targum is, "and I also, when they rebelled against "my word, and would not obey my prophets, cast "them far off, and delivered them into the hands of "their enemies; and they went after their foolish "imagination, and made decrees which were not "right:" *and judgments, whereby they should not live*: yea, which were deadly and destructive to them; which brought ruin, destruction, and death upon them; for more is designed than is expressed: this was the effect of following the customs of the nations, and of walking in the statutes of their fathers, and of their own; whereas, had they walked according to the judgments and statutes of God, moral and ceremonial, they had lived comfortably and prosperously.

Ver. 26. And I polluted them in their own gifts, &c.] Suffered them to defile themselves; or declared them to be, and treated them as, polluted persons, in the gifts and sacrifices which they offered to idols, particularly their first-born: as the next clause explains it: *in that they caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb*; this very likely they did, when they sacrificed to Baal-peor, the same with Molech, Numb. xxv. 3: *that I might make them desolate*: their families, by stripping them of their children, their first-born, and strength: *to the end that they might know that I am the Lord*; a righteous God, in punishing men for sin, in a way it deserves. Some interpret this, not of causing the first-born to pass through fire to an idol; but of causing them to pass, or of setting them apart, to the Lord, according to the law in Exod. xiii. 12. where the same word is used as here; and the sense is that God declared them to be impure in or with all their gifts, by commanding them to cause their first-born to pass to him, which they were obliged to redeem; which sense is approved of by Gussetius[l]; and so Abendana, taking the words to refer to both, gives this sense of them, "I pronounced them impure, and "removed them far from me, instead of sanctifying "them; because they caused every one that opens the "womb to pass from me, whom I commanded to "give to me for holiness, but they have given them to "idolatry;" rather, according to Braunius[m], the words may be understood of God's rejecting and causing the first-born to pass from him, and not suffering them to offer gifts and sacrifices unto him; which may be meant by pronouncing them impure, or polluting them in their gifts; this was after the worship of the golden calf; when he took Aaron and his sons in their room.

Ver. 27. Therefore, son of man, speak unto the house of Israel, and say unto them, &c.] The elders of Israel, ver. 1, who came in the name of the whole body, and represented them, and by whom the following message is sent unto them; or the prophet by them might speak unto them, as he is ordered: *thus saith the Lord God, yet in this your fathers have blasphemed me*; besides what they did in Egypt, and in the wilderness, when they were come into the land of Canaan, such was their ingratitude, that to all the rest they added this wickedness, to sacrifice to other gods on every high hill, and in all thick trees; which was a blaspheming the name of God, and casting reproach upon him: *in that they have committed a trespass against me*; idolatry is meant, described in the next verse; and which they committed, not through ignorance and weakness, but voluntarily, against light and knowledge; and obstinately, notwithstanding all the remonstrances made unto them, and cautions, exhortations, and reproofs given them.

Ver. 28. For when I had brought them into the land, &c.] Brought them out of Egypt through the wilderness into the land of Canaan, through so many difficulties, by such displays of power, goodness, and truth: *for the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to them*: which he swore he would give unto them, and

[l] Ebr. Comment. p. 576, 999.

[m] Selecta Sacra, l. 4. c. 11. p. 509.

which he did, and so fulfilled his word and oath; and which was an instance of his bounty and goodness, and not owing to any merits of theirs: *then they saw every high hill, and all the thick trees;* as soon as they had got into the land, and took a view of it, they at once fixed their eyes upon the high hills and groves, as proper places to set up their idols on, and perform idolatrous worship in; in the one place more openly, and in the other more secretly, as they might judge proper and necessary; in which they imitated the Heathens, who had their temples, idols, altars, and sacrifices, amidst groves and thick trees. So Herodotus[a] relates of the temple of Diana at Bubastis in Egypt, that at the entrance of it there were rivulets from the Nile, which flowed about it here and there, shaded with trees; and within were a vast grove of the largest trees, planted about the temple; and which he afterwards calls trees reaching to heaven: *and they offered there their sacrifices:* either to the God of Israel, as some of them sometimes did, and which was sinful; for though they might offer sacrifices, as were commanded, to a right object, yet not in the proper place: or rather to their idols; and so the Septuagint and Arabic versions, *to their own gods;* which they had made to themselves, and had chose and approved of: *and there they presented the provocation of their offering;* or their offering which provoked the wrath of God against them; being such as either he had not appointed, or was offered in a wrong place, or to a wrong object; than which nothing could be more provoking to him; it was giving his glory to another, and his praise to graven images: *there also they made their sweet savour:* incense to their deities. The Targum is, the worship of their sacrifices: *and poured out there their drink-offerings;* libations of wine: all kind of sacrifices were offered up here by them; which shews to what lengths in idolatry they ran, and how dreadfully guilty they were.

Ver. 29. *Then I said unto them,* &c.] By his prophets that he sent unto them: *what is the high place whereunto you go?* what is the name of it? what is the use of it? to what end do you go there? is there not an altar built by my order and command to sacrifice upon? is this high place better than that? does it answer a better end and purpose? *and the name thereof is called Bamah unto this day:* or a high place. The Septuagint also leaves the word untranslated, and calls it Abama; and the Arabic version Abbana; so they called their altars after the Gentiles, by whom they are called βωμοι; nor were they ashamed of it, but persisted in so calling them, from the first use of them to the present time. These are often called Bamah and Bamot in the books of Kings. Jarchi says it is a term of reproach, as if it was said, Bamah—in what is it to be accounted of?

Ver. 30. *Wherefore say unto the house of Israel, thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] To the elders, as before: *are ye polluted after the manner of your fathers?* they were: *and commit ye whoredom after their abominations?* spiritual adultery; that is, idolatry, in the same abominable manner? they did, as appears by what follows:

Ver. 31. *For when ye offer your gifts,* &c.] And sacrifices to idols. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, *the first-fruits of your gifts;* it may design their first-born; see ver. 26. as the following clause seems to explain it: *when ye make your sons to pass through the fire;* or between two fires to Moloch, as their fathers had done before them: *ye pollute yourselves with all your idols, even unto this day;* by worshipping idols, or dunghil-gods, as the word signifies, as often observed; they defiled themselves with those filthy things, which they continued to do to that very day, and so became more and more polluted; and were as their fathers had been, and therefore must expect to be used in like manner: *and shall I be inquired of by you, O house of Israel?* can you think that I will suffer you to come and inquire of me, or to make your requests to me? or can you hope to have an answer from me; at least a favourable one, such as you could wish for? *as I live, saith the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you:* so confirming again with an oath what he had before declared, ver. 3. wherefore they might assure themselves that they would not be acceptable to him, neither their persons nor petitions, or be regarded by him.

Ver. 32. *And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all,* &c.] What they had contrived in their own breasts, and laid a plan of, and would gladly have brought about, should be frustrated, take no effect, and come to nothing: *that ye say, we will be as the Heathen;* live without God; not be in subjection to him, or under his government, or be called by his name, or attend to his word, worship, and ordinances; but join ourselves to them; enter into alliance, and intermarry with them; carry on trade and commerce with them, and embrace the same religion; and then we shall prosper as they do, as well as no more incur the reproach of singularity or precisenesss in religion: *as the families of the countries;* being incorporated into them, dwelling with them, and joining with them in the same exercises of religious worship: *to serve wood and stone;* images made of wood and stone. Strange! that a people that had a revelation from God, and such an experience of his power and goodness, should ever form such a scheme, or once think of entering into such measures, so grossly absurd and scandalous.

Ver. 33. *As I live, saith the Lord God,* &c.] The form of an oath; the Lord swears by his own life, used more than once before; it supposes something of moment, and the certain performance of it: *surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched-out arm;* from which none can escape, and which none can withstand: *and with fury poured out;* like floods of water, in a violent hasty shower of rain; it denotes the abundance of divine wrath, and the sudden and sure execution of it: *will I rule over you;* not in a gentle and merciful way, but with great rigour and severity; though they had contrived to withdraw themselves from under his dominion and government, by joining with the Gentiles, and conforming to their laws and customs, and complying with their religious rites and idolatrous practices; yet they should not be able to accomplish their designs; they should be so far from being free

[a] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 138.

men, as they promised themselves, that whereas they did not choose to be his voluntary and faithful subjects, he would keep a watchful eye and a strict hand over them as rebels, and rule them with a rod of iron, as well as with a sceptre of righteousness; and would be King over them, and they should be subject to his authority, whether they would or no.

Ver. 34. *I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered*, &c.] The Egyptians, Ammonites, and others; where they went for safety and protection, and among whom they intended to settle, and had formed a scheme to cast off the yoke of God and his worship, and be no more a nation or people under his government; but mix themselves with these nations, and become a part of them, and join with them in all matters, civil, commercial, and religious: but here the Lord will not suffer them to continue, but will bring them out from hence: *with a mighty hand, and a stretched-out arm, and with fury poured out*: as before, ver. 33. though some think this is to be understood as a favour to the Israelites, who should be brought out of the countries of the idolatrous Gentiles by mighty power, and with marks of wrath and displeasure upon the nations; designing hereby the good of his people, that they might be reduced to his government, and live happily and comfortably under him, and not be destroyed and lost among the nations.

Ver. 35. *And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people*, &c.] Into Babylon, and into captivity there, which they thought to avoid by fleeing to other countries. Some think that those inhospitable nations are meant, Syro-media, Caspia, Hyrcania, Iberia, and others, into which many of the Jews were brought, who sought to live elsewhere than at Babylon: and others are of opinion that this respects the time of their return from Babylon to their own land, between which lay a wilderness, here referred to; but perhaps the prophecy respects the present state of the Jews, in which they have continued ever since their destruction by the Romans; through whom they have been brought among the several nations of the world, particularly the Roman empire, compared to a wilderness; and represented as a populous one, as it is, and in which the beast, or antichrist, now is; see Rev. xvii. 3: *and there will I plead with you face to face*: judge, condemn, and take vengeance, or inflict punishment on them in the most public manner, as he now does. The Targum is, "and I will take vengeance on you face to face."

Ver. 36. *Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt*, &c.] Which was over-against the land of Egypt, near unto it, on the borders of it; and into which the people immediately went, when they came out of Egypt, and passed the Red sea; and the Arabic version is, "when I brought them out of the land of Egypt." This refers to the controversy the Lord had with the Israelites for murmuring upon the report of the spies; and the sentence he passed upon them, that they should not enter into the land of Canaan, but their carcasses should fall in the wilderness, Numb. xiv. 29, 30: *so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God*: take vengeance on them, as the Targum; who disbelieve the Messiah, reject him, and will not have him to reign over them; these are now punished, by a dispersion of them in the wilderness of the nations, where they die and perish, and see not their own land.

Ver. 37. *And I will cause you to pass under the rod*, &c.] That is, such whom God will not take vengeance on, and shall not die in the wilderness of the people; but whom he will have mercy on, and shew favour to, and bring at length into their own land: these he indeed will bring under the *rod* of correction and chastisement, by which they shall be brought to a sense of sin, a confession of it, humiliation for it, and to seek to Christ for salvation from it; or under the *rod* of his word, the rod of his strength, he sends out of Zion the Gospel, the power of God unto salvation; by which they shall be brought to agree unto and comply with the way of salvation by Christ; to submit to his righteousness; to embrace the doctrines of the Gospel, and be subject to the ordinances of it: or the allusion is to shepherds, in taking an account of their flocks, or at the tithing of them, who strike and mark them with their rod, Lev. xxvii. 32. Jer. xxxiii. 13. and thus, as the Lord has in election distinguished his sheep from others, taken an exact account of them, and set his seal or mark of foreknowledge on them; so in effectual vocation he separates them from others, takes special knowledge of them, and sets his mark of sanctification on them. This will be the case of the converted Jews in the latter day: *and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant*; or, *the discipline of the covenant*, as the Syriac version; the same with the rod of correction, being what is provided in covenant for the good of the covenant-ones. This covenant is the covenant of grace; the bond of which are not faith, repentance, and new obedience; for these are parts and blessings of the covenant; nor any outward ordinance; not circumcision formerly, nor baptism and the Lord's supper now; which persons may submit to, and yet not be in the covenant: but it designs that which makes the covenant firm, sure, and lasting; which are the everlasting love of God, from whence it springs; his unchangeable counsel, according to which it proceeds; his solemn oath, that it shall never be removed; his faithfulness, which will not suffer it to be made void; and his power, which will accomplish every article of it; and the blood of Christ, which ratifies and confirms it. So Kimchi interprets it, "I will bind you in a covenant, that ye shall not go out of it for ever;" or it is that which binds persons, or lays them under obligation to love, fear, and serve the Lord; and that is the love of God and Christ, and the exceeding great and precious promises of the covenant; and now into this sure, firm, and obliging covenant the Lord has brought all his chosen ones in eternity, when it was first made with Christ; and into which he may be said to bring them in time, as he will the converted Jews, when he manifests it to them, and applies the blessings and promises of it; shews them it, and their interest in it.

Ver. 38. *And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me*, &c.] All men are enemies, and enmity itself, against God; and every sin is an act of hostility and rebellion against him; every transgression and violation of his law is a

casting off of allegiance to him, and a trampling upon and despising his legislative power and authority; wherefore rebels and transgressors of his law are put together; the one being explanative of the other. The people of the Jews were always more or less a rebellious people; so they were in the times of Moses, and all the while that he was with them, and were notoriously so in the times of Ezekiel; and therefore are often so described in this book; but they were not all so; such as were, the Lord here declares that he would single them out, as goats from among his sheep he brought under the rod, and purge them as chaff from the wheat; that sinners in Zion should be no more in the congregation of the righteous: *I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn;* or *countries;* wherever they have been pilgrims and sojourners, as they now are; wherever they are; it looks as if, a little before or when the remnant of God, according to the election of his grace, shall be converted, that the rest shall be collected together into some one place, and be destroyed as rebels: *and they shall not enter into the land of Israel;* when the converted Jews shall; an emblem of carnal Israelites, wicked professors, being not admitted into the New Jerusalem, and being excluded the kingdom of heaven: *and ye shall know that I am the Lord:* that knows all things, can do all things, and will faithfully and punctually perform all that is promised, threatened, or predicted.

Ver. 39. *As for you, O house of Israel,* &c.] The then present house of Israel, and the elders of it, who were upon the spot with the prophet: *go ye, serve ye every one his idols;* or dunghill-gods; since they liked not to serve the true God: this is not giving them leave to serve idols, or approving their idolatrous practices; but is said *ironically,* as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe, who compare it with Eccl. xi. 9: *and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me:* not only serve them now, but for the future; seeing ye choose not to hearken to my voice, to obey my laws, and to worship me, and me only: for it suggests, that it was better to attend to the service of the one, or of the other, and not halt between two opinions; but either, if the God of Israel was the true God, then serve him, and him only; but if Baal, or any other Heathen deity, was so, then serve them, and keep serving them: *but pollute ye my holy name no more with your gifts and with your idols:* to worship him along with them, and them along with him; to pretend they worshipped him in them, and offered their gifts and sacrifices to him through them: and so made use of his name as a cover to their idolatrous practices: this was a polluting his name, and was abominable to him.

Ver. 40. *For in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord God,* &c.] Alluding to Mount Zion, or Moriah, on which the temple was built, on the highest part of the land of Israel, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe: here the Gospel church is meant, comparable to a *mountain* for its firmness and durableness; said to be a *holy* one, because consisting of holy persons, performing holy worship to a holy God: and represented as *high,* being established, as it will be in the latter day, upon the top of the mountains, and be very visible and glorious: *there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me:* when all Israel shall be saved, or converted; and, the rebels and transgressors being purged away from them, they shall join themselves to the Gospel church, and in it serve the Lord, according to the rules of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; even all of them that shall enter into their own land and dwell in it; the rest being not admitted to it: *there will I accept them:* their persons, and their sacrifices of prayer and praise, being offered up, in the name and faith of Christ, that altar which sanctifies every gift; see Isa. lvi. 7: *and there will I require your offerings, and the first-fruits of your oblations, with all your holy things:* meaning the offering up of their persons, bodies, and souls, as a living, holy, and acceptable sacrifice, which he would require of them as their reasonable service; together with all holy duties of prayer, praise, and beneficence: sacrifices with which God is well-pleased through Christ and his sacrifice; and which are the only sacrifices he now requires under the Gospel dispensation; for ceremonial ones he does not require, seek after, enjoin, or accept; these are done away and made void by the sacrifice of his son: only it may be observed, as in other places and prophecies of Gospel times, that New Testament worship is expressed by the phrases, forms, and usages suited to the Old Testament; see Psal. xl. 6.

Ver. 41. *I will accept you with your sweet savour,* &c.] Their sins being expiated by the sacrifice of Christ, which is unto God for a sweet-smelling savour; and their persons being clothed with the robe of his righteousness, and the garments of his salvation, all whose garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia; the Gospel being the savour of life unto life unto them; and the savour of the knowledge of Christ being communicated to them by it; and also the savour of his good ointments, the graces of the spirit, being imparted to them: *when I bring you out of the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered;* which will not only be locally and literally true of them, when the Jews are converted, that they shall be collected together out of all nations where they now are dispersed, and return to their land; but spiritually also, they being effectually called out from among the men of the world, and to leave their former company, customs, and lusts: *and I will be sanctified in you before the Heathen:* the Gentiles, Christian men; who will take notice of the power, and grace, and goodness of God, in the conversion and restoration of them, and praise and glorify him on account of it; and when he will be visibly feared, served, and worshipped, in the midst of them.

Ver. 42. *And ye shall know that I am the Lord,* &c.] The one only Jehovah, that keeps covenant; performs promises; is faithful to his word; is kind, gracious, and merciful, as well as mighty and powerful: and all this they shall experimentally know, and publicly own and acknowledge: *when I shall bring you into the land of Israel;* which will be the Lord's doing; his hand and his power will be signally seen in it: this is one of the places in prophecy, which clearly asserts that the Jews, when converted, shall be brought into their own land again: *into the country for the which I lifted up mine hand, to give it to your fathers;* that is, which he swore he would give unto them.

Ver. 43. *And there ye shall remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled,* &c.] Their rejection of the Messiah; their continued disbelief of him; their obstinacy, hardness, and impenitence; their adherence to the traditions of the elders, to the making void the word of God; together with the most flagrant immoralities that ever any people were guilty of, and which are of a very defiling nature, and made them abominable in the sight of God; these now the spirit of God convincing them of, they'll remember with shame and confusion, and mourn over them in an evangelical way; and the more so, when they shall find themselves reinstated in their own land, enjoying all civil and religious privileges and liberties under Christ their King, whom they will now know, own, and serve; see Zech. xii. 10: *and ye shall loath yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed*; against God and Christ; against the law of the one, and the Gospel of the other: Sin is a loathsome thing to God; and it is so to his people when they are thoroughly convinced of it, and they loath themselves for it; and never more so than when they have the greatest instances and clearest discoveries of the love and grace of God in Christ to them; then they blush, are ashamed of themselves and their sins, and are confounded when they perceive the Lord is pacified towards them, and their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake: sin never appears more odious and loathsome than when viewed in the glass of pardoning love; see Ezra ix. 6, 8. Ezek. xvi. 63.

Ver. 44. *And ye shall know that I am the Lord,* &c.] Jehovah their righteousness, their Redeemer and Saviour, Lord and King; they shall know Christ, and him crucified, and God in Christ as their covenant-God; see the note on ver. 42: *when I have wrought with you for my name's sake*; in the thorough conversion of them; not that there is any co-operation with God in that work; ministers indeed are co-workers, not as efficients, but instruments; persons converted are wholly passive in the first work of conversion or regeneration; and in all after-actings move as they are acted, turn being turned, walk and run being drawn, not being able to do any thing as of themselves: but the phrase signifies a working in favour of them; doing great things for them, and good things in them, well-pleasing in his sight, and good unto them; plucking them as brands out of the burning; taking them out of the hands of Satan; calling them out of darkness into light, and bringing them out of bondage into liberty; and all this *for his own name's-sake*, of his own will and pleasure, according to his abundant mercy, and for the glory of his rich grace: *not according to your wicked ways, not according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord God*; had he, they must have perished in their sins, and been miserable for ever; but he neither proceeds according to the bad works nor the good works of men, in calling and converting them, but according to his own purpose and grace, 2 Tim. i. 9. their evil works don't hinder his grace when he's resolved to work, and their good works don't merit it; he acts freely, and in a sovereign way.

Ver. 45. *Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] Or the word of prophecy, as the Targum. Here begins a new prophecy, and most properly a new chapter should here begin; for the next chapter is of the same argument with this, and an explanation of it, and an enlargement upon it. And here Ben Melech begins one; and so Junius and Tremellius, Piscator, and Castalio.

Ver. 46. *Son of man, set thy face toward the south,* &c.] The land of Judea, which lay south of Babylon, where the prophet now was, as Babylon lay north of that, Jer. i. 14. and iv. 6. to *set his face* was to speak freely and boldly, with courage and constancy, and without fear and dread, to the inhabitants of it; and as a token of the Lord's face being set against them for their sins. The Targum is, "take a prophecy towards "the way of the south." *And drop* thy word *toward the south*: or prophesy, as the Targum; doctrine or prophecy being compared to rain, and the delivery of it to the dropping or distilling of rain; which falls gently, gradually, successively, and oftentimes with weight, and to good purpose; see Deut. xxxii. 2. which metaphorical phrase is explained in the next clause: *and prophesy against the forest of the south field*; the city of Jerusalem, in the land of Judea, which was very full of people, as a forest of trees; but these barren and unfruitful, as the trees of the wood generally are; and a rendezvous of wicked persons, comparable to beasts of prey, that haunt in woods and forests.

Ver. 47. *And say to the forest of the south,* &c.] To the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea: *hear the word of the Lord*: attend to it, and receive it, believe it, and take warning from it: *thus saith the Lord God, behold, I will kindle a fire in thee*; in Jerusalem; meaning that he would send great calamities among them, the sword of the Chaldean army, famine, and pestilence; and that at last it should be burnt with fire, and the remainder of the inhabitants be carried captive: *and it shall devour every green tree, and every dry tree*: all sorts of persons should be consumed by one or other of the above calamities, high and low, rich and poor, good and bad; and if good men should suffer, comparable to green trees, which fire will not so easily burn, not being fit fuel for it; then much more bad men, who were by far the most numerous, comparable to dry trees, and so fit fuel for the flames, and easily consumed thereby: *the flaming flame shall not be quenched*; or, the *flame, flame*: or, the *flame of flame* *; signifying either the succession of these calamities one after another; or the force and strength of them, which should not be abated until the ruin of the city was completed: *and all faces from the south to the north shall be burnt therein*; which some understand of an utter destruction of the Jews, either by sword, famine, and pestilence, or by captivity from Jerusalem or Judea unto Babylon; but rather the meaning is, that all the inhabitants thereof should suffer, from one end of it to the other, from Beer-sheba to Dan, the country lying in such a position.

Ver. 48. *And all flesh shall see that I the Lord have kindled it,* &c.] Not only the inhabitants of Jerusalem

* להבת שלהבת flamma flamma, pro flamma continua & perpetua, Vatablus; flamma inflammatissima, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus[1] flamma flammæ, Montanus, Piscator.

and Judea should see the hand of the Lord in their destruction; but even all the neighbouring nations, the case was so clear and plain, the matter so visible: *it shall not be quenched*; no stop put to it by all the art and power of man; so that it was a clear point that it was the Lord's doing.

Ver. 49. *Then said I, ah Lord God!* &c.] The Septuagint version is, *by no means, Lord, Lord*: that is, let me not be sent on such an errand; at least, let it not be delivered in such figurative terms: or let not such a general calamity befall the people. The Targum is, "receive my prayer, O Lord God;" the prophet here either complains of the usage he had met with after delivering the above prophecy; or rather of what he had met with before, and which he expected again; and therefore desired either that he might be excused delivering the prophecy; or, however, that it might be delivered not in obscure and enigmatical terms, but in plain and easy ones: *they say of me, doth he not speak parables?* as before, of a lion and her whelps; and of a vine, and its rods and branches, ch. xix. and now here again, of a fire, and a forest, and trees of it, green and dry; things not easily understood, and so not attended to and regarded; as if they should say, this man brings us nothing but parables, riddles, and enigmas, and such sort of unintelligible stuff, not worth minding; and rather appears as a man delirious and mad than a prophet. Wherefore Ezekiel seems to desire that he might be sent to them with a message more plainly expressed; and which might excite their attention and regard, and not expose him to their ridicule and contempt; and accordingly we find it is explained and expressed in clearer terms in the next chapter.

CHAP. XXI.

THIS chapter contains an explanation of a prophecy in the latter part of the preceding chapter; and a new one, concerning the sword of the Chaldeans, and the destruction of the Jews and Ammonites by it. The prophecy of the fire in the forest is explained, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. upon which the prophet is directed to shew his concern at it by sighing, in order to awaken the attention of the people to it, ver. 6, 7. then follows a prophecy of a very sharp and bright sword, which should do great execution upon the people and princes of Israel; and therefore the prophet, in order to affect them with it, is bid to howl and cry, and smite on his thigh, and smite his hands together, and the Lord says he would do so; all which is designed to set forth the greatness of the calamity and the distress, ver. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. next the prophet is ordered to represent the king of Babylon as at a place where two ways met, and as at a loss which way to take, and as determined by divination to go to Jerusalem first, ver. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. and then Zedekiah, the then reigning prince of Israel, has his doom pronounced on him, and he is ordered to be stripped of his regalia; and an intimation is given that there should be no more king over Israel of the house of David until the Messiah came, ver. 25, 26, 27. and the chapter is concluded with a prophecy of the destruction of the Ammonites in their own land, which should certainly be, though their diviners might say the contrary, ver. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32.

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] Upon the above excuse or complaint about speaking in parables; wherefore the prophet is ordered to speak in plainer language to the people. It is very probable that the prophet delivered the prophecy recorded in the latter part of the preceding chapter in the figurative terms in which he received it; and he here is bid to explain it to the people, or to repeat it to them in clearer expressions.

Ver. 2. *Son of man, set thy face toward Jerusalem,* &c.] Which shews that this city was meant by *the south*, ch. xx. 46: *and drop* thy word *toward the holy places*: which also are meant by the south in the passage referred to, even the holy land, holy city, and holy temple; or the temple itself is only meant, with the courts adjoining to it; or as consisting of three parts, as Kimchi, the porch, the temple, and the oracle; or the outward court, the holy place, and the holy of holies; and it may respect all other places for sacred worship, as their synagogues, both in city and country; which were not to be spared any more than the temple, nor were they, Psal. lxxiv. 7, 8. Jarchi thinks that the destruction both of the first and second temple is here intended; and which sense Kimchi also mentions. *And prophesy against the land of Israel*; by which it appears that this is intended by the *forest of the south field*; even the numerous inhabitants of it in general, as well as the city of Jerusalem, ch. xx. 46.

Ver. 3. *And say to the land of Israel,* &c.] The inhabitants of it, signified by the *forest of the south field*, ch. xx. 47: *thus saith the Lord, behold, I am against thee*; and sad it is to have the Lord against a people, a nation, a city, or a family, or a particular person; for there's no contending with him, or standing before him; there is always a reason for it, it is for sin when God is against a people, even his own professing people: *and will draw forth my sword out of his sheath*; bring the Chaldean army out of Babylon; which interprets what is meant by the *fire* he would *kindle* in the land of Israel, ch. xx. 47, namely, the sword of the enemy, which he would bring upon it; or war, with all its desolating train of judgments: *and will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked*; meant by the *green and dry tree*, ch. xx. 47. who, though they shall not perish everlastingly together, yet may fall together in temporal calamities; the one may be chastised, and the other condemned; or the one be carried captive for their good, as Ezekiel and Daniel, *&c.* and others be cut off by sword and famine; and such as were captives, never the better for their captivity. The Targum is, "I will remove out of thee thy righteous "ones, that I may destroy thy wicked ones." Some think that only such who were righteous in appearance, or in their own sight, are here meant. R. Saadiah Gaon, as Kimchi quotes him, interprets them of such as were righteous to Baal, and served him continually, in distinction from such as were wicked to him, and did not serve him continually; and both

were wicked before the Lord, and therefore justly cut off.

Ver. 4. *Seeing then that I will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked*, &c.] Some by the sword, some by famine, some by pestilence, and others by captivity; and, upon the whole, none spared, but the land left desolate: *therefore shall my sword go forth out of his sheath against all flesh, from the south to the north*: the Chaldean army shall go out of their own land against all the inhabitants of Judea, from Beersheba to Dan; this explains what is meant by all faces being burnt from the south to the north, ch. xx. 47. namely, the general destruction of the Jews by the Chaldeans.

Ver. 5. *That all flesh may know that I the Lord have drawn forth my sword out of his sheath*, &c.] The same with kindling a fire in Judea, ch. xx. 48. see the note there: *it shall not return any more*: that is, into its sheath, until it has done all its work; meaning that the Chaldean army should not return to their own land until they had executed the whole will of God upon the Jews; this is the fire that should *not be quenched*, ch. xx. 48. and here ends the explanation of the said prophecy.

Ver. 6. *Sigh, therefore, thou son of man, with the breaking of thy loins*, &c.] As if thy loins were broke, and go as if they were, and sigh as thou goest; or as a woman in travail, having her hands upon her loins as ready to break, and in the utmost distress; or heave, and groan, and sigh, till the girdle of the loins is broke, and by these motions and gesture shew the miserable state of this people, and how much thou art affected with it: *and with bitterness sigh before their eyes*: in the sight and hearing of the captives at Babylon; who would take care, by some means or other, to inform their brethren at Jerusalem of it, how the prophet sighed and groaned, under an apprehension and assurance of a dreadful calamity coming upon them; using along with his sobs and sighs, and brinish tears, doleful words and bitter lamentations.

Ver. 7. *And it shall be, when they say unto thee, wherefore sighest thou?* &c.] Which he was to do for that purpose, that they might be put upon asking him the reason of it; whether it was on his own personal account, or on account of his family or particular friends; or whether on a public account, either because of what should befall the captives there, or their countrymen in Judea and Jerusalem: *that thou shalt answer, for the tidings*, or, *the report*[r], *because it cometh*: the report of the Chaldean army approaching and invading Judea, and besieging Jerusalem, which he had from the Lord; and the thing itself was just at hand, and would shortly and certainly be; and that was the thing that affected him, and caused such sorrow and sighing: *and every heart shall melt*: like wax, for fear of the enemy; even such who then disbelieved the report, and laughed at it as an idle story: *and all hands shall be feeble*; and not able to hold a sword, or strike a stroke: *and every spirit shall faint*: yea, such who had the greatest spirits, and were the most bold and undaunted, shall be quite dispirited, having no heart nor courage to defend themselves or their country: *and all knees shall be weak as water*; they shall not be able to stand upon their legs, and fight like men in their own defence; nor even be able to flee away, and make their escape: or, *shall flow with water*[s]; either with sweat, or with urine, through fear of the enemy: *behold, it cometh, and shall be brought to pass, saith the Lord God*: let no man therefore put this evil day far from him, or treat this report as an idle tale, or a thing at a distance, and which may never come to pass; for it is now a coming, and in a very little time will be accomplished; for the Lord has said it, who cannot lie, whose counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure.

Ver. 8. *Again, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying*.] Either this is a new prophecy of another sword, distinct and different from that of the Chaldeans, even of the sword of the Romans, as Cocceius thinks; or it is a further explanation of the former, and an enlargement upon it.

Ver. 9. *Son of man, prophesy and say, thus saith the Lord*, &c.] Deliver out the following prophecy in the name of the Lord: *say, a sword, a sword is sharpened, and also furbished*; it is not only drawn out of its sheath, as before, but is made sharp and bright, and ready for use. It is repeated, either to shew the certainty of it, or to express the terror and anguish of mind on account of it; persons in distress generally repeating that which is the occasion of it. The Targum interprets it of two swords, the sword of the Babylonians, and the sword of the Ammonites; first the one was to be used, and then the other: this latter, Jarchi and Kimchi observe, was fulfilled by Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slaying Gedaliah, sent for that purpose by Baalis king of the Ammonites, Jer. xl. 14, and xli. 2, 10. but if two distinct swords are meant, I should rather think the sword of the Chaldeans, and the sword of the Romans, are intended. Cocceius, as before observed, interprets it only of the latter; but Abendana both of the sword of the king of Babylon, and of the sword of the Romans.

Ver. 10. *It is sharpened to make a sore slaughter*, &c.] To cut easily, and wound deeply, and make a slaughter of men, like beasts for sacrifice; a sacrifice to the justice of God for their sins, and so acceptable to him; and it is he indeed that sharpens it, or prepares the instruments of his vengeance, whether Chaldeans, or Romans, or both; and gives them might and courage to execute his will with great keenness of wrath and fury: *it is furbished that it may glitter*; and so strike terror on those against whom it is drawn, and for whom it is prepared, as glittering armour does: *should we then make mirth?* sing, and dance, and feast, and indulge ourselves in all kind of mirth and jollity, when this is the case, a drawn, sharp, glittering sword hangs over our heads? no, surely! there is good reason for you to lament and sigh, as I do; you ask me the reason of it, this is it; is there not a cause? there is; it is not a season for mirth; but for weeping and

[r] אל שמועה, επι τη αγγελια, Sept.; propter rumorem, Vatablus, Cocceius; propter, vel ad auditum, Pagninus, Montanus.

[s] תלכנה מים fluent aquis, Munster, Tigurine version, so Ben Melech; manabunt ut aqua, Cocceius.

lamentation. The words may be rendered, *or let us rejoice*[r]; that is, if we can, ironically spoken. *It contemneth the rod of my son, as every tree:* thus says the Lord God, this sword so sharpened and brightened despises the rod or sceptre (for so the word signifies) of Israel my son, my first-born, and makes no more of it than a common stick, and cuts it to pieces, and destroys it; signifying hereby the easy destruction of the sceptre and kingdom of Judah by the sword of the Chaldeans or Romans. Some understand it of Christ the son of God. The words may be rendered, it is *the rod of my son, it despiseth every tree*[s]; this sword, prepared, is no other than the rod of iron, which the son of God makes use of to rule his enemies with, and break them in pieces; and no tree, high and low, can stand before it; it cuts down all, and destroys them, be they what they will: see Psal. ii. 7, 8, 9. Cocceius interprets the former clause, *or we shall make merry*[t], of the Father and of the Son, and of their delight and pleasure, whilst wrath was executed on their enemies.

Ver. 11. *And he hath given it to be furbished, that it might be handled,* &c.] Either Nebuchadnezzar, or rather God, or the Son of God, prepared and brightened the sword, that it might be handled and made use of, either by the Chaldeans or Romans, to the destruction of the Jews. The Targum is, "he gave their "vengeance to be delivered into the hand of the king "of Babylon." *The sword is sharpened and furbished, to give it into the hand of the slayer:* either the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar; or the Roman emperor, Titus Vespasian.

Ver. 12. *Cry, howl, son of man,* &c.] Not only sigh, but cry; and not cry only, but howl; signifying hereby that this would be the case of the Jews when these calamities should come upon them; and, in order to affect them with them before-hand, the prophet is ordered to act such a part, as well as to express his sympathy with them: *for it shall be upon my people:* that is, the sword, or the calamity signified by it; this should be not upon other nations, but upon the Lord's own people; such who professed themselves to be his people, and whom he had distinguished from all others; this is said, to affect the prophet the more, they being both the Lord's people, and his also: *and it shall be upon all the princes of Israel;* who were slain in Riblah by the king of Babylon, Jer. lii. 10. the sword spared neither people nor princes. *Terrors, by reason of the sword, shall be upon my people:* upon the rumour of the invasion, and when besieged in the city, and when attempting to make their escape by flight: or *my people are fallen by the sword*[u], as some: *smite therefore upon thy thigh;* as one grieved in spirit, in great distress and anguish; see Jer. xxxi. 19.

Ver. 13. *Because it is a trial,* &c.] As all afflictions and calamities are, especially to the people of God; they try their faith and patience, and every other grace; and also to wicked men, they try them, whether they will repent or no: *and what if the sword contemn even the rod?* the *sceptre:* the king of Judah, and his family; not only come upon and cut off the people and the princes, but the royal family also; and even overturn the *tribe* of Judah, as the word also signifies; and subvert the government of it, of which the rod or sceptre is an ensign; this would be a sore trial indeed, and yet it is intimated that so it should be: *it shall be no more, saith the Lord God;* the rod or sceptre shall be no more in one of David's line, of the tribe of Judah, until the Messiah comes, ver. 27. I should choose to render the words thus, *for it is a trial, but what*[w]? what an one is it? or for what is it? what will be the fruit, effect, and issue of it? *if also the sceptre despises;* the king despises the trial, the affliction, the calamity, and is not brought to repentance by it: *it shall be no more,* or *it shall not be*[x], *saith the Lord God:* it, the sceptre, shall be taken away, and not restored to the house of David, until the Messiah comes.

Ver. 14. *Thou, therefore, son of man, prophesy, and smite thine hands together,* &c.] As being in the greatest agony for what is coming upon thy people; or *strike hand to hand*[y]; clap them together, as encouraging the enemy with his drawn, sharp, and glittering sword, to make use of it, and do execution with it: *and let the sword be doubled the third time:* some think this has reference to the three captivities of Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah; others to the threefold calamity in Zedekiah's time; the first, the taking of him; the second, the taking of the city; the third, the carrying captive the residue along with Gedaliah: or to the three times the Chaldeans came against Jerusalem, after this prophecy; first with Nebuchadnezzar, in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, and took him and the city; then with Nebuzaradan, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, and burnt the city and temple; and again in the twenty-third of Nebuchadnezzar, and carried away the remnant of the people, Jer. lii. 5, 6, 12, 30: *the sword of the slain:* by which many should be slain: *it is the sword of the great men that are slain;* of the sons of the kings, and of the princes and nobles of the land: *which entereth into their privy chambers:* where they should endeavour to hide themselves from it, but in vain, none should escape; their privy chambers could not secrete nor secure them: or *which remains with them;* as that which is laid up, and reserved in a privy chamber, as De Dieu, from the use of the word in the Ethiopic language, renders it.

Ver. 15. *I have set the point of the sword against all their gates,* &c.] The word rendered *point* is nowhere else used, and is differently translated: by some the *fear* of the sword[z], as Menachem and Kimchi; by others the *cry* of the sword, or of those that are slain with it, as Jarchi; and the Targum paraphrases it, "those that slay with the sword:" some, as both Jarchi and Kimchi, observe, by an inversion of the

[r] נשיש lætemur, Castalio; gaudeamus, Glassius.
[s] שבט בני מאסת כל עץ virga est filii me illa sprevit, *vel* quæ sprevit omne lignum, Tigurine version, Piscator, the margin of our Bibles.
[t] Aut bilarybimur, Cocceius.
[u] So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 59. 1.

[w] כי בחן ומה quum fuit probatio quid tandem fuit? Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.
[x] לא יהיה non erit, V. L.; scilicet sceptrum, Mariana.
[y] והך כף אל כף percute manum ad manum, Pagninus, Polanus; volam ad volam, Montanus; feri manum ad manum, Starckius.
[z] אבחת חרב terrorem gladii, Munster, Pagninus, Montanus.

letters of the alphabet, called *athbash*, render it, the *slaughter* of the sword; and De Dieu and Dr. Castel, from the use of the word in the Ethiopic language, the *destruction* of it, or the *power* of it. The meaning is, that the enemy, with their swords drawn, should be placed at every gate of the city of Jerusalem, or of their houses, pointed towards them; which would be very terrible, and sore destruction to them. *That their hearts may faint*; seeing nothing but death before their eyes, and no way to escape it: *and their ruins be multiplied*; of their families, and of their houses. *Ah! it is made bright*; to terrify the more, as in ver. 10. appearing as a flaming sword, and so causing fear; the prophet expresses his sorrow and concern for it. The Targum is, "woe! the sword is drawn out to kill." *It is wrapped up for slaughter*; in its sheath or scabbard, that it might not rust or be blunted, it being furbished and brightened; but this seems contrary to its being drawn out of its sheath, as in ver. 3, 5. Kimchi renders it, therefore, *sharpened*, as in ver. 10. and so the Targum, "it is sharpened to destroy;" the more easily and speedily.

Ver. 16. *Go thee one way or another*, &c.] Go to some one place: or *unite thyself*[a]; to other swords, or join other soldiers holding swords: the address is to the sword, to steer its course some one way, and slay as it goes along, sparing none: *either on the right, or on the left*; or south, or north; so the Targum, "unsheath, and slay on the south, and destroy on the north:" *whithersoever thy face is set*; or prepared, as the Targum, or appointed for destruction: this is the usual interpretation: but why may not the words be an apostrophe to the prophet, to go alone or single, either to the right or left, south or north, as his face was set, ver. 2. sighing and crying, smiting his hands together, in order to affect the minds of the people with the sense of their calamities coming upon them?

Ver. 17. *I will also smite my hands together*, &c.] As well as the prophet was bid to do, ver. 14. either expressing a concern for the calamity of the people, or indignation at their sins; or rather as encouraging their enemies to make use of the sword pointed at them, and, as it were, rejoicing at their destruction for the honour of his justice. The Targum is, "and even I will bring vengeance upon vengeance:" *and I will cause my fury to rest*; when the sword has done its business, and just vengeance is taken, the fury of the Lord shall cease; it shall proceed no further, it shall be kept within due bounds, and no more or further rage: *I the Lord have said it*; who is omnipotent, and can do all things, and will do every thing that he has said, whether in a way of promise or threatening.

Ver. 18. *The word of the Lord came unto me again*, &c.] Immediately after the former; for this respects the same prophecy about the sword, and the way of its coming, and the cause of it: *saying*; as follows:

Ver. 19. *Also thou, son of man, appoint thee two ways, that the sword of the king of Babylon may come*, &c.] Describe or draw out upon a table or tile, as in ch. iv. 1. or on the ground, two roads, such as are described in maps; which it may be supposed the king of Babylon would take, either the one or the other, in order to make war against some king or another: *both twain shall come forth out of one land*; both ways must be drawn as coming from one country, even Babylon; *and choose thou a place, choose it at the head of the way to the city*; fix upon some spacious place, where Nebuchadnezzar may be supposed to bring his army, as a proper rendezvous for them to muster them in; and let it be where two ways meet, that lead to cities, one to one city, and another to another: and it seems that upon the desert of Arabia, through which the king of Babylon came, there was such a place, where two ways met, and one led to Jerusalem, and the other to Rabbath; and this is the place the prophet was to describe, and where in fact Nebuchadnezzar came.

Ver. 20. *Appoint a way*, &c.] Mark out a way, describe a road, draw one out upon the ground, or point out one upon a table, or tile: *that the sword may come*; in which the sword will come; or those that kill with the sword, as the Targum, even the Chaldean army under Nebuchadnezzar: *to Rabbath of the Ammonites*; which was the metropolis of the Ammonites, and is now called Philadelphia, as Jerom writes; it is so called, to distinguish it from others of the same name; see 2 Sam. xii. 26: *and to Judah in Jerusalem, the defenced city*; which was so both by nature and art; it had mountains round about it, and had been fortified by several kings from the time of David, as Solomon, Hezekiah, and Manasseh. Judah is said to be in it; though it would seem more properly that Jerusalem was in Judah, because that people from all parts of Judah, upon hearing of the king of Babylon's intention and near approach to invade their land, fled to Jerusalem, being a fortified place, for security. Now the prophet is bid to describe a way hither; not that one and the same way led to Rabbath and Jerusalem; but he was to describe a way from the place where Nebuchadnezzar stopped, which led to Rabbath, and another which led to Jerusalem.

Ver. 21. *For the king of Babylon stood at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways*, &c.] That is, he would stand there; the prophet knew that it was certain it should be, and therefore represents it as if it was; he had, by a spirit of prophecy, seen, that when the king of Babylon was come to such a place, on the borders of the desert of Arabia, where the road from Babylon parted, where two ways met, the one leading to Jerusalem on the right, and the other to Rabbath on the left, he should make a full stop with his army, and consider which way he should take, whether that which led to Jerusalem, or that which led to Rabbath. It is very probable, when he came out of Babylon, his scheme was to make an attempt on both these important places, and take them; but he had not determined which to attack first, and was still doubtful: and now being come to the two roads, which led to the one and the other, it was necessary to make a halt, consider, and conclude, which course to steer; to determine which, he thought proper *to use divination*, which was performed in the following manner: *he made his arrows bright*; being made of iron or steel; in the brightness of which diviners looked, and made their observations, and accordingly directed what was

[a] התאחדי unito, Montanus, Piscator, Polanus; unitor te, Starckius; in unum dirigitor, Cocceius.

to be done; as they did by looking into the brightness of a man's nails, as David Kimchi observes; though his father, Joseph Kimchi, was of opinion that the word has the signification of casting of arrows, or causing them to fly in the air; and supposes that Nebuchadnezzar cast up arrows into the air, and observed on which side they fell, and so judged which way to take: to this agrees the Targum, "with a bow he cast "out arrows;" so the Syriac and Arabic versions[b]. Jerom says the way of divining by arrows was this: arrows, with the names of the cities inscribed upon them, were put into a quiver, and mixed together; and the city upon the arrow which came out first was first attacked. To this agrees the Vulgate Latin version, which renders the words, *mingling the arrows;* and Dr. Pocock[c] prefers this sense of the word, which he observes so signifies in the Arabic language; and who gives an account of the use of divination by arrows among the Arabians, who much used it; though forbidden by Mahomet, as Schultens[d] observes. Their custom was this; when a man was about to marry a wife, or go a journey, or do any business of importance, he put three arrows into a vessel; on one was inscribed, "my lord hath com- "manded me;" on another, "my lord hath forbid me;" the third had nothing on it. If the first he took out had the command upon it, then he proceeded with great alacrity: but if it had the prohibition, he desisted; and if that which had nothing inscribed on it, he laid it by, till one of the other two was taken out; and there is to this day a sort of divination by arrows used by the Turks; it is commonly for the wars, though it is also performed for all sorts of things; as to know whether a man should undertake a voyage, buy such a commodity, or the like. The manner of doing it, as Monsieur Thevenot[e] relates, is this; they take four arrows, and place them with their points against one another, giving them to be held by two persons; then they lay a naked sword upon a cushion before them, and read a certain chapter of the Alcoran; with that the arrows fight together for some time, and at length the one fall upon the other: if, for instance, the victorious have been named Christians (for two of them they call Turks, and the other two by the name of their enemy), it is a sign that the Christians will overcome; if otherwise, it denotes the contrary. The Jews[f] say, that in the present case of Nebuchadnezzar, that when he or his diviner cast the arrow for Antioch, or for Tyre, or for Laodicea, it was broke; but when he cast it for Jerusalem, it was not broke; by which he knew that he should destroy it. This is that sort of divination which is called *belomancy: he consulted with images;* or *teraphim;* images in which, as Kimchi says, they saw things future; Heathen oracles, from whence responses were made; these were images for private use, such as were the *lares* and *penates* with the Romans; these Laban had in his house, which Rachel stole from him; and are supposed to be such as are made under certain constellations, and their influences capable of speaking; see Zech. x. 2. as Aben Ezra on Gen. xxxi. 34. observes, with which men used to consult about things future or unknown; and this is thought to be one reason why Rachel took away these images from her father, that he might not, by consulting with them, know which way Jacob fled[g]; with such as these the king of Babylon consulted, that he might know which way he should take: *he looked in the liver;* of a beast slain, and made observations on that to direct him; as used to be done by the Aruspices among the Romans. This is that sort of divination which is called *hepatoscopy*, or inspection into the liver; for though the Aruspices or Extispices, so called from their looking into the entrails of a beast, and making their observations on them, used to view the several inward parts, yet chiefly the liver, which they called the head of the intestines; and if this was wanting, or the head in it, the chief part of it, it was an ill omen; thus, in the month that Claudius Cæsar was poisoned, the head of the liver was wanting in the sacrifice; or if the liver was livid, vicious, had any pustules upon it, or any purulent matter in it; or was touched, cut and wounded with the knife of the sacrificer, it foreboded great evils and misfortunes; or if the extreme part of the liver, which is called the fibre, was so placed, that from the lowest fibre the livers were replicated, or there was a double liver, this was a token for good, and portended joy and happiness[h]; moreover, they used to divide the bowels or entrails into two parts, and so the liver; the one they called *familiaris*, by which they judged what would befall themselves and their friends; the other *hostilis*, what concerned their enemies; according to the habit, colour, and position they were in, they concluded what would befall the one and the other[i]. Lucan[k] and Seneca[l] particularly have respect to this: and the king of Babylon here having two people to deal with, the Ammonites and the Jews, he inspects the liver of a creature slain for sacrifice, that he might judge which was best and safest for him to attack; which was less threatening, and more easy to be overcome[m]: this divination used to be made with calves, kids, and lambs[n].

Ver. 22. *At his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem,* &c.] All his divinations, whether by arrows, or by images, or by liver, all directed him to his right hand, to turn to that which led to Jerusalem; and thus what appeared to him to be the effect of divination was overruled by the providence of God, to direct him to go and do what he designed he should: *to appoint captains to open the mouth in the slaughter;* upon which he appointed his several captains and officers their distinct bodies of men they were to lead on to the siege of Jerusalem; and give them the word of command when to invest the place, scale the walls, or make breaches in it, and fall upon the enemy, and

[b] So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 25, 2, interprets the word.
[c] Specimen Arab. Hist. p. 327.
[d] Animadv. in Job, p. 169, 170.
[e] Travels, par. 1. B. 1. ch. 26. p. 56.
[f] Midrash Tillim in Psal. lxxix. 1.
[g] See Godwin's Moses and Aaron, l. 4. c. 9.
[h] Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 5. c. 25. & Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 37.

[i] Vid. Valtrinum de Re Militari Roman. l. 1. c. 6. p. 27. Liv. & Ciceron. in ib.
[k] Cernit tabe jecur madidum, venasque minaces,
Hostili de parte videt, &c. Pharsal. l. 1.
[l] Hostile valido robore insurgit latus. Œdipus, Act 2.
[m] Vid. Lydium de Re Militari, l. 1. c. 3. p. 9, 10.
[n] Pausanias, l. 6. p. 345.

make a slaughter of them. The word for *captains* signifies *rams*; and Joseph Kimchi interprets it of battering-rams, to beat down walls; but these are after mentioned; and is both by Jarchi and David Kimchi explained of general officers of the army; and so the Targum, "to appoint generals to open the "gates, that the slayer may enter by them:" *to lift up the voice with shouting;* which is usually done in sieges, when a shout is made, and a place is stormed; both to animate the besiegers, and to terrify the besieged: *to appoint* battering-rams *against the gates;* to break them down, or break through them, and so make way for the army to enter in; these were engines used in sieges, to beat down walls, and make breaches in them, that the besiegers might enter; so called from the iron heads of them, which resembled rams; and are thus described by Josephus[o], "the ram is a huge beam, not "unlike the mast of a ship; the top of it is capped "with a thick piece of iron, in the form of a ram's "head, from whence it has its name: this is hung by "the middle with ropes to another beam, which lies "across, supported by a couple of posts; and thus "hanging equally balanced, is by a great number of "men violently thrust backwards and forwards, and "so beats the wall with its iron head; nor is there any "tower so strong, or wall so broad, as to resist its re-"peated strokes." Vitruvius[p] says, it was invented by the Carthaginians at the siege of Cadiz; but Pliny[q] affirms it was invented by Epeus at the siege of Troy; but the first mention of them is made by Ezekiel here, and in ch. iv. 2. and Diodorus Siculus[r] affirms they were not known in the times of Sardanapalus, when Nineveh was taken by Arbaces. The Targum interprets it of officers set at the gates, as before; and so Jarchi: *to cast a mount;* made up of earth, to raise their batteries upon: and *to build a fort;* to cast out their arrows from thence, and protect the besiegers; see the note on ch. iv. 1.

Ver. 23. *And it shall be unto them as a false divination in their sight,* &c.] That is, the Jews shall laugh at this divination as a vain thing, as a Heathenish practice, and of which nothing would come; and even at the prophet's account of it, and his prophecy concerning the king of Babylon coming to invade them; they looked upon them all as of a piece, trusting to their false prophets, who assured them that they should not be delivered into his hands: *to them that have sworn oaths;* a description of the Jews, who had with their king Zedekiah sworn allegiance to the king of Babylon; which oaths they had violated, taking others to the king of Egypt; or, *because they were bound by oaths to them*[s]; meaning either the Egyptians, who had bound themselves by oaths to protect the Jews; and therefore they feared nothing from this pretended divination and prophecy, as they judged them to be, though they had not kept faith with the Chaldeans themselves; or the Jews, because of the Egyptians who had entered into an alliance with them, confirmed by oaths; and this had made them secure, on this they depended. The Targum takes the words as if they signified *seven times seven;* and gives this strange paraphrase of them, accounting for the vain confidence of the Jews; "and their divinations were lies in their "eyes, and the enchantments with which he enchanted "them; for they knew not that he had observed forty-"nine times (*i. e.* his arrows, images, and liver), and "an answer was returned upon the word, till the time "came to him in which they should be delivered into "his hands:" *but he will call to remembrance the iniquity;* that is, Nebuchadnezzar would call to mind the perfidy and perjury of the king of Judah, in breaking covenant with him, and violating his oath. Some think that the Chaldeans that were with Nebuchadnezzar were not satisfied at first that it was a true divination that was made, they being set upon the taking of Rabbath first; but Nebuchadnezzar, remembering and putting them in mind of the treachery of Zedekiah, reconciled them to it, and determined them in the expedition against the Jews: *that they may be taken;* as birds in a snare, or beasts in a net, and be carried captive.

Ver. 24. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Because of their vain confidence, added to their perjury and perfidy: *because ye have made your iniquity to be remembered;* their old sins, by committing new ones, both against the Lord, and against the king of Babylon: *in that your transgressions are discovered, so that in all your doings your sins do appear;* both in their religious and civil actions; in the worship of God, and in their covenants and agreements with men; their sins were exposed and manifest to all, not only to God, who was provoked thereby, but to men, to the nations round about; particularly to Nebuchadnezzar, who was enraged by them: *because, I say, that they are come to remembrance;* both before the Lord, and the king of Babylon: *ye shall be taken with the hand;* as easily as a bird is, when in the snare. The Targum is, "ye "shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Ba-"bylon;" which is no doubt the sense of the passage.

Ver. 25. *And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel,* &c.] Meaning Zedekiah, the then reigning prince; who is so called, because he had profaned or violated the oath and covenant he made with the king of Babylon, as well as because of other sins he was guilty of; and his being a prince of Israel was an aggravation of his crimes: now, though it is *not fit* in common, or for ordinary persons, *to say to a king thou art wicked, and to princes ye are ungodly,* Job xxxiv. 18. yet a prophet from the Lord, and in his name, may say so; and he ought, when he has a commission from God for it: *whose day is come;* the time of his downfal and ruin; and so the Targum, "whose day of destruction is "come:" *when iniquity shall have an end;* a stop put to the torrent of it, both in the king and his subjects; they not having the opportunity and means of sinning in captivity as before; or when the measure of iniquity is filled up, then comes punishment; or when the punishment of iniquity shall be completed. So the Targum, "the time of the recompense of his sins."

Ver. 26. *Thus saith the Lord God, remove the diadem,*

[o] De Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 7. sect. 19. Vid. Valtrinum de Re Militari Roman. l. 5. c. 6. p. 326.
[p] De Architectura, l. 10. c. 19.
[q] Nat. Hist. l. 7. c. 56.
[r] Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 113.
[s] שבעי שבעות להם quia obstricti juramentis eis sunt, Piscator.

and take off the crown, &c.] That is, from Zedekiah; and as these are the regalia and ensigns of royal dignity, taking them off signifies the deposition of him as a king, the stripping him of his kingly power and authority: an earthly crown is a corruptible and fading one, at most it continues but during this life, and sometimes not so long; it does not always sit firm; sometimes it is tottering and shakes, and sometimes quite fails off to the ground; it is taken from the head of one, and put upon the head of another, by him who gives the orders in the text, and has the sovereign disposal of crowns and kingdoms; who sets up one, and puts down another. The *diadem* was a royal tire of the head, wore in common; the *crown* was put on at certain times; both signify one and the same thing, royal dignity; though the former is sometimes used as an ornament of the priesthood, as the latter of kingly power; hence the Targum, "remove the diadem (or "mitre) from Seraiah the high-priest, and I will take "away the crown from Zedekiah the king;" but the latter is only meant; besides, as Kimchi observes, it was not Seraiah, but Jehozedek his son, that was carried captive with Zedekiah: *this shall not be the same;* this royal dignity shall not continue the same; the kingdom shall not be in the same lustre and glory, nor in the same hands: *exalt him that is low;* either Jeconiah now in captivity; and which was fulfilled when Evil-merodach lifted up his head, and set his throne above the thrones of the kings in Babylon, Jer. lii. 31, 32. or Zerubbabel, of the seed of Jeconiah, who was born in the captivity, and became prince of Judah; or rather the Messiah, who was of a low extraction; born of mean parents; was as a root out of a dry ground; appeared in the form of a servant, poor and lowly; yet, when he had done his work, was highly exalted at the right hand of God; far above angels, principalities, and powers; as well as set upon the throne of his father David: *and abase him that is high;* the then prince upon the throne, Zedekiah; who was high and lifted up, but should be pulled down and humbled, as he was.

Ver. 27. *I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it,* &c.] The crown and kingdom of Judah; which being expressed three times, has not respect, as Kimchi thinks, to the three generations, in which the crown ceased after the captivity, as those of Asir, Shaaltiel, Pedaiah; and in the fourth generation was restored to Zerubbabel; for he was no king, nor was there any of David's line after; nor were the Maccabees or Hasmoneans properly kings; but the phrase denotes the utter abolition of the kingly power, and the certainty of it, which could not be restored, notwithstanding the attempts made by Gedaliah and Ishmael; all their schemes were overturned, and so in successive ages; and may also denote and include the troubles that were in the Jewish state, not only during the captivity, but from that time unto the Messiah's coming; there were nothing but overturnings, overturnings till that time came: *and it shall be no more;* a kingdom governed by one of the seed of the then present family, or of the seed of David; there shall be no more a king of his race, as there was not till Shiloh came, intended in the next clause: *until he come whose right it is;* the right of the crown and kingdom of Israel; which belongs to Jesus the Messiah, being descended from a race of kings of the house of Judah, and of the seed of David; or, *to whom the judgment is*[s]; to whom the father hath committed all judgment, John v. 22. all power of judging both his church and people, and the whole world: *and I will give it him;* the crown and kingdom, which is his right; put him in the possession of it, as he was at his resurrection and ascension; and which will more fully appear in the latter day, when all kingdoms will become his; especially he has, and will appear to have, the throne of his father David, and of his kingdom there will be no end, Luke i. 31, 32. This is understood and interpreted of the Messiah, by R. Abendana[t], a modern Jew.

Ver. 28. *And thou, son of man, prophesy, and say,* &c.] Here begins a new prophecy, or rather an enlargement on part of the former; two ways being marked out for the sword of the Chaldeans to come in; the one leading to Jerusalem, the other to Rabbath of the Ammonites; the prophecy being finished concerning the former, here an account is given of the latter; how the sword should move that way, and what execution it would do: *thus saith the Lord God concerning the Ammonites, and concerning their reproach;* Nebuchadnezzar, agreeably to the above prophecy, having taken his rout to Jerusalem, as his divination directed him, and destroyed that, returned to Babylon, without making any attempt upon the Ammonites; which so flushed them, that they insulted the Jews, and laughed at their destruction, as if their God whom they served could not save them; attributing their safety and prosperity to the idols they worshipped; see ch. xxv. 1—7. Zeph. ii. 8—10: *even say thou, the sword, the sword is drawn for the slaughter:* the same sword of the Chaldeans, which was drawn for the slaughter of the Jews, is now drawn for the slaughter of the Ammonites; and which is repeated for the certainty of it, and to inject terror; and this, as Josephus[u] says, was accomplished five years after the destruction of Jerusalem, in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar: *it is furbished, to consume because of the glittering;* being brightened and made sharp, it not only terrified with its glittering, but was more fit and prepared to cut and destroy; see ver. 9, 10.

Ver. 29. *Whiles they see vanity unto thee, whiles they divine a lie unto thee,* &c.] The Ammonites had their seers, soothsayers, diviners, and false prophets, which they are bid to be aware of, and are cautioned against hearkening to, Jer. xxvii. 3, 9. these told them they were in the utmost safety, and that the king of Babylon would not come against them; or, if he did, would not succeed, when his sword was drawn and furbished for the destruction of them: *to bring thee upon the necks of the slain, of the wicked;* that is, of the Jews who were slain by the sword of the Chaldeans for their wickedness; and these diviners by their vain divination and lies would bring the Ammonites into the same condition, to be slain as they were; and as it were to fall upon their necks, as one slain person upon

[s] אשר לו המשפט cujus est judicium, Pagninus, Starckius; *vel* jus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator.

[t] Not. in Ben Melech, Miclol Yophi in loc.
[u] Antiqu. Jud. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7.

another; and so the Targum, "to deliver thy neck as "the necks of the slain, of the wicked:" it may be rendered, *to put thee to the necks of the slain**; or, as Kimchi, *with the necks of the slain;* though some understand it, as if the diviners by their lies, promising peace and prosperity, encouraged the Ammonites to insult the Jews, and as it were to trample upon the necks of the dead: *whose day is come, when their iniquity shall have an end;* along with Zedekiah their king; a description of the Jews; see the note on ver. 27.

Ver. 30. *Shall I cause it to return into his sheath?* &c.] The drawn and furbished sword of the Chaldeans? no, I will not; it shall never return or be put up until the Ammonites are utterly consumed. Some read these words in the imperative, as the Targum, "return the sword to its sheath;" so the Vulgate Latin version, *return to thy sheath;* and so may be considered as a direction to the Ammonites to put up their swords, and not stand in their own defence, since it would be to no purpose; though Jerom, and Grotius after him, take the words to be an apostrophe to the drawn sword of the Chaldeans to sheath itself, having done its work upon the Jews and Ammonites; or to the Chaldeans to return to Babylon, and where they also should be punished; and so interpret all that follows of the destruction of the Babylonians by the Medes and Persians; but the first sense is best: *I will judge thee in the place where thou wast created, in the land of thy nativity;* not in the place where their father Ammon was born, which was at Zoar; but where they first became a kingdom and state, a body politic; or where the present generation of them were born; they should not be carried out of their own land, but destroyed in it.

Ver. 31. *And I will pour out mine indignation upon thee,* &c.] Like a mighty flood, which should sweep them away for their sins and transgressions; and particularly for their reproaches of God and his people, which caused his indignation to rise, and him to pour it out upon them in such a manner: *I will blow against thee in the fire of my wrath*: as men put metal into a furnace, and then blow upon it, in order to melt it, and consume the dross; and which fire, so blown, is exceeding fierce and very consuming; who can stand against such a blast as that of the wrath of God, not only kindled, but blown with his breath like a stream of brimstone? *and deliver thee into the hand of brutish men;* or *burners**; that burn with fierce anger, barbarous and inhuman, that would shew no mercy nor compassion, such were the Chaldeans, Hab. i. 6, 7, 8: *and skilful to destroy;* though like brutes or beasts of prey for their cruelty; yet, like men, rational, cunning, and artful to devise ways and means to destroy men; well versed in the art of war; and thoroughly learned in all the lessons and methods of violence and destruction.

Ver. 32. *Thou shalt be for fuel for the fire,* &c.] Easily consumed, as briers and thorns cast into a furnace; such are wicked men to the fire of God's wrath: *thy blood shall be in the midst of the land;* such large numbers shall be slain everywhere, that the land shall flow with the blood of them; who shall lie unburied, and rot, and putrefy upon the ground: *thou shalt be no more remembered;* but lie in everlasting oblivion, as they do to this day; the name of an Ammonite being nowhere mentioned and heard of: *for I the Lord have spoken it;* who never alters the thing that is gone out of his lips; and sooner shall heaven and earth pass away than one word of his. The Targum is, "for I the Lord have decreed by my word;" and his counsel shall stand, and every purpose and resolution of his shall be accomplished.

CHAP. XXII.

IN this chapter a catalogue or list of the sins of the Jews is given; a comparison of them to dross is made, and they are dealt with accordingly; and a complaint is lodged against all ranks and orders of men for their sins; on account of which, there being no intercessor for them, they are threatened with captivity and destruction. The prophet is ordered to judge them, and lay before them their abominable sins, ver. 1, 2. of which a long list is given, as murder, idolatry; contempt of parents; oppression of the stranger, fatherless, and widow; negligence of holy things; profanation of the sabbath; tale-bearing, lewdness and uncleanness of various sorts; bribery, usury, extortion, and dishonest gain, ver. 3—13. for which the Lord threatens to deal with them in a manner that would be intolerable to them; that he would carry them captive, and scatter them among the Heathen, ver. 14, 15, 16. they are compared to dross, and as such should be gathered into a furnace, and melted down, ver. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. all ranks and orders of men are complained of, because of their sins, and threatened, ver. 23, 24. the prophets, for their voraciousness, rapine, murder, and lies, ver. 25, 28. the priests, for their violation of the law, neglect of holy things, and profanation of the sabbath, ver. 26. the princes, for their cruelty, murder, and dishonest gain, ver. 27. the people of the land, for their oppression and robbery, ver. 29. and there being none to stand in the gap for them, the Lord threatens to pour out his wrath upon them, and consume them, ver. 30, 31.

Ver. 1. *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me,* &c.] The word of prophecy from the Lord, as the Targum, another prophecy: *saying:* as follows:

Ver. 2. *Now, thou son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge the bloody city?* &c.] Or, *city of bloods*†? the city of Jerusalem, in which was shed the blood of the prophets sent unto her; the doubling of the word denotes the vehemency with which it was expressed: wilt thou plead for and excuse such a city as this? surely no; so some: or wilt thou do thy work and office as a prophet? hast thou courage enough to

* לתת אותך אל צוארי חללי ut ponant te cum cervicibus interfectorum, Munster; Tigurine version; applicando te ad cervices confossorum, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.

* בערים ardentium, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; urentium, so some in Vatablus.

† את עיר דמים civitatem sanguinum, Valg. Lat. Munster, Montanus.

do it? wilt thou rebuke and reprove? as the Targum; wilt thou examine her case, judge truly, and condemn her, as thou oughtest to do? hast thou an inclination to take this affair in hand? then be directed to it, as follows: *yea, thou shalt shew her all her abominations*; lay them before her; convict her of them; shew her the evil of them, and the punishment they deserve; every kind of sin she was guilty of; for, as for particular acts, it was impossible to reckon them; those sins that were the most flagrant, and most frequently committed, and which were abominable to the Lord, and rendered her so in his sight, are intended.

Ver. 3. *Then say thou, thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] For though the prophet was to sit as judge, yet in the name of the King of kings, under whose authority he acted: *the city shedaeth blood in the midst of it*; openly and impudently, in the face of all, and in great abundance; even innocent blood, as the Targum has it: murders were frequent and common, either through quarrels, or through unrighteous judgments in courts of judicature: *that her time may come*; to fill up the measure of her iniquity, and to receive the just punishment of her sins. So the Targum, "the time of "her destruction:" *and maketh idols against herself, to defile herself*; being guilty, not only of murder, but of idolatry; she was an idol-maker and an idol-worshipper; and which was against herself, as well as against God; to her own ruin and destruction, as well as to his dishonour; and it is no wonder she should be defiled with such dunghil-gods as these were, as the word used signifies. The Targum renders it, *in the midst of her*; and Kimchi interprets it, by *her*, or *above* her, upon the mountains and hills.

Ver. 4. *Thou art become guilty in thy blood that thou hast shed*, &c.] Not only she contracted guilt by the innocent blood she shed, but she was tried and found guilty; her guilt was notorious, plain, and evident, as well as exceeding great, and much aggravated: *and hast defiled thyself in thine idols which thou hast made*; she not only made them, in doing which she sinned; but polluted herself with them, by worshipping them; her mind and conscience were defiled with them; and which brought such a stain and pollution, as could not be removed by any thing that she could do: there are both pollution and guilt in sin, and neither can be removed but by the blood of Christ; and, unless removed that way, punishment must follow: *and thou hast caused thy days to draw near, and art come even unto thy years*: to full age, to ripeness for judgment; she had hastened by her sins her days of affliction and distress appointed for her, and was come to years of maturity to suffer for her sins; the years of her captivity, which would soon take place; years in which she would have no pleasure: *therefore have I made thee a reproach unto the Heathen, and a mocking to all countries*; who, instead of praising them for their idolatry, would deride them for leaving the God of their fathers, which they did not; and insult over them in their affliction and distress, though they joined with them in idolatrous practices.

Ver. 5. *Those that be near, and those that be far from thee, shall mock thee*, &c.] The neighbouring nations, as the Edomites, Philistines, Moabites, and Ammonites; and distant ones, as the Babylonians, Medes, and Persians; all that either hear of, or see their misery, shall rejoice at it, and triumph over them: which art *infamous* and *much vexed*; or they shall say, O thou of an infamous name and character; who hast defiled thy name, got a blot upon it, and lost thy credit by thy conduct and behaviour; and now fretting and vexing under the afflictions and calamities that lie upon thee: or whose tumults are many, as the Targum; who hast been full of noise, and factions, and tumults; thou art now come to a righteous end.

Ver. 6. *Behold, the princes of Israel*, &c.] Those that belonged to the royal family, or the nobles of the land, or the members of the grand sanhedrim of the nation: *every one were in thee to their power to shed blood*; every one exerted himself to the uttermost, according to his ability, to shed blood, or cause it to be shed; every one strove, as it were, who should shed most, to exceed each other in this abominable sin.

Ver. 7. *In thee have they set light by father and mother*, &c.] Through whom they received their being from God; by whom they were brought into the world, brought up and educated; and to whom they owed great respect, honour, and obedience; but, on the contrary, they wanted affection to their persons, shewed great disrespect to their commands, and treated them with irreverence and contempt; a sin of a very heinous nature, of the first magnitude; reckoned among the very Heathens as next to contempt of God, and disobedience to him; is directly contrary to a law of God, and threatened with a curse, and a severe punishment, Exod. xx. 12. Deut. xxvii. 16. Prov. xxx. 17. by the connexion of the words with the preceding, the princes of Israel seem intended; the children of the nobles, and the sons and daughters of the king; who, it might have been thought, by the character they bore, the station they were in, and the politeness of their education, would have behaved in another manner; and if this sin prevailed among them, no doubt it did among those of a lower class, who are always influenced by such examples: *in the midst of thee have they dealt by oppression with the stranger*; the proselyte, as the Septuagint; him that was converted to me, as the Syriac version; which is an aggravation of the sin, that it was not merely a stranger that came about civil business, but one who came from foreign parts to worship the Lord at Jerusalem, as the Ethiopian eunuch did: now, to oppress such an one, either by private frauds, or by injustice in a court of judicature; to exact upon him for food or lodging; or circumvent and overreach him in trade and commerce; or distress him by vexatious lawsuits, when ignorant of the laws and customs of the country; at a distance from his friends, and in want of money, must be a very great evil; and yet even the princes themselves in Jerusalem were guilty of it: *in thee have they vexed the fatherless and the widow*; that were weak and helpless, and had none to protect them, father and husband being dead; when, according to their first rank and station as princes, they ought to have been the defenders of them; but, instead of that, distressed, afflicted, and grieved them.

Ver. 8. *Thou hast despised mine holy things*, &c.] The holy place, the temple, and the worship of it; holy persons, the priests that officiated there; holy

sacrifices offered up by them; the holy word of God read and explained; and all holy ordinances there administered. These words are directed to Jerusalem, the holy city, and to the inhabitants of it, who ought to have been holy men: *and hast profaned my sabbaths*: by doing their own work, and neglecting the service of God; and which was an inlet, as it usually is, to all manner of sin.

Ver. 9. *In thee are men that carry tales to shed blood*, &c.] Innocent blood, as the Targum; such who go from house to house, as pedlars do with their wares or spices, as the word [a] signifies; hence the Syriac version renders it *merchants*: and carry tales and lies of innocent persons, and stir up others against them to wrath and revenge, and shed their blood; or that go to the courts of judicature, and there accuse innocent persons, and bear false witness against them, to the taking away of their lives. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it *thieves*; who commonly are murderers: *and in thee they eat upon the mountains*; that is, there were such in Jerusalem who used to go to the mountains where idols were worshipped, and eat the things that were sacrificed to them; or partook of the feast made to the honour of them. So the Targum, "in "thee they served idols on the mountains:" *in the midst of thee they commit lewdness*; a general word for all manner of uncleanness, as adultery, fornication, incest, &c. of which some particulars follow.

Ver. 10. *In thee have they discovered their father's nakedness*, &c.] Or, *he discovered* [b], or *uncovered*, it being in the singular number; though the Targum, Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read in the plural; this, though committed, was done but by a few; it being a sin not so much as named among men, as for a man to lie with his father's wife, 1 Cor. v. 1. as Reuben did, Gen. xxxv. 22. and which is expressly forbidden; and is mentioned first as the captical sin of uncleanness, Lev. xviii. 6: *in thee have they humbled her that was set apart for pollution*; ravished and deflowered such women who had their menstrues; to lie with such was prohibited by the law of God, Lev. xviii. 19. and xx. 18. so that here was a double sin committed; a rape of a woman, whether married or unmarried, at the time of her purgation or sickness; and such a copulation, which at another time would be lawful, ought to be abstained from at such a time, as prejudicial to themselves, and to their posterity, as well as contrary to the divine law.

Ver. 11. *And one hath committed abomination with his neighbour's wife*, &c.] The sin of adultery, which is an abominable sin; it is so to God, and it should be so to man: or, *a man hath committed* [c]; some man of note, a great man; for this sin prevailed among the princes and nobles: or *every one*: it being a general vice, which obtained among all ranks, high and low, rich and poor: *and another hath lewdly defiled his daughter-in-law*; his wife's daughter, or his son's wife, contrary to Lev. xviii. 15, 17: *and another in thee hath humbled his sister, his father's daughter*: his own sister, begotten of the same father, though it may be not born of the same mother; yet the relation is too near for marriage; and besides, 'tis a rape that is here intended; and the uncovering of the nakedness of a sister, whether by father or mother's side, whether born at home or abroad, is prohibited, Lev. xviii. 9. and some have thought that all these acts of uncleanness were committed in honour of their idols, and when they worshipped them on the mountains, ver. 9.

Ver. 12. *In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood*, &c.] Innocent blood, as the Targum; judges upon the bench, whose office it is to take the part of the innocent, and clear him from unjust charges; and protect him from the violence of wicked and unreasonable men, that lay things to his charge, which, if true, would require blood; and yet men in such offices took bribes to bring in the innocent guilty, and pass sentence of death on him; which is a most shocking iniquity indeed: to take bribes in pecuniary matters is very wicked; but to do it in cases which affect life is most dreadfully cruel: or if it is to be understood of such persons who take bribes to bear false witness against a man, to the taking away of his life, it is a very heinous and detestable sin; for, as for a set of jurymen bribed to bring in a wrong verdict, which would be equally a most enormous crime; such a custom to try causes to be determined by a jury did not obtain among the Jews: *thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion*; not content with moderate usury and increase, and even that were forbid the Jews among themselves; so greedy were they of gain at any rate, that they extorted it of their neighbours, in the most violent and oppressive manner. Kimchi, by her *friends or neighbours*, understands the Assyrians and Egyptians; to whom she gave gifts, extorted by oppression from her own people, to get help of them: *and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord*; to seek for help from me; or they had forgotten his law, which forbids the above sins; they had forgotten the instructions, cautions, and directions he had given them. The Targum is, "and hast forsook my "worship;" forgetfulness of God is the cause of all sin.

Ver. 13. *Behold, therefore, I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made*, &c.] As one amazed at it; or as filled with indignation against it; or as grieved and distressed at it; so Jarchi and Kimchi: or else as rejoicing at the punishment going to be inflicted on them for it. So the Septuagint renders it, "I will bring my hand upon them;" and the Targum, "behold, I will bring my vengeance upon "thee for the sins of mammon," &c. Jarchi and Kimchi observe from their Rabbins, that four-and-twenty sins are recited by Ezekiel; but the final sentence of punishment is for rapine or dishonest gain, which is the greatest evil of all, 1 Tim. vi. 10: *and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee*; the innocent blood shed in the midst of her; not so much by thieves and cut-throats, as under a pretence of justice, which was very abominable indeed; against which the Lord expresses just and strong resentment.

Ver. 14. *Can thine heart endure*, &c.] Or *stand* [d]:

[a] רכיל אנשי homines mercaturæ, vel aromatis; so Ben Melech observes.

[b] גלה revelavit, Montanus; discooperuit, Vatablus; retegit, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; sub. filius, Piscator.

[c] ואיש־עשה & vir fecit, Cocceius.

[d] היעמד nam quid stabit cor tuum? Pagninus, Montanus; consistet, Munster, Vatablus, Piscator; perstabit, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; constabit, Cocceius, Starckius.

surely it must fall within thee; become like water, and melt as wax, be it ever so hard and adamantine: *or can thine hands be strong in the days that I shall deal with thee?* surely they must become weak, and drop, and not be able to hold a weapon for defence: and, if this would be the case, when God should deal with the Jews for their sins, by sending the Chaldean army to besiege their city, and take it; how will it be with sinners at the day of judgment, and to all eternity, when the awful sentence shall be pronounced, *go ye cursed*; when the wrath of God shall be poured out upon them; when they shall be cast into hell, where the worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched? this will be intolerable by the most stout-hearted sinner; no heart will be strong enough to stand up under it, or hands to keep it off: *I the Lord have spoken it, and will do it*; he who is the mighty God, the eternal and unchangeable Jehovah; he has said it, that he will deal with impenitent sinners in a way of wrath, and he'll be as good as his word; he will certainly accomplish it; it is in vain for men to flatter themselves to the contrary; or to put away the evil day far from them; it shall surely be. The Targum is, "I have decreed by my word, and "I will establish it."

Ver. 15. *And I will scatter thee among the Heathen, and disperse thee in the countries,* &c.] Not only cause them to be carried captive to some one place, as Babylon; but to be scattered and dispersed throughout the several provinces of it, and in other nations, as chaff is by the winds; signifying hereby the power by which it would be done; their weakness, who would not be able to hinder it; and the uncomfortable condition they would be in: *and will consume thy filthiness out of thee*; by destroying some filthy persons, and reforming others; by bringing them by means of those afflictions to a sense of their sins, and to forsake them; and so would be refined as silver from its dross in a furnace: it may have a particular reference to their idolatry, that filthy sin, which they were cured of, and purged from, by their captivity, and to which they returned no more.

Ver. 16. *And thou shalt take thine inheritance in thyself in the sight of the Heathen,* &c.] No longer be the inheritance of God, but their own; and not have God to be their portion and inheritance, but themselves; and a poor portion and inheritance that must be, being in captivity, poverty, and distress; enjoying neither their civil nor religious liberties, as heretofore; it would be now manifest to the Heathens that they were forsaken of God, and left to themselves. Some render it, *and thou shalt be profaned*, or *polluted in thyself*[e]; shalt be known to be so to thyself, as well as appear so to others. The Targum is, "I will be sanctified in "thee before the people:" *and thou shalt know that I am the Lord*: able to do what I say; faithful to my word; omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent; and this thou shalt not only know, but own and acknowledge, when these calamities take place, and have their effect.

Ver. 17. *And the word of the Lord came unto me,* &c.] The word of prophecy from the Lord, as the Targum: *saying*; as follows:

Ver. 18. *Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross,* &c.] Vile, despicable, useless, and unprofitable; to which the wicked of the earth are compared, Psal. cxix. 119. and here the Lord's professing people, they differing nothing from them, being sadly degenerated; formerly they were as silver, and so they might be reckoned among themselves; but to God, who is omniscient, the searcher of the hearts and reins, who saw all their actions, and knew the spring of them, in his sight they were as dross: *all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace*; or *crucible*[f]; where they are put together, in order to be set in the furnace, and melted down. It is not usual to put so many different metals together for melting, but separately; but here it seems to intend a mixture of them all together; and so the Targum and Septuagint render it, "all they as "brass, *&c.* are mixed;" several metals of the baser sort are here mentioned, by a gradation from the better to the worse; tin being not so good as brass, and iron of less value than either, and lead than any of them. Some think the different characters of the people are here described; impudent persons by *brass*; hypocrites by *tin*; cruel and savage ones by *iron*; and such as were sottish and stupid by *lead*; or, as others, covetous ones: *they are even the dross of silver*; once they were like silver, precious and valuable, whilst they retained the true religion, and the worship of God, and behaved agreeably to their character in the performance of all good works, and were in outward flourishing circumstances; but now degenerated from the pure worship of God, and sunk into idolatry and wickedness, and become poor and miserable.

Ver. 19. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, because ye are all become dross,* &c.] King, princes, nobles, prophets, priests, as well as the common people; the apostacy was general, in city and country; scarce any exceptions to be made: *therefore will I gather you into the midst of Jerusalem*; from the several parts of the country, thinking they should be safe there, when the design of God by this providence was the destruction of them in it.

Ver. 20. *As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace,* &c.] As refiners of metal do; though not together, as here, but each metal apart. Silver is here mentioned, to denote that those who were truly good should suffer in this calamity, and be tried and purified by it: *to blow the fire upon it, and to melt it*; the metal being covered with fuel, this is kindled and blowed upon, to cause the greater heat, in order to melt it down: expressive of the wrath of God, as follows: *so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury*: from the several parts of the land unto the city of Jerusalem: this they thought was for their good and safety, but it was in wrath, and in order to ruin: *and I will leave you there, and melt you*: that is, I will leave you in

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[e] ונחלת בך & prophana effecta in te, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; prophana efficieris, Piscator; & polluta eris in te, Grotius; & prophanata eris in te, Starckius; & prophanaberis in te, Coccerius.

[f] כור catinus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Grotius, Coccerius, Starckius.

the city of Jerusalem, to the sword, famine, and pestilence, to be destroyed by them: or with fire at the burning of the city: or, *I will rest*[g]; as the refiner does; having put his metal into the furnace, and blown the fire, sits still till all is melted.

Ver. 21. *Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath*, &c.] Not only gather them in wrath, as before; but blow upon them in wrath, which is often compared to fire in Scripture; and besides, the city and temple of Jerusalem were to be burnt, and were burnt with material fire, in consequence of God's displeasure against his people: *and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof*: of the city of Jerusalem; be destroyed by one judgment or another in it; or perish in the conflagration of it.

Ver. 22. *As silver is melted in the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof*, &c.] This is repeated for the greater confirmation of it; and the people might assure themselves that it would verily be, as was threatened: *and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you*: feel it upon them; be sensible of it, and acknowledge it; and that it is the Lord's doings, and righteously done; these are they who are meant by the silver, who, though cast into the furnace, were not destroyed, only purified, and made the better and brighter for their afflictions.

Ver. 23. *And the word of the Lord came unto me*, &c.] The word of prophecy from the Lord, as the Targum: *saying*; as follows:

Ver. 24. *Son of man, say unto her, thou land*, &c.] Thou land of Israel, as the Targum: *thou art not cleansed*: from filthiness, by the fire of divine judgments; or reformed from sins, by the instructions, cautions, and exhortations of the prophets; none of these things had any effect upon her to make her wiser and better. So the Targum, "a land not cleansed it "is, and good works are not done in it, to protect it "in the day of cursing:" *nor rained upon in the day of indignation*; no cooling shower to quench the fire of divine wrath; nothing to avert or stop the judgments of God; no refreshment and comfort from the doctrines of the prophets, which fell like rain: it is a judgment upon a people to have no rain, either in a temporal or spiritual sense; see Zech. xiv. 17, 18. In the Talmud[h], this text is brought to prove that the flood did not come upon the land of Israel.

Ver. 25. There is *a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof*, &c.] Not of the prophets of the Lord, but of her prophets; such as were agreeable to her, the false prophets. The Targum renders it, "a company of scribes;" the interpreters of the law; these entered into a confederacy together against the true prophets, and agreed to prophesy the same things, to flatter the people with peace and prosperity, when sudden destruction was at hand: *like a roaring lion ravening the prey*; that roars when hungry, and while it is tearing the prey in pieces; so these false prophets thundered out their menaces against the true prophets, and those that adhered to them; clamouring against them as enemies to the state; and threatening them with accusations to it; and carrying on a judicial process against them: *they have devoured souls*; persecuted men to death, that would not give credit to their prophecies; and destroyed the souls of those that did, with their false doctrines and prophecies: *they have taken the treasure and precious things*; of those they destroyed; or of others, for prophesying smooth things to them; filthy lucre being the principal thing they had in view: *they have made her many widows in the midst thereof*; by persecuting their husbands to death for not believing their prophecies; or by persuading to hold out the siege, under a notion of deliverance; whereby the lives of many were lost by the sword, famine, and pestilence, to whose death they might be said to be accessary.

Ver. 26. *Her priests have violated my law*, &c.] Or, *forced it*[i]; they gave a wrong explanation of it, made it speak what it should not; they wrested the sense and meaning of it, and did and taught things contrary to it; they broke it themselves, who should have instructed others in it, and exhorted them to have kept it, and encouraged them by their own example: *and have profaned my holy things*; sacrifices and oblations, which were only to be offered and eaten by holy persons; they made them common to others who should not have partook of them: *they have put no difference between the holy and the profane*; between holy persons and things, and profane persons and things; they made no difference in their practice between the one and the other; but promiscuously conversed with holy and profane persons, and used holy and profane things, without distinguishing one from the other: *neither have they shewed* the difference *between the unclean and the clean*: they did not shew to the people, as was the duty of their office, what was clean or unclean for sacrifice; what was clean and allowed to be eaten, and what was unclean and forbid to be eaten; nor who were clean and who were unclean persons for conversation; who were to be kept company with, and who not: *and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths*; were not careful to observe them themselves, and connived at them that broke them; they might have seen men carrying burdens, and doing other servile works on such days, but they turned their eyes another way, and would not look at them; and when they did see them were silent, and would not reprove them: *and I am profaned among them*; for the law of God being profaned, his institutions profaned, and his sabbaths profaned, he himself was profaned; inasmuch as he was not sanctified by them, through the just observation of those things. The Targum is, "my will is profaned among them."

Ver. 27. *Her princes in the midst thereof* are *like wolves ravening the prey*, &c.] The king and his nobles, those of the first rank and quality, who ought to have protected the persons and property of the meaner sort; these were like *wolves* themselves, subtle, voracious, and cruel, preying upon harmless persons, as those creatures do upon the sheep and lambs: *to shed blood*; innocent blood, as the Targum: *and to destroy souls*; take away lives, under a pretence of treasonable

[g] והנחתי & requiescam, Mercerus; & requiescere faciam, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus.
[h] T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 113. 1.

[i] חמסו תורתי vim faciunt legi meæ, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; vim fecerunt, Cocceius, Starckius.

practices, and all with a view *to get dishonest gain*; that their estates may be forfeited, their goods confiscated, and got into their hands.

Ver. 28. *And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, &c.*] Palliated their sins, declared it to be right to shed the blood they did; and seize on the estates of men; but this, though it might for a while satisfy the consciences of these princes, and stop the clamours of the people against them; yet would not last long, but be like the building of a wall with bad stuff, which will not stand; and daubing it with mortar, which will soon wash off. So the Targum, "and the false prophets which are in the "midst of her are like to those that build a wall, and "daub it with mere clay, without straw;" see the note on ch. xiii. 10. *Seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them*; pretending visions from God, when what they see, or pretend to see, is nothing but vanity and emptiness, mere delusions; and prophesying good things, peace and prosperity, when they are all lies; giving out they have messages from God, and are ordered to foretel that happy times will be, when it is all falsehood: *saying, thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord hath not spoken*: herein mimicking the true prophets, who came in the name of the Lord, and usually prefaced their prophecies with a *thus saith the Lord*; and so did these false prophets, when the Lord said nothing to them, and gave them no commission to speak in his name, or say the things they did.

Ver. 29. *The people of the land have used oppression, &c.*] The common people, the more powerful among them, such as were in greatest authority in cities and towns, in neighbourhoods and families, the richest among them; these oppressed the poor, and those that were under them, the servants of them, and tenants to them, and who were not able to defend themselves against them: the Septuagint and Syriac versions understand this of the prophets using the people of the land ill: *and exercised robbery*; such who had not the power as others had, became thieves and robbers, went on the highway, and took men's money from them; broke up houses, and plundered them, and stole away their goods: *and have vexed the poor and needy*; by their oppressions, rapines, and robberies, when they should rather have relieved them: *yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully*; or, *without right or judgment*[k]; in a very unjust manner, contrary to the due course of law, against all equity and justice; which the Israelites were warned and ordered not to do, in many passages of Scripture; and for this reason, because they had been strangers in Egypt.

Ver. 30. *And I sought for a man among them, &c.*] Among the princes, priests, prophets, and people of the land, who acted the part as above described: for otherwise, no doubt, there were good people in the land, as Jeremiah, Baruch, and others, but not among these: *that should make up the hedge*; that was broken down by the transgressions of the people, who exceeded all bounds of law and justice; one that would restrain them from sinning, and reform them, and set them a good example; one, as the Targum has it, "whose works were good;" a good man, that would endeavour by his influence to stop the breaking in of sin, and the consequences of it: *and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it*; in the gap that sin had made, at which the Lord was entering as a man of war to destroy the transgressors; one that should present himself to the Lord on the behalf of the people; seek mercy for them, as the Targum; interpose between God and them, and act the part of an intercessor; pray for them, as Moses did for the people of Israel, that he would not destroy them; see Psal. cvi. 23: *but I found none*; no reformer of them, no repairer of the breach, nor restorer of paths, to dwell in; no intercessor for them, as Abraham for Sodom, Moses for Israel; or any, like Aaron, that stood between the living and the dead to stay the plague.

Ver. 31. *Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them, &c.*] Like a mighty torrent, carrying all before it: *I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath*; by the sword, famine, pestilence, and captivity: *their own way have I recompenced on their heads, saith the Lord*; brought just punishment upon them, such as their ways and works deserved; "the "vengeance of their way," as the Targum.

CHAP. XXIII.

IN this chapter the idolatries of Israel and Judah are represented under the metaphor of two harlots, and their lewdness. These harlots are described by their descent; by the place and time in which they committed their whoredoms; by their names, and which are explained, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. the idolatries of Israel, or the ten tribes, under the name of Aholah, which they committed with the Assyrians, and which they continued from the Egyptians, of whom they had learned them, are exposed, ver. 5, 6, 7, 8. and their punishment for them is declared, ver. 9, 10. then the idolatries of Judah, or the two tribes, under the name of Aholibah, are represented as greater than those of the ten tribes, ver. 11. which they committed with the Assyrians, ver. 12. with the Chaldeans and Babylonians, ver. 13—18. in imitation of the Egyptians, reviving former idolatries learnt of them, ver. 19, 20, 21. wherefore they are threatened, that the Chaldeans, Babylonians, and Assyrians, should come against them, and spoil them, and carry them captive, ver. 22—35. and the prophet is bid to declare the abominable sin of them both, ver. 36—44. and to signify that they should be judged after the manner of adulteresses, should be stoned, and dispatched with swords, their sons and their daughters, and their houses burnt with fire; by which means their adulteries or idolatries should be made to cease, ver. 45—49.

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord came unto me, &c.*]

[k] בלא משפט absque judicio, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; non in judicio, Cocceius.

The word of prophecy, as the Targum; another prophecy, one upon the same subject, as in ch. xvi.: *saying*: as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, there were two women*, &c.] Or two nations and kingdoms, the kingdom of Israel or the ten tribes, and the kingdom of Judah or the two tribes. So the Targum, "son of man, prophesy concerning two provinces, which are as two women:" *the daughters of one mother*; either Sarah the wife of Abraham, from whom they sprung; or because they were originally one kingdom and nation; so they were when they came out of Egypt, and during the times of the judges, and in the reigns of David and Solomon; but became two in the days of Rehoboam the son of Solomon, from whom ten tribes revolted, and set up a separate kingdom, with Jeroboam at the head of it.

Ver. 3. *And they committed whoredoms in Egypt*, &c.] When they were but one body, one nation; and while they sojourned as strangers in that land they learned and practised the idolatries of it, Josh. xxiv. 14. and so the Targum, "and they erred in Egypt, after "the worship of their idols they erred, and there they "corrupted their works:" *they committed whoredoms in their youth*: as soon as they were come out of Egypt, and were formed into a political and ecclesiastical state, had the law of God given them, and promised obedience to him, and were espoused by him, which times are called the days of their youth and espousal, Jer. ii. 2. Hos. ii. 15. and then were they guilty of whoredom, or spiritual adultery, which is idolatry, in making and worshipping the golden calf, after the manner of Egypt; and in joining themselves to Baal-peor, the god of the Moabites, Exod. xxxii. 1—4. Numb. xxv. 2, 3: *there were their breasts pressed, there they bruised the teats of their virginity*: that is, the Egyptians, who drew them into idolatry, and with whom they committed it; which is expressed by the actions of adulterous persons, suggesting that, before this, they were as chaste and pure virgins to God, adhered to his worship, and served him only, and were not defiled with the superstition and idolatry of the Heathens: or, *they made*[l] *the teats* or *paps of their virginity*; that is, made them swell and increase, being impregnated by them, and their idolatry completed; or to move and heave being pressed.

Ver. 4. *And the names of them* were *Aholah the elder*, &c.] Or, *the greater*[m]: meaning the ten tribes of Israel, which were more in number than Judah, and greater in power and riches; their name, Aholah, signifies *her tent* or *tabernacle*, which was entirely their own, and not the Lord's: their worship, and places of worship, were of their own appointing, namely, their calves at Dan and Beth-el; God had nothing to do with them, there he did not dwell; his tabernacle was not there, that was at Salem, Psal. lxxvi. 1: *and Aholibah her sister*; which name signifies *my tent* or *tabernacle is in her*: this is the name of Judah or the two tribes, in which stood the temple of the Lord, where he was worshipped, and where he dwelt: some think these were proper names of two Egyptian harlots; others think there is allusion to the wife of Esau, Gen. xxxvi. 2: *and they were mine*; or, *I had them*[n]; when they were together; they were originally espoused unto him; he avouched them to be his people, and they avouched him to be their God; he chose them for himself above all other people, and they professed themselves to be his, and promised to serve and worship him; and for a while did continue in his service and worship: *and they bare sons and daughters*: to the Lord, whom they brought up in the fear of God, and taught them to serve him: the phrase is expressive of their increase, and of their happiness and prosperity, whilst they adhered to the pure worship of God: *thus were their names*; this is the application of them: *Samaria* is *Aholah*; or Aholah signifies Samaria, which was the metropolis of Ephraim, and belonged to the ten tribes, and is put for the whole, Isa. vii. 9: *and Jerusalem Aholibah*; or Aholibah designs Jerusalem, the head city of Judah, and stands for the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

Ver. 5. *And Aholah played the harlot when she was mine*, &c.] His married wife, and so ought to have cleaved to him alone: or, *under me*[o]; under his cover, power, and protection, and therefore it was their interest to serve him only: or, *instead of me*[p]; or, as the Syriac version, *besides me*: they worshipped other gods in the room of the true God, or other gods besides him. The Targum is, "and Aholah erred from "my worship;" the ten tribes fell into idolatry, when they were God's professing people: *and she doted on her lovers*; whom she loved even to madness; she was mad with love, to the idols, temples, altars, and idolatrous worship of the Heathens; particularly doted *on the Assyrians her neighbours*; who were become so by the conquest of Syria; and these they treated as their neighbours, and sought to have them to be their allies and confederates; courted their help and assistance, and gave them much money for that purpose; as Menahem gave to Pul king of Assyria a thousand talents of silver, to confirm the kingdom in his hand, 2 Kings xv. 19.

Ver. 6. *Which were clothed with blue*, &c.] A colour the Assyrians were fond of, and clothed their soldiers in, and was taking to the eye; and is mentioned, because that men, finely clothed and beautifully arrayed, are more engaging to women, who are fond of dress: *captains and rulers*; men of power and authority in military and civil affairs, either in the camp, or in the court; officers either in the army, or in the king's palace; and which was a recommendation of them: *desirable young men*; for their youth, strength, beauty, and honourable employments and offices: *horsemen riding upon horses*; of which there was a scarcity in Judea; wherefore such were the more desirable to them, as appearing more grand, and being more serviceable and helpful to them.

Ver. 7. *Thus she committed her whoredoms with them*, &c.] Entered into alliance with them, and joined

[l] עשו דדי fecerunt mammas, Starckius; fecerunt ut earum mammæ augerent, Gussetius; sese commovendo scilicet, in contentione libidinis æstuantes, & pectoris anheli reciprocationem sequentes, ib. p. 650; ibi subagitarunt ubera earum virginum, Cocceius.

[m] הגדולה major, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Starckius.

[n] ותהיינה לי & habui eas, V. L. Heb.; factæ sunt mihi, Piscator; sub uxores, Grotius.

[o] תחתי sub me, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Tigurine version, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.

[p] Exteras excipiens loco meo, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.

them in their idolatrous worship: *with all them that were the chosen men of Assyria*: before described by their habit, office, and age: *and with all on whom she doted*: had an insatiable desire and lust after: *with all their idols she defiled herself*: worshipped all the idols the Assyrians did; and which were defiling, as they must needs be, since, as the word used signifies, they were dunghil-gods.

Ver. 8. *Neither left she her idols brought from Egypt*, &c.] Though the Israelites took in the gods of the Assyrians into their worship, they did not relinquish the golden calves set up at Dan and Beth-el, in imitation of the Egyptian deities; the idolatrous worship of which they learnt in Egypt, and brought from thence: *for in her youth they lay with her*: the Egyptians enticed the Israelites to idolatry when among them, as soon as they began to be a people; see the note on ver. 3: *and they bruised the breasts of her virginity*: who before retained the pure worship of God, and was like a chaste virgin: *and poured their whoredom upon her*: expressive of the numerous acts of idolatry committed together by them.

Ver. 9. *Wherefore I have delivered her into the hand of her lovers*, &c.] To destruction; their persons, families, riches, and kingdom itself: *into the hand of the Assyrians, on whom she doted*: first into the hands of Pul, then Tiglath-pileser, then Salmaneser, all kings of Assyria, by whom they were spoiled or carried captive: by the two first in part, by the last wholly; see 2 Kings xv. 19, 29. and xvii. 5—18.

Ver. 10. *These discovered her wickedness*, &c.] That is, stripped them of all their substance: *they took her sons and her daughters*: and carried them captive: *and slew her with the sword*: put an end to the kingdom of Israel, or the ten tribes, and which was never recovered to this day: *and she became famous among women*: or among the provinces, as the Targum; she became famous, or rather infamous, among other nations; was talked of for her sins, her whoredoms and idolatries, and the vengeance of God upon her for them; she became a by-word and a proverb among the kingdoms of the world for her wickedness and her destruction: *for they had executed judgment upon her*: that is, the Assyrians, who were the instruments in God's hand in doing justice to her, and inflicting his judgments on her, and for that she became famous.

Ver. 11. *And when her sister Aholibah saw this*, &c.] The two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, when they saw the idolatries the ten tribes fell into, and the destruction which came upon them for the same; instead of receiving instruction, and taking caution by all this, *she was more corrupt in her inordinate love than she*: in courting the friendship, alliance, and help of their Heathen neighbours: *and in her whoredoms more than her sister in her whoredoms*: guilty of more idolatries than the ten tribes, as in the times of Manasseh; see Jer. ii. 28.

Ver. 12. *She doted upon the Assyrians her neighbours*, &c.] As in the times of Ahaz, who sent to Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, for help; and from whence he took the pattern of an altar, and had one built like it at Jerusalem, and offered upon it, 2 Kings xvi. 7—12: *captains and rulers clothed most gorgeously*; or *perfectly* [s]; with all kind of precious garments, and of all manner of colours; not with blue only, but purple, scarlet, crimson, *&c.*: *horsemen riding upon horses, all of them desirable young men*; see the note on ver. 6.

Ver. 13. *Then I saw that she was defiled*, &c.] With idols, and the worship of them, ver. 7: *that they took both one way*; the same way of idolatry; worshipped the same idols, lived the same course of life, were guilty of the same sin, both Israel and Judah.

Ver. 14. *And that she increased her whoredoms*, &c.] Added to the number of her idols, increased her idols, and even was guilty of more than her sister: *for when she saw men portrayed on the wall*; of the temple, as idols were, ch. viii. 10. or upon the wall of a private house, where they were worshipped as household gods: *the images of the Chaldeans portrayed with vermilion*; the images of their heroes, who after death were deified; and these, being drawn upon the wall with vermilion, which, being mixed with ceruse, made a flesh-colour, were worshipped; as Bel, Nebo, Merodach, which are names of their idols, Isa. xlvi. 1. Jer. l. 2. or these were graven on the walls, or etched out upon them with minium or red lead; or rather were *painted* [t], as some render the word, with minium, vermilion, or cinnabar, which are the same; of which see the note on Jer. xxii. 14. and it may be observed, that it was usual with the Heathens to paint the images and statues of their gods with these. Thus Virgil [u] represents Pan, the god of Arcadia, coloured red with minium or vermilion; and Pausanius [w] speaks of the statue of Bacchus being besmeared with cinnabar; and Pliny [x] says the face of the image of Jupiter used to be anointed with minium or vermilion on festival-days; and observes, that the nobles of Ethiopia used to colour themselves all over with it; this being the colour of the images of their gods, which they reckoned more august, majestic, and sacred. Hence the Romans, in their triumphs, used to paint themselves with vermilion; particularly it is said of Augustus Cæsar, that he did this to make himself the more conspicuous and respectable, after the example of the Assyrians and Medes [y]: and the triumphers chose to be rubbed all over with a red colour, that they might, according to Isidore [z], resemble the divine fire.

Ver. 15. *Girded with girdles upon their loins*, &c.] As a token of dignity and authority; see Isa. xi. 5. which was the peculiar custom of the Babylonians, as Kimchi, from the Talmudists, observes: *exceeding in died attire upon their heads*: having turbants of various colours upon their heads, after the manner of the Persians: *all of them princes to look to*; bore the resemblance of kings, princes, and the great men of the

[s] מכלול omni genere pulchrarum vestium, Pagninus; absoluto vestitu, Montanus; perfectione, *sive* universitate, *sub.* vestium, Vatablus; perfectissime, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; perfecto ornatu, Piscator; vestitos accurate, Cocceius.

[t] חקקים בשׁשר depictas sinopide, Pagninus; pictas minio, Piscator.

[u] Pan deus Arcadiæ venit, quem vidimus ipsi
Sanguineis ebuli baccis, minioque rubentem. Bucolic. Eclog. 10.

[w] Achaica, sive l. 7. p. 452. & Arcadica, sive l. 8. p. 509.

[x] Nat. Hist. l. 33. c. 7.

[y] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 6. c. 6. p. 332.

[z] Originum, l. 18. c. 2.

earth, and whose images indeed they were; even of such who in their life-time were famous for military exploits, or for some excellency or another, either real or pretended, and after death reckoned among the gods, and worshipped: *after the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldea, the land of their nativity:* either where these heroes were born whose images were portrayed; or where Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, was born, and so called from thence the land of their nativity; putting them in mind of their original, and of the idolatries of their ancestors, which they were now returning to.

Ver. 16. *And as soon as she saw them with her eyes, she doted upon them, &c.*] As lustful women, on the sight of the pictures of men, fall in love with them, and are mad after them; such a vehement desire after the idols of the Chaldeans prevailed, upon seeing their images: *and sent messengers unto them in Chaldea:* to make alliances with the Chaldeans, and to have their idols, and worship them.

Ver. 17. *And the Babylonians came to her in the bed of love, &c.*] Entered into alliance with the Jews, and worshipped together in the same idols' temple. Jarchi thinks this refers to the messengers of the king of Babylon to Hezekiah; who were gladly received by him, and to whom he shewed all the treasures of his house: *and they defiled her with their whoredom;* or with their idols, as the Targum; they drew them into their idolatrous practices; which were a defiling them, and by which they were corrupted from the simplicity of the true worship of God: *and she was polluted with them, and her mind was alienated from them:* or *plucked*, or *disjoined from them*[r]; the Chaldeans, broke league and covenant with them, hating them as much as before they doted upon them; this was done in the times of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, who rebelled against the king of Babylon, 2 Kings xxiv. 1, 20. as it often is the case with lewd women, when they have satisfied their lust with their gallants, loath and despise them, and cast them off.

Ver. 18. *So she discovered her whoredoms, and discovered her nakedness, &c.*] The Jews did not cease from their idolatries when they broke with the Babylonians; but were rather more frequent and impudent in them, and courted the friendship and alliance of other Heathen nations, and their worship; even as a lewd woman, when she has cast off her former lovers, does not leave her lewdness, but seeks after others; and by her impudence in discovering her whoredoms, and her nakedness, and by all the signs of a prostitute, draws in others to commit lewdness with her: *then my mind was alienated from her, like as my mind was alienated from her sister;* as a virtuous husband is alienated from an adulterous wife, and can't admit her to his bed and board, so the mind of the Lord was alienated from the Jews, because of their idolatries; nor could he favour them with his presence, and the blessings of his providence and goodness, as he had formerly done; even as his mind had been alienated, on the same account, from the ten tribes of Israel, and which he shewed by suffering them to be carried captive.

Ver. 19. *Yet she multiplied her whoredoms, &c.*] Though the Lord frowned upon the Jews in the times of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, yet still they went on, and increased their alliances and idolatries with the Heathen nations: *in calling to remembrance the days of her youth, wherein she had played the harlot in the land of Egypt;* they called to mind with pleasure the idolatries of their fathers in Egypt, and committed the same themselves; they sent ambassadors to Egypt, in the times of Zedekiah, for help and assistance, and to enter into alliance with them, when they renewed among them the idolatries of that nation; see ch. xvii. 15.

Ver. 20. *For she doted upon their paramours, &c.*] Or *concubines*[s]; the neighbouring nations and allies of the Egyptians, whose friendship the Jews courted, and whose idols they served: the Septuagint and Arabic versions wrongly read the Chaldeans: *whose flesh is as the flesh of asses, and whose issue is like the issue of horses:* by *flesh* is meant the *membrum virile*, which in asses is very large, and therefore dedicated to Priapus by the Heathens; and vast is the profusion of seed in coitus by horses, to which the flesh and issue of the Egyptian paramours are compared; who were very libidinous, and therefore desirable to insatiable women; all which serves to express the eagerness of the people of the Jews after idolatry.

Ver. 21. *Thus thou calledst to remembrance the lewdness of thy youth, &c.*] By committing the same; the same idolatries their fathers committed in Egypt they now committed, being in alliance with the same people: or, *thou causedst to be visited the lewdness of thy youth*[t]; by the Lord, who remembered their sins, and punished them for them: *in bruising thy teats by the Egyptians for the paps of thy youth:* committing spiritual fornication, that is, idolatry, with them; signified by pressing and bruising the breasts and paps of virgins, by corporeal fornication with them.

Ver. 22. *Therefore, O Aholibah, thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Or, ye two tribes of Benjamin and Judah, hear what the Lord says unto you: *behold, I will raise up thy lovers against thee;* the Chaldeans, whom they had formerly loved, and in whose alliance they were, and whose idols they worshipped: *from whom thy mind is alienated;* having broke covenant with them, and cast off their yoke, and rebelled against them: *and I will bring them against thee on every side:* to besiege and encompass Jerusalem on every side with their army, as they did, so that there was no escaping.

Ver. 23. *The Babylonians, and all the Chaldeans, &c.*] Both the inhabitants of the city of Babylon, called in the Hebrew text the children of Babylon, and all the inhabitants of the several parts of the country of Chaldea, of which Babylon was the metropolis: *Pekod, and Shoa, and Koa:* the Vulgate Latin version, and so Jerom, take these words to be appellatives, and render them noblemen, tyrants, and princes; as some

[r] ותקע נפשה מהם avulsa est, Munster; et luxata est anima ipsius ab eis, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.

[s] פלגשיהם concubinos eorum, Vatablus, so Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; concubitores, Munster, Tigurine version; cinaedos, Castalio; and, as Ben Melech observes, these were men, and not women.

[t] ותפקדי את זמת נעוריך & visitasti scelus adolescentiae, vel pueritiae tuae, Piscator, Starckius; i. e. visitari fecisti a Deo, a Lapide.

mentioned by Jarchi do, governors, princes, and rulers: and Kimchi[a] thinks they are the titles of the Babylonian princes spoken of in Jeremiah, as Nebuzar-adan, Nebushasban, Rab-saris, Rab-mag, *&c.* Jer. xxxix. 3, 13. but with others they are the proper names of persons or places: and so the Targum calls them, Pekodaites, Shoaites, and Koaites; that is, the inhabitants of places so called; and certain it is that Pekod was a province of Babylon, Jer. l. 21. which, according to Junius, lay between the two rivers Tigris and Lycus, and in which was the famous city of Nineveh; and, according to him, Shoa, or the Shoaites, lay between the rivers Lycus and Gorgus, among whom were the Adiabeni, and the town called Siai by Ptolemy; and the Koaites were situated in the inward part of Assyria, by Arbelitis, where formerly was the fortified town of Koah, by historians called Gauga; and by Strabo Gaugamela. Grotius thinks that Pekod are the Bactriani; and that Shoa is Siai in Armenia with Ptolemy; and that Koa is Choana of Media, with the same Ptolemy; but, be they who they will, they were such people as were to come with the Chaldean army against the Jews: *and all the Assyrians with them*: which were now one people with the Chaldeans and Babylonians, by whom formerly the ten tribes were carried captive: *all of them desirable young men, captains and rulers, great lords and renowned, all of them riding upon horses;* persons of high rank and dignity, in chief offices at court or in the camp, all in the bloom and strength of youth; men of name and renown for their honour and valour; and all well-mounted, a famous cavalry of them; and who before were lovely on these accounts, when they were their gallants and lovers, their confederates and allies, but now formidable and terrible being their enemies; see ver. 5, 6, 12.

Ver. 24. *And they shall come against thee with chariots, waggons, and wheels,* &c.] With *chariots*, in which were their princes and great men, their chief commanders, generals, and captains, and in which they fought, as was usual in those times; and with *waggons*, to carry their provisions and warlike stores; and with *wheels*, that is, either with chariots and waggons that ran upon wheels, or with wheels for them in case they should break down; the first of these words here, according to some Jewish interpreters, as Donesh in Jarchi, signifies warlike instruments in general; and the second word is used for chariots: and so the whole is paraphrased by the Targum, "and they "shall come against thee with instruments of war, "with chariots and wheels;" all which denotes how well prepared they should be, and with what swiftness they would come: *and with an assembly of people, which shall set against thee buckler, and shield, and helmet, round about;* a multitude of people, a vast army gathered out of all the provinces of Babylon, having bucklers and shields about their bodies, and helmets on their heads, to protect and defend them: and these should surround the city of Jerusalem. So the Targum, "an army of people, armed with shields "and helmets, shall set themselves against thee round "about:" *and I will set judgment before them, and they shall judge thee according to their judgments*: that is, I will deliver you into their hands, and they shall judge and condemn you; not according to my laws and yours, but according to their own laws, according to the customs and usages among them, according to the law of nations; they shall deal with you as rebels and covenant-breakers, such Zedekiah was; he broke covenant with the king of Babylon, and rebelled against him: and this was fulfilled when he fell into his hands, and when he slew his children before his face, and then put out his eyes.

Ver. 25. *And I will set my jealousy against thee, and they shall deal furiously with thee,* &c.] As a jealous husband, enraged against his adulterous wife, falls upon her in his fury, and uses her with great severity; so the Jews, having committed spiritual fornication, that is, idolatry, and departed from the Lord, he threatens to stir up the fury of his jealousy, and punish them severely by the Chaldeans, as follows: *they shall take away thy nose and thine ears, and thy remnant shall fall by the sword;* as gallants use their harlots when they leave them, or jealous husbands their adulterous wives, disfiguring them, that they may be marked and known what they are, and be despised by others; and as has been the custom in some countries, particularly with the Egyptians, to cut off the noses of adulterous persons; here it is to be understood figuratively; by the *nose*, according to Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, is meant the king, who is higher than his people, as the nose is the highest part in a man's face; and by the *ears* the priest, who caused a noise to be heard when he entered into the temple with his bells; or rather because it was the priest's office to attend to the word of God, and teach it the people; in general, these denote every thing that was excellent among the Jews, their city, temple, king, kingdom, princes, priests, and prophets, which should be demolished and removed; and by the *remnant* is meant the common people, that should come into the hands of the Chaldeans, and fall by their sword. So the Targum paraphrases it, "thy princes "and thy nobles shall go into captivity, and thy people shall be killed with the sword:" *they shall take thy sons and thy daughters, and thy residue shall be devoured by the fire;* take and carry their sons and daughters captive, and burn with fire the city left by them. Thus the Targum, "they shall carry thy sons and daughters "captive, and the beauty of thy land shall be burnt "with fire;" that is, the city of Jerusalem, the temple, the king's palaces, the houses of the great men, and others in it, which were all burnt with fire when taken by the Chaldeans, Jer. lii. 13.

Ver. 26. *They shall also strip thee out of thy clothes,* &c.] As such who are taken captives are usually served: *and take away thy fair jewels;* their ornaments of every kind: or *the vessels of thy glory*[b]; Kimchi observes this may be meant either of the garments of the priests, and the vessels of the sanctuary; or of the

[a] So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 51. 1.
[b] כלי תפארתך vasa gloriæ tuæ, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; instrumenta ornatus tui, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator; vasa ornatus tui, Starckius.

whole spoil of the city in general, whether in the temple, or in other houses.

Ver. 27. *Thus will I make thy lewdness to cease from thee,* &c.] That is, their idolatry; for, after this captivity, the Jews never were guilty of idolatry any more: *and thy whoredom brought from the land of Egypt;* the idolatry which they learned there, and brought from thence; so the Targum, "the worship "of thine idols, which was with thee when thou wast "in the land of Egypt:" *so that thou shalt not lift up thine eyes unto them;* to the idols of Egypt, to pray unto them, and worship them: *nor remember Egypt any more;* with any delight and pleasure, and so as to desire an alliance with them, and help from them, or to join with them in their idolatries: so the Targum, "and the idols of the Egyptians thou shalt remember "no more."

Ver. 28. *For thus saith the Lord God, I will deliver thee into the hand of them whom thou hatest,* &c.] The Chaldeans and Babylonians, before loved by her, and doted upon, but now hated and rebelled against; and to fall into such hands must be a sore judgment; and this the Lord threatens to bring upon the Jews for their sins; and he having said it, it might be depended upon it would be performed; and, for the greater certainty of it, it is repeated in different words: *into the hand of them from whom thy mind is alienated;* see the note on ver. 17.

Ver. 29. *And they shall deal with thee hatefully,* &c.] The Chaldeans should hate the Jews as much as before they loved them, when they came into the bed of love to them, ver. 17. and as much as the Jews hated them; which they shewed by their severe and rigorous usage of them, putting some to the sword, carrying the rest captive, and employing them in hard service and labour; and, which is still worse, and an aggravation of all this: *and shall take away all thy labour:* whatever they got by labour, that they should not enjoy, but should be taken away from them: *and shall leave thee naked and bare:* stripped of all the necessaries and conveniences of life: *and the nakedness of thy whoredoms shall be discovered, both thy lewdness and thy whoredoms;* it shall then be manifest to all that thou hast been guilty of idolatry, and hast departed from the Lord thy God, which has caused him to bring these judgments upon thee for thy sins. The Targum paraphrases the latter part of the clause thus, "the sins of thy wicked "counsels, and thy pride." It seems to be a heap of words, to express the grossness of their idolatries, which now should be exposed.

Ver. 30. *And I will do these things unto thee,* &c.] What the Chaldeans did God is said to do, because he suffered them to do these things, as a punishment for their sins; yea, it was according to his will, and by his orders. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it, *they have done these things unto thee:* that is, the Chaldeans. The Targum is, "thy sins are the "cause of these things unto thee;" that is, their idolatry and other iniquities. Hence the Syriac version is very particular, "for thy whoredoms these things shall "be done unto thee;" and the Arabic version, "thy "whoredom hath done (or is the cause of) these things "unto thee," as follows: *because thou hast gone a whoring after the Heathen,* and *because thou art polluted with their idols;* imitated them in their idolatries; worshipped the same dunghil-gods as they did, as the word signifies; with which it was no wonder they should be polluted, and become abominable unto God.

Ver. 31. *Thou hast walked in the way of thy sister,* &c.] Samaria, or the ten tribes of Israel; followed them in their idolatrous practices, were guilty of the same: *therefore will I give her cup into thine hand;* the cup of her vengeance, as the Targum; inflict the same punishment on the two tribes as on the ten, and suffer them to be carried captive as they had been.

Ver. 32. *Thus saith the Lord God, thou shalt drink of thy sister's cup deep and large,* &c.] That is, partake of the same punishment, which was very great, signified by a deep and large cup, which holds much: *thou shalt be laughed to scorn, and had in derision:* by the nations round about, who, instead of pitying them under their troubles, will rejoice at them; just as drunken men are laughed at, when intoxicated and reeling about: *it containeth much;* the cup of wrath and vengeance; as much as will last seventy years drinking. The Targum connects this with the preceding clause, "and thou shalt be for derision and for "laughter, because of the greatness of the tribulation "that shall come upon thee."

Ver. 33. *Thou shalt be filled with drunkenness and sorrow,* &c.] Sorrow is the effect of drunkenness; these two generally go together; when a man is filled with the one, he is with the other; this expresses the greatness of the sorrow and distress of the Jews in captivity: *with the cup of astonishment and desolation;* their punishment would be so great, and their condition be so desolate, that it should astonish them, and bereave them of their senses; and they should be like mad men, as their actions in the following verse shew: *with the cup of thy sister Samaria;* the same punishment as inflicted on the ten tribes.

Ver. 34. *Thou shalt even drink it, and suck it out,* &c.] The very dregs of it, that which lies at the bottom, which is the most nauseous and the most pernicious; not through love to it, but through force, shall be obliged to it; see Psal. lxxv. 8: *and thou shalt break the sherds thereof;* and suck them, so that not a drop of the liquor shall be lost; even what has penetrated into the earthen vessel, which this cup is supposed to be; and therefore it shall be broken to pieces, and these pieces sucked, that all may be got out: suggesting that there will be no abatement of the punishment, it shall be endured to the utmost; or it may be an allusion to drunkards, who, having drunk up their liquor, and become drunk, break their glasses, pots, and cups, and to which the next clause agrees: *and pluck off thine own breasts;* as men in their drunken fits, being like mad men, tear their own flesh; and so the Targum paraphrases it, "thou shalt tear thy flesh;" so the Jews, under punishment for sin, and pressed with the guilt of it, through indignation at themselves should tear their flesh, and particularly pluck off their breasts: the allusion is to fornication, to which idolatry is compared, in which those parts are particularly affected; see ver. 21. the Syriac version renders this and the former clause thus, *thou shalt shave thine hair and cut off thy breasts;* Kimchi thinks by the *breasts*

are meant the oral and written laws, which ceased in the time of the captivity; but without any foundation: *for I have spoken it, saith the Lord:* and therefore it shall be done.

Ver. 35. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, because thou hast forgotten me,* &c.] His word, worship, and ordinances, and did not attend unto them, but worshipped strange gods: so the Targum, "because thou "hast left my worship:" *and cast me behind thy back;* or, as the same paraphrase, "hast cast the fear of me "from before thine eyes;" or out of thy sight, his laws and statutes; see Neh. ix. 26. Isa. v. 24. as men cast behind their backs that which they have no value for and loath, and which they don't care to see, and choose to forget: *therefore bear thou also thy lewdness and thy whoredoms;* that is, the guilt of their sins, the punishment of their idolatries, and shame and confusion for them.

Ver. 36. *The Lord said moreover unto me, son of man, wilt thou judge Aholah and Aholibah?* &c.] Plead the cause of Israel and Judah? say any thing in their defence, and in excuse of them? or intercede and pray for them, that threatened judgments may not come upon them? no, do nothing of this kind; if thou wilt do any thing, do as follows: *yea, declare unto them their abominations;* their abominable sins, their murders, adulteries, and idolatries; set them in a true light before them, in all their aggravated circumstances; that, if it can be, they may be brought to a true sight and sense of them, to repent of them, be ashamed of them, loath them, confess them, and forsake them.

Ver. 37. *That they have committed adultery,* &c.] Either literally, adultery with their neighbours' wives, which was a prevailing sin with this people; or figuratively, spiritual adultery, that is, idolatry: *and blood is in their hands;* the Targum is, "they have shed the "blood of innocents with their hands;" the blood of prophets and righteous men, sent unto them; and the blood of their infants in sacrificing to idols, as after mentioned: *and with their idols have they committed adultery;* by worshipping them, which is spiritual adultery; and this being so explicitly mentioned, it seems to be distinguished from corporeal adultery in the first clause, which may be only there designed; and so Kimchi thinks: *and have also caused their sons, whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through the fire, to devour them;* their children, who were the Lord's by national adoption, and who ought to have been trained up in the worship and service of God, were, in a most barbarous and unnatural manner, caused to pass through the fire, for or to the idols Molech and Baal; and that not merely by way of lustration and dedication, which was sometimes done by passing between two fires, but so as to be devoured and destroyed by the fire.

Ver. 38. *Moreover this they have done unto me,* &c.] The following piece of wickedness, which was very provoking to the Lord: *they have defiled my sanctuary in the same day;* as they caused their children to pass through the fire to their idols, by entering into the sanctuary when they had so done, and were thus defiled, and by offering sacrifices to their idols in it; or under pretence of serving the Lord, when they had just been guilty of murder and idolatry: *and have profaned my sabbaths;* not only by doing their own worldly and civil business, but by slaying their infants on those days, and sacrificing them to idols.

Ver. 39. *For when they had slain their children to their idols,* &c.] This explains more clearly what is before said, that by causing their children to pass through the fire was a slaying them; and that their passing through it *for them* was for their idols, and unto them; see ver. 37. and now when they had been guilty of such shocking wickedness, *then they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it;* not that they came into the temple on purpose to profane it; but coming into it, being themselves defiled with the murder of their infants, and offering sacrifices to idols, or performing a hypocritical service to the Lord, this was in the event a profanation of the sanctuary: *and, lo, thus they have done in the midst of mine house;* set up idols there, and worshipped them; as they did in the temple itself, in the times of Ahaz and Manasseh; see Jer. vii. 30.

Ver. 40. *And furthermore, that ye have sent for men to come from far,* &c.] From Egypt, Assyria, and Chaldea, to treat with them, and enter into alliances and confederacies with them, and to join them in their idolatrous practices; these Heathen nations did not send to the Jews, but the Jews to them; they did not court their friendship and alliance, but the Jews courted theirs: *unto whom a messenger was sent;* to court their favour, and solicit a confederacy, and to desire that ambassadors might be sent to reside among them: *and, lo, they came;* these Heathen courts listened to the proposal, and accordingly sent their plenipotentiaries and ambassadors to them, who came in their masters' name, and with their credentials; and for the reception of whom great preparations were made, as follows: *for whom thou didst wash thyself, paintedst thy eyes, and deckedst thyself with ornaments;* just as harlots do to make themselves agreeable to their lovers; who use washes and paint, as Jezebel did, and dress themselves in their best clothes, and adorn themselves in the best manner they can. Harlots had their particular attire, by which they were known, Prov. vii. 10. and they not only used bagnios or baths, but washes for their face, to make them look beautiful; and particularly painted their eyes, to make them look larger; for large eyes in women, in some nations, were reckoned very handsome, particularly among the Greeks: hence Juno, in Homer[d], is called βοῶπις, the ox-eyed, as some translate it; or rather the large-eyed Juno: and the Grecian women, in order to make their eyes large, made use of a powder mixed with their washes, which shrunk their eyebrows, and caused their eyes to stand out, and look fuller and larger; and such was the paint which Pliny[e] calls *stibium*, and says it was by some named *platyophthalmon*, because in the beautiful eyebrows of women it dilated the eyes; and it seems that painting with something of this nature was used by the Jewish women, in imitation of the Heathens, for the same purpose, especially by harlots; hence the phrase

[d] Iliad. 1. l. 550.

[e] Nat. Hist. l. 33. c. 6.

of rending the face, or rather the eyes, with paint, Jer. iv. 30. so the Moorish women now, as Dr. Shaw[f] relates, to add a gracefulness to their complexions, tinge their eye-lids with *alkahol*, the powder of lead-ore; and this is performed by first dipping into this powder a small wooden bodkin, of the thickness of a quill, and then drawing it afterwards through the eyelids, over the ball of the eye; and which is properly a rending the eyes indeed, as the prophet calls it, with powder of *pouk*, or *lead-ore*: so, for the gratifying these idolatrous ambassadors, idols were set up, altars built, and sacrifices prepared; and, in order to their public entry, and to shew how acceptable they were, palaces were fitted up for them, and the streets through which they passed decorated, and all public marks of esteem and affection given them; to this the Targum seems to have respect, paraphrasing the words thus, "and, lo, "they came to the place thou hadst prepared; thou "hast adorned the streets, and appointed palaces."

Ver. 41. *And satest upon a stately bed*, &c.] Or *honourable*[g], a bed of state: either a throne, a royal seat under a canopy, on which the king of Judah sat to receive foreign ambassadors; or a stately bed at a feast, made for the entertainment of them; it being usual in the eastern nations to sit on beds at eating, to which the next clause agrees. The allusion is to a harlot sitting on a bed decked out by her to allure men to lie with her; see Prov. vii. 16: *and a table prepared before it*: before the bed, furnished with the richest provisions to treat the ambassadors with; or this may design an altar built for them to offer on it sacrifices to their idols, according to the customs of their countries: *whereupon thou hast set mine incense and mine oil*; which were the gifts of God to this people, and which they should have used in his service; but with these they treated the ministers of Heathen princes; scenting the room where they were entertained with incense, and anointing their heads and feet with oil, for their pleasure and refreshment; or they offered these on the altars of the idols to them.

Ver. 42. *And a voice of a multitude being at ease was with her*, &c.] With Aholibah, with the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin: or, *in her*, in Jerusalem; or *in it*, or *about it*[h]; the bed, or table, or both: these were either the people of the many nations that came in great numbers with the ambassadors, as their retinue, and for the greater splendour of them; and who came, not to make war, but in a peaceable way, being invited to come; or these were a confluence of the Jewish people, who came from all parts to see the public entry of these ambassadors; who were quite easy with it, since they came as the ambassadors of their allies and friends, in whose alliance they thought themselves safe and happy; and therefore welcomed them with their loud huzzas: *and with the men of the common sort were brought Sabeans from the wilderness*; or, *and with men because of a multitude of men*[i]; that is, with those men that came from several parts on this occasion, for the sake of a greater number, and of making a greater appearance, the Sabeans that dwelt in the desert of Arabia were fetched from thence; or their neighbours round about Moab and Ammon, that dwelt in the wilderness, were sent for, and brought to make the solemnity the greater; so Jarchi; and to this sense the Targum renders it, "because of the multitude of men that came round about on every side "from the wilderness." Some render it, *drunkards from the wilderness*[k]; a parcel of drunken fellows that lived in the wilderness, rustic, brutish, people; these were brought as fit persons to drink healths, and roar on this occasion: *which put bracelets upon their hands, and beautiful crowns upon their heads*; that is, the Jews put these ornaments upon the hands and heads of these men of the common sort, and the Sabeans with them, and these poor country drunken fellows too, that they might make the better appearance when they met and huzzaed the ambassadors at their entry; or which Sabeans and other foreigners put these ornaments on Aholah and Aholibah, and enticed them to the worship of their idols, and taught them idolatry.

Ver. 43. *Then said I unto her that was old in adulteries*, &c.] That had been an old adulterer or idolater; meaning either Aholah the ten tribes, who from Jeroboam's time had been guilty of idolatry; or Aholibah the two tribes, who had remained longer in their own country, and had been long given to idolatry; or both of them, as some think, the whole body of the people of Israel, who had been addicted to idolatry ever since they came out of Egypt, and so was like an old harlot indeed: now the Lord said *unto her*, or *concerning her*[l]; in his own mind, after the manner of men. So the Targum, "I said concerning the congregation of Israel, "whose people are old in sins:" *will they now commit whoredoms with her, and she with them?* will they commit adultery with such an old harlot? are they not weary of her? and will they not rather loath and despise her? as it is common when such prostitutes grow old; and what pleasure can she take, thus advanced in years, in such impurities? suggesting that alliances and confederacies between the Jews and the nations of the world could not be agreeable on either side, especially to the former; but so it was, and so were their idolatries likewise. The Targum is, "now she will "leave her idols, and return to thy worship; but she "returned not."

Ver. 44. *Yet they went in unto her*, &c.] Made a league with one another, and joined in idolatrous worship: *as they go in unto a woman that playeth the harlot*: with the same heat of lust, with the same greediness and eager desire as young men do when they go into a brothel-house where a beautiful harlot lives: *so went they in unto Aholah and unto Aholibah, the lewd women*; the ten tribes of Israel, and the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which apostatized from God, and committed idolatry; with these the Sabeans before

[f] Travels, p. 229. Ed. 2.

[g] כבודה honorato, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Coccejus, Starckius.

[h] בה in ea, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; in illa, Coccejus, Starckius; in illo, Piscator; circa eam, a Lapide.

[i] ואל אנשים מרב אדם & cum viris ut multiplicarent homines, Pagninus; ut adessent multi homines, Munster; præ multitudine hominum, Tigurine version, Coccejus, Starckius; propter multiplicare homines, Vatablus.

[k] סובאים ממדבר ebriosi ex deserto, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; so R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 99. 1.

[l] לבלה de inveterata illa, Vatablus.

mentioned, and other nations, joined in idolatrous worship.

Ver. 45. *And the righteous men, &c.*] Some understand this of the prophets, who were really righteous men; and foretold the righteous judgments of God that should come upon the idolatrous Jews, which was a judging them: others, of righteous men in general, who will one and all agree that persons guilty of such crimes ought to suffer the punishment adequate to them, and usually inflicted on such; but rather the Babylonians are here meant; who, though not righteous in themselves, or truly so, yet were so in comparison of the wicked Jews, who had a divine revelation, and knew better than to commit such idolatries; whereas these were Gentiles that knew not God, nor his will. So the Targum, "and righteous men in respect (or "comparison) of them;" that is, of Israel and Judah; and they may be also called so, because they were the executioners of justice, the instruments of inflicting God's righteous judgments on the Jews; and, among other things, for their perfidy and treachery to them; so that they would appear just in the eyes of other nations for treating them as they did: *they shall judge them after the manner of adulteresses, and after the manner of women that shed blood;* that is, according to the law concerning such persons; and shall condemn them to suffer the punishment denounced on such, and shall execute it on them: *because they are adulteresses, the blood is in their hands;* are guilty, not only of corporeal uncleanness, but of spiritual adultery; that is, idolatry; and of the murder of their prophets and righteous men, and even of their own children sacrificed to idols; than which nothing can be more unnatural and barbarous for women to do.

Ver. 46. *For thus saith the Lord God, I will bring up a company upon them, &c.*] Or, *do thou bring up a company upon them*[m], or *against them.* The Targum represents it as spoken to the prophet, thus, "prophesy "that armies shall come up against them." Kimchi interprets it as we do, *I will bring up,* &c. and so others[n]. By this *company* is to be understood the Chaldean army, whom God in his providence, and in righteous judgment, would bring up against the Jews; styled a *convocation*[o], assembly or congregation, in allusion to the sanhedrim, or court of judicature, that took cognizance of such crimes, and judged and condemned for them: *and will give them to be removed and spoiled;* or, *for a removing,* and *a spoil*[p]; that is, he would give the Jews into the hands of the Chaldean army; their persons to be carried captive into other lands, and their substance to be spoiled and plundered.

Ver. 47. *And the company shall stone them with stones, &c.*] Which was the punishment of adulterers and idolaters, Deut. xiii. 10. and xxii. 24. this seems to refer to the Chaldean army casting out stones from their slings and engines into the city of Jerusalem, when they besieged it, by which they killed some, and beat down the houses, which fell upon others, and destroyed them. So the Targum, "and the army shall "stone them with the stones of a sling;" *and dispatch "them with their swords;* cut them in pieces with them, such as sallied out of the city upon them, or they found without, or by any means fell into their hands: *they shall slay their sons and their daughters;* when they broke into the city, and took it; or when they found them making their escape, and hiding themselves in secret places: *and burn up their houses with fire;* as they did; the temple, the king's palace, the houses of noblemen, and all the houses in Jerusalem; see Jer. lii. 13.

Ver. 48. *Thus will I cause to cease lewdness out of the land,* &c.] There being no opportunity for it, nor any to commit it; what were not destroyed by famine, sword, and pestilence, during the siege, were carried captive; and, when they returned, were never more given to idolatry; see ver. 27: *that all women may be taught not to do after your lewdness;* that is, that all provinces, as the Targum, all kingdoms, states, churches, and people, hearing and reading the judgments of God on this people for their idolatry, may learn to shun it; it is even an instruction to us, at this distance, not to commit idolatry, as they did, 1 Cor. x. 7, 11. The church of Rome ought to observe this.

Ver. 49. *And they shall recompence your lewdness upon you,* &c.] Or, *give your lewdness*[q]; the punishment of it; the just recompense of reward for their idolatry: *and ye shall bear the sins of your idols;* the shame, and guilt, and punishment of their sins committed in worshipping idols: *and ye shall know that I am the Lord God;* the only Lord God who is to be worshipped, and not idols; jealous of my honour and glory, and true to my word; who can and will accomplish all I have said; this the Jews knew and acknowledged when in captivity, and returned from it, as they will more fully when they shall be converted in the latter day.

CHAP. XXIV.

IN this chapter the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem is prophesied of; the former under the parable of a boiling pot; the latter is represented by the sudden death of Ezekiel's wife. The time of this prophecy was that very day the king of Babylon began the siege of Jerusalem, ver. 1, 2. the parable of the boiling pot, ver. 3, 4, 5. the explanation and application of it to the city of Jerusalem, ver. 6—14. the prophet is told of the death of his wife, and bid not to mourn on that account, which accordingly came to pass, ver. 15, 16, 17, 18. upon the people's inquiring what these things meant, he informs them that hereby

[m] העלה עליהם קהל ἀνάγαγε ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ὄχλον, Sept.; adduc super eas cœtum, Vulg. Lat.; ascendere fac contra eos, vel eos, cœtum, Cocceius, Starckius.

[n] Faciam ascendere, Pagninus; adducam, Munster, Tigurine version; quum adduxero, Piscator.

[o] קהל congregatio, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; consessus judicum, Grotius, Starckius.

[p] לזעוה ולבז commotioni & direptioni, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator; in commotionem & in prædam, Starckius.

[q] ונתנו זמתכנה & dabunt scelus vestrum, Vulg. Lat. Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius.

was signified the profanation of the temple; and that their distress should be so great, that they should not use any set forms of mourning, but pine away and die, ver. 19—24. and the chapter is closed with assuring the prophet, that the day these things should come to pass, a messenger should be sent him, to whom he should open his mouth, and be no more dumb, ver. 25, 26, 27.

Ver. 1. *Again, in the ninth year*, &c.] Of Jehoiachin's captivity, from which the dates of Ezekiel are, and of Zedekiah's reign, which commenced together: *in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month*; the month Tebet, which answers to part of our December, and part of January; so that it was at the latter end of December when this prophecy was given out: at which time Jerusalem was besieged by the king of Babylon, even in the winter season: *the word of the Lord came unto me, saying*; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, write thee the name of the day*, &c.] That is, what day of the week it was, as well as what day of the month; as whether the first, or second, or third, *&c.*; for the Jews had no other names for their days, as we have: even *of this same day*; according to Bishop Usher [r], it was the 30th of January, and the fifth day of the week (Thursday); in the year of the Julian period 4124, and 590 before Christ. Mr. Whiston [s] places it in the year of the Julian period 4123, and 591 before Christ. The prophet is bid to observe it punctually, and write it exactly, that there might be no mistake; to set it down in his pocket-book; or it may be in some public register, that it might not only be remembered by him, but known by the people; that so when they should hear the fact afterwards related, and exactly agreeing with this prediction, they would acknowledge him to be a true prophet; since this would be a confirmation of the word of the Lord coming to him: *the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day*: or *drew nigh* [t]; brought up his army to it, and laid siege against it, and prepared every thing to carry it on; which he very probably did in person, though he afterwards retired, and left the command of his army with his generals; and this was exactly the day before mentioned; see 2 Kings xxv. 1. Jer. xxxix. 1. and lii. 4. The Prophet Ezekiel was now in Chaldea, many miles from Judea, and yet had this account the very selfsame day, even from the Lord himself, who is omniscient and omnipresent.

Ver. 3. *And utter a parable to the rebellious house*, &c.] The people of the Jews so called, not so much on account of their rebellion against the king of Babylon, which caused him to come against them, as on account of their rebellion against God, and the breach of his laws; see ch. ii. 3, 5, 6, 7, 8. The prophet is bid to represent to them, in a figurative and emblematic way, the miseries that were coming upon them for their wickedness, namely, under the parable of a boiling pot: *and say unto them, thus saith the Lord God*; speaking in his name, and as coming from him, and clothed with his authority; that the following parable might not be thought to be a fancy and chimera of his own: *set on a pot, set it on*; set a pot on the fire, and do it quickly. This *pot* is the city of Jerusalem, which was to be brought into great distress and ruin; not a cauldron of brass, wherein the inhabitants should be as safe as if they had walls of brass about them, as they vainly boasted, ch. xi. 3. but a seething-pot, such an one as Jeremiah saw, to which, it may be, reference is here had, Jer. i. 13. in which the people should be destroyed: *and also pour water into it*; which, as it is some time a boiling, may denote the length of the siege of the city, which held two years; and of the troubles and miseries attending it; and of the greatness of them, which were as intolerable as boiling water. The Targum is, "prophesy "that armies shall come against this city; and also "there shall be given unto it length of time to receive "the siege."

Ver. 4. *Gather the pieces thereof into it*, &c.] A fire being made, and the pot set on, and water poured into it, the next thing is, to put in the pieces that are to be boiled; and these are to be gathered; meaning the people of the land, that were to be gathered from the several parts of it, for their security, as they thought; but the event proved it was for their ruin: even *every good piece, the thigh and the shoulder*; the princes and gentry, the great and the mighty, the rich and wealthy of the people; who, upon the invasion, got together in Jerusalem, to secure their persons and substance: *fill it with the choice bones*; or with those pieces that have the choice bones, that are full of marrow; the strongest among the people; the soldiers, or such as were fit for war; the best of their militia, brought hither to defend the city; but, in fact, to be slain, as they were. The Targum is, "gather the "princes thereof into the midst of her, every terrible "man and warrior; fill her with the army of the people."

Ver. 5. *Take the choice of the flock*, &c.] King, princes, nobles, magistrates, priests and rulers of the people: *and burn also the bones under it*: or, *put a pile of bones under it* [u]; the bones of them that are slain in it; denoting the great slaughter of them; or the bones of the innocent that had been murdered in it; which were the cause of these judgments coming upon them; and caused the wrath of God to burn the more hotly against them; or the bones of the wicked: *and make it boil well*; the pot; that the water may be very hot and boiling; denoting the severity of the judgments of God in the city, to the destruction of many by sword, famine, and pestilence: *and let them seethe the bones of it therein*; that the strongest among them may be weakened and destroyed by the length and severity of the siege, and the judgments attending it. The Targum is, "bring near the kings of the people, and even "join auxiliaries with them; hasten the time of it; "yea, let her slain be cast in the midst of her."

Ver. 6. *Wherefore thus saith the Lord God, woe to the bloody city*, &c.] Here the parable begins to be explained; and shews that by the pot is meant the city of Jerusalem, called the *bloody city*, because of the blood of the prophets, and of righteous persons, and

[r] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3414.
[s] Chronological Tables, cent. 10.
[t] סמך appropinquavit, Pagninus, Vatablus; so R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 84. 2. adjunxit se, Montanus.

[u] דור העצמים תחתיה pyram ossium sub ipsa, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Starckius. דור rogus, strues materiæ combustibilis rotunda, Stockius, p. 223.

of innocent babes, that was shed in it; and which was the cause of the judgments of God coming upon her, which would issue in her destruction, and therefore woe unto her; see Matt. xxiii. 37: *to the pot whose scum is therein, and whose scum is not gone out of it;* when a pot boils, a scum arises, and appears upon the top of the water, which the cook usually takes off: this denotes the filthiness and wickedness of the people of the Jews, which would work up and be seen by the judgments of God upon them; yet should not be removed, but continue on them, unrepented of, and unpardoned. It signifies that they would remain hardened in their sins; and that the judgments of God would have no effect upon them to bring them to repentance; and that God would have no mercy on them, or pardon their sins: *bring it out piece by piece;* the people that were in Jerusalem, of every class and rank, of every age and sex; suggesting that they should not be all destroyed at once, but some at one time, and some at another; some in one way, and some in another; some by famine, others by the pestilence, and others by the sword; some by sallying out upon the enemy; others by endeavouring to make their escape privately, and fall into their hands: *let no lot fall upon it;* to save some, and destroy others, as is often done in war; signifying that all were destined to destruction, some way or another; and none should be spared; they that escaped the pestilence should die by famine; and they that escaped them both should die by the sword; and they that escaped all three should be carried into captivity. The Targum is, "captivity upon "captivity shall go out with her, because repentance "was not in her."

Ver. 7. *For her blood is in the midst of her, &c.*] The blood of innocent persons shed in the midst of her, openly and publicly, cried for vengeance: *she set it upon the top of a rock;* where it could not soak in, as when spilled upon soft earth: this denotes her openness and impudence in shedding blood, as not being ashamed of it, or afraid of punishment for it, but as rather glorying in it; perhaps there may be some allusion to the tops of hills and mountains, where idolatry was committed, attended with shedding human blood: *she poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust;* she did not take any methods to hide her sin; having no sense of the heinousness of it, nor any consciousness of guilt, or any remorse or repentance; respect is had to a law which obliged to cover blood shed with dust, Lev. xvii. 13. The Targum of the whole is, "because innocent blood which is shed in "the midst of her; with pride and with a high arm "she shed it; she shed it not through ignorance, that "she might repent of it."

Ver. 8. *That it might cause fury to come up to take vengeance, &c.*] Into the heart and mind of God, into his face, speaking after the manner of men; observing such gross and open wickedness, he determined within himself to shew his resentment, manifest his wrath and displeasure, and take vengeance on such capital and impudent offenders: *I have set her blood upon the top of a rock, that it might not be covered;* by way of just retaliation; that as her sin was publicly committed, and no repentance shewn for it, so her punishment should be open and manifest to all the world, and no forgiveness should be granted her. The Targum is, "I have revealed their sins, because they "have shed innocent blood openly, that it might not "be forgiven."

Ver. 9. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, woe to the bloody city, &c.*] See the note on ver. 6: *I will even make the pile for fire great;* a large pile of wood, a great quantity of fuel to maintain the fire, and keep the pot boiling; meaning the vast army of the Chaldeans, which the Lord would bring against Jerusalem, which should closely besiege it, and vigorously attack it, until it had executed the fury of the wrath of God, comparable to fire, and of his judgments upon it. The Targum is, "even I will multiply her destruction."

Ver. 10. *Heap on wood, kindle the fire, &c.*] This is said either to the prophet, to do this in an emblematic way; or to the Chaldean army, to prepare for the siege, encompass the city, begin their attacks, and throw in their stones out of their slings and engines, and arrows from their bows: *consume the flesh;* not entirely, since it is afterwards to be spiced; but thoroughly boil it: denoting the severe sufferings the inhabitants should undergo before their utter ruin: *spice it well;* pepper them off; batter their walls, beat down their houses, distress them by all manner of ways and means; signifying that this would be grateful to the Lord, as his justice would be glorified in the destruction of this people; and as the plunder of them would be like a spiced and sweet morsel to the enemy; whose appetites would hereby be sharpened and become keen, and to whom the sacking and plundering the city would be as agreeable as well-seasoned meat to a hungry man: *and let the bones be burnt;* either under it, or rather in it; even the strongest and most powerful among the people destroyed, who should hold out the longest in the siege. The Targum of the whole is, "multiply kings; gather an army; order the auxilia-"ries, and prepare against her warriors, and let her "mighty ones be confounded."

Ver. 11. *Then set it empty upon the coals thereof, &c.*] The city, when emptied of its inhabitants and substance, like a pot that is boiled over, and all in it boiled away, or taken out; burn it with fire, as the city of Jerusalem when taken and plundered was: *that the brass of it may be hot, and burn;* as brass will when set on coals: or, *the bottom of it* *; so Ben Melech observes, from the Misnah, that the lower part or bottom of a pot, cauldron, or furnace, is called the brass of it; and so the sense is, make the fire burn so fierce as to burn the bottom of the pot; or the canker and rust of it, which the following words explain: *and that the filthiness of it may be molten in it, that the scum of it may be consumed;* the abominable wickedness of this people; since they were not reformed and brought to repentance for it by the admonitions and instructions given them, and by the chastisements and corrections laid upon them, they with their sins should be consumed in this terrible manner. The Targum is, "I "will leave the land desolate, that they may become "desolate; and that the gates of her city may be con-

* נחשתה fundum ejus, Pagninus, Vatablus.

"sumed; and that those that work uncleanness in "the midst of her may melt away, and her sins be "consumed."

Ver. 12. *She hath wearied* herself *with lies*, &c.] With serving idols, which were lying vanities; by trusting to the alliances of neighbouring nations, which deceived her; or by committing sin, in which there was no satisfaction; or it may be understood of wearying of God with their sins, and particularly with her lying promises of repentance and reformation: *and her great scum went not forth out of her*: notwithstanding her promises; or notwithstanding the admonitions given, and the chastisements inflicted on her, yet she continued hardened in her sins, impenitent and unreformed: *her scum* shall be *in the fire*: like a pot that boils over, its scum falls into the fire, and is consumed there; and in no other way, but by the fire of divine judgments, or the burning of the city, could the wickedness thereof be consumed. The Targum is, "and they shall not go out of her that work iniquity; "in the fire shall she be burnt, because of the multi- "tude of her sins."

Ver. 13. *In thy filthiness* is *lewdness*, &c.] Consummate wickedness joined with impudence, and an obstinate persisting in it; though her sins were so abominable and filthy, yet she was not ashamed of them, nor could be reclaimed from them; but, like a lewd woman, or an old harlot, was bold and impudent: *because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged*: made use of means for the purgation of them, by his prophets, and by exhortations and instructions given by them, and by various corrections and chastisements; but all in vain, and to no purpose, they were all without effect: *thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee*: there was no other way left to purge her from her sins, but by the fire of his wrath, and the fury of his anger, in her utter destruction.

Ver. 14. *I the Lord have spoken it*: *it shall come to pass*, &c.] What God has said shall be accomplished; his word shall not return void and empty, or be without effect: *and I will do it*: being God omnipotent and unchangeable: *I will not go back*: from his word, or the thing threatened and denounced; nothing should prevail upon him to act such a part: *neither will I spare*; shew any mercy or compassion, or abate of the punishment due: *neither will I repent*, or change the course and method of Providence; but abide by the decree gone forth, and the sentence pronounced, and thoroughly execute it; a heap of words ascertaining the truth of what is predicted: *according to thy ways and according to thy doings shall they judge thee, saith the Lord God*: that is, the Chaldeans shall judge and condemn thee, and execute my judgments on thee in a just and righteous manner, as thy evil ways and works deserve.

Ver. 15. *Also the word of the Lord came unto me, saying*.] Next follows the other sign, by which the Lord shews the destruction of the temple.

Ver. 16. *Son of man, behold*, &c.] This is said to raise the attention of the prophet, something strange and unusual, interesting and affecting, being about to be delivered: *I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke*: meaning his wife; who very probably was of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to; however, of an amiable disposition, and in her conjugal relation very agreeable to the prophet; and, no doubt, a truly religious woman, and upon all accounts desirable to him. This lovely object of his affection the Lord, who is the sovereign disposer of all persons, signifies he would take away from him by death unto himself; that is, suddenly and at once; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, *with a sudden stroke*; as sometimes persons are struck with death at once with an apoplexy or palsy. The Targum renders it, with the pestilence; it was what the Jews call death by the hand of heaven, by the immediate hand of God; and, it may be, without any intervening disease; or, however, without any train of disorders which lead on to death: *yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep*; on account of the dead; neither privately nor publicly, inwardly or outwardly, though so near and dear a relation; and though it would seem strange, and be charged with want of natural affection, and with a brutish insensibility: *neither shall thy tears run down*; his cheeks, by which vent would be given to his grief, and his mind somewhat eased; but all care was to be taken to prevent any gushing of them out of his eyes, and especially that they did not run down in any quantity on his cheeks, and to be seen; though they might seem to be but a proper tribute to the dead.

Ver. 17. *Forbear to cry*, &c.] Groan or howl, or make any doleful noise: or, *be silent*[x]: which the Talmudists[y] interpret of not greeting any person: *make no mourning for the dead*: use none of those rites and ceremonies commonly observed for deceased relations and friends, particularly and especially for a wife; who is one of the seven persons for whom mourning is to be made, according to the Jewish canons[z]; and which the ties of nature, nearness of relation, and especially mutual and cordial affection, where that has taken place, require; and though a wife is not expressly mentioned among those, for whom a priest might defile himself by attending their funerals, yet must be included among those akin to him, if not solely designed, as Jarchi thinks; whose note on Lev. xxi. 2, is, there are none his kin but his wife; so that Ezekiel, though a priest, was not exempted from the observation of funeral rites, but obliged to them, had he not been forbid by a special order from the Lord: the particulars of which follow: *bind the tire of thine head upon thee*; cap or turbant, wore on the head, as a covering of it, and ornament to it, as the word used signifies; and the priests' bonnets were for glory and beauty, Exod. xxviii. 40. and such was the tire about the prophet's head, since he was a priest; and which, in time of mourning, was taken off, and it was customary for mourners to be bare-headed; and though the high-priest might not uncover his head and rend his clothes for the dead, Lev. xxi. 10. yet other priests might, unless they had a particular and special prohibition, as Ezekiel here; see Lev. x. 6. and

[x] דם tace, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus.
[y] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 15. 1.

[z] Maimon. Hilchot Ebel, c. 2. sect. 1. Buxtorf. Jud. Synagog. c. 49. p. 709.

yet it seems, by some instances, particularly that of David's mourning for Absalom, that the head was covered at such a time, 2 Sam. xix. 5. and Kimchi on the place expressly says, that it was the way and custom of mourners to cover themselves; and certain it is, that in later times, however, it has been the usage of the Jews to cover their heads in mourning; for this is one of the things expressly forbid in the Jewish canons, as Maimonides[a] says, to be used in mourning for the dead, namely, making bare the head; and covering the head is what mourners are obliged to[b]: this Gejerus[c] reconciles, by observing, that at the first of the mourning they used to take off of their heads what they wore for the sake of ornament, such as the tire, or bonnet here; but after a while covered themselves with veils when they went abroad, or others came to them. Jarchi interprets this of the *tephillim*, or phylacteries the Jews wore about their heads: and so the Talmud[d]; and the Targum is, "let thy *totaphot* "or frontlets be upon thee;" of which interpretation Jerom makes mention; but these things don't appear to be in use in Ezekiel's time: *and put on thy shoes upon thy feet*: which used to be taken off, and persons walked barefoot in times of mourning, 2 Sam. xv. 30. and this custom continues with the Jews to this day; and which they say is confirmed by this passage. One of their canons[e] runs thus, "they don't rend garments, "nor pluck off the shoe for any, until he is dead;" which supposes they do, and should do, when he is dead: and this is one of the things, their writers[f] say, is forbidden a mourner for the dead, namely, to put on his shoes; and they ask, from whence it appears that a mourner is forbid to put on his shoes? the answer is, from what is said to Ezekiel, *put on thy shoes upon thy feet*: which shews that in common it was not right nor usual to do it; and it is their custom now for mourners, when they return from the grave, to sit seven days on the ground with their feet naked[g]: *and cover not thy lips*; as the leper did in the time of his separation and distress, who put a covering upon his upper lip, Lev. xiii. 45. and as mourners did, who put a veil upon their faces: *and eat not the bread of men*; of other men; or *of mourners*[h], as the Targum; such as used to be sent to mourners by their friends, in order to refresh and revive their spirits; and who, they supposed, through their great grief, were not careful to provide food for themselves; and this they did to comfort them, and let them know that, though they had lost a relation, there were others left, who had a cordial respect for them, and heartily sympathized with them: and, according to the traditions of the Jews[i], a mourner might not eat of his own bread; but was obliged to eat the bread of others, at least his first meal, and on the first day of his mourning; though he might on the second, and on the following days; and this they endeavour to establish from this place of Scripture. What their friends used to send them at such a time were usually hard eggs and wine. Eggs, because round and spherical, and so a proper emblem of death, and might serve to put in mind of it, which goes round, is with one to-day, and with another to-morrow; and wine, to cheer their spirits, that they might forget their sorrow[k]. They also used to eat at such times a sort of pulse, called lentiles, to shew by what sort of food they lost their birth-right, or first-born[l]. And such-like things were used by the Romans in their funeral feasts, as beans, parsly, lettuce, lentiles, eggs, &c[m]. and as the Romans had their *parentalia*, and the Greeks their παρεδωνια, so the Jews had also very sumptuous feasts on such occasions; not only great personages, as kings and nobles, made them; so Archelaus made a magnificent one for the people, on the death of his father Herod[n], after the custom of the country; but even the common people were very profuse and lavish in them; and which, as Josephus[o] observes, was the cause of great poverty among them; for so prevalent was the custom, that there was a necessity of doing it, or otherwise a man would not have been reckoned a holy man; see Jer. xvi. 7.

Ver. 18. *So I spake unto the people in the morning*, &c.] Did the duty of his office as a prophet; exhorted and instructed the people, particularly informed them of what had been said to him by the Lord, the evening or night before, concerning the death of his wife, and how he was to behave under such a providence; which he told them of before-hand, that, when it came to pass, they might have a further proof of his being a true prophet of the Lord: *and at even my wife died*; suddenly, as it was said she should; this shews who is meant by the desire of his eyes, and what by the taking it away; *and I did in the morning as I was commanded*; neither moaned, nor sighed, nor wept, nor shed a tear, nor used any of the common ceremonies of mourning, but dressed and ate as at other times, as he was ordered to do; this was the next morning after his wife died. So the Syriac version, "in the "morning of the other day;" and the Arabic version, "in the morning of the following day." Thus whatever the Lord commands is to be done, though ever so contrary to the customs of men, or to natural inclinations and affections.

Ver. 19. *And the people said unto me*, &c.] Either seriously, as being desirous of knowing what was meant by all this; since they had reason to believe that it was not out of want of affection in Ezekiel to his wife that he so behaved; and therefore there must be some hidden meaning in it, which they should be glad to be informed of: or in a ludicrous manner, deriding the prophet for his conduct, and despising what he meant to instruct them in hereby: *wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us, that thou doest so?* for

[a] Maimon. Hilchot Ebel, c. 5. sect. 1.
[b] Schulchan Aruch, lib. Jore Dea, c. 380. sect. 1. c. 386. sect. 1, 2.
[c] De luctu Ebr. c. 11. sect. 5. p. 250.
[d] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 11. 1. Moed Katon, fol. 15. 1. Succa, fol. 25. 2.
[e] Masech. Semachot, c. 1. sect. 5.
[f] Maimon. Hilchot Ebel, c. 5. sect. 1. Schulchan Aruch, lib. Jore Dea, c. 380. sect. 1. 382. sect. 1, 2.
[g] Buxtorf. Jud. Synagog. c. 49. p. 706.
[h] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 11. 1. Moed Katon, fol. 15. 1. Succa, fol. 25. 2.
[i] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 27. 2. Maimon. Hilchot Ebel, c. 4. sect. 9. Schulchan Aruch, lib. Jore Dea, c. 378. sect. 1.
[k] Buxtorf. Jud. Synagog. c. 49. p. 708.
[l] Hieron. ad Paulam super obitu Blesillæ, tom. 1. operum, fol. 54. L.
[m] Vid. Kirchman. de Funer. Rom. l. 4. c. 7. p. 591.
[n] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 17. c. 8. sect. 4.
[o] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 1. sect. 1.

they suspected it was not on his own account, but to signify something to them, that these things were done; and laughing at him, they say, to what purpose are these things done? if you don't tell us for what reason they are done, instruct us by words, and not by actions: these were his fellow-captives in Babylon.

Ver. 20. *Then I answered them*, &c.] And gave them an account of the design of the whole, and what was signified hereby: *the word of the Lord came unto me, saying*; ordering him to do all he did; for he did nothing of himself, but all according to the divine will; and who also directed him to say the following things to the people, by way of explanation.

Ver. 21. *Speak unto the house of Israel*, &c.] By word of mouth, to those who were upon the spot with him in Chaldea; and by a messenger, or a letter, to them that were in Judea: *thus saith the Lord of hosts, behold, I will profane my sanctuary*; the temple, built for him, and where he dwelt, and was worshipped; where duties were performed, and holy sacrifices offered up formerly; this he now says he would profane, that is, would bring the Chaldeans against Jerusalem, who should take it, and enter into the temple, and so profane it, and make it common, yea, utterly destroy it: *the excellency of your strength, the desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth*; all which is said of the temple; it was the pride and glory of the Jews, what they boasted of, and put their confidence in, and reckoned their strength and security; it was as dear and as desirable to them as Ezekiel's wife was to him, the emblem of it; the destruction and desolation of which would be pitied by them, and would sensibly affect them upon hearing of it, even in prophecy: *and your sons and your daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword*; whom they had left behind them in Judea, when they were carried captive with Jehoiakim, and to whom they hoped to return, as their false prophets had assured them; but so it should not be, for these should die by the sword of the Chaldeans, when the city of Jerusalem should be taken, and the temple profaned; and this should be the case of the sons and daughters of those who then should be carried captive, that should be left in the land; as was the case of Gedaliah, and those that were with him.

Ver. 22. *And ye shall do as I have done*, &c.] When his wife died, and as he was ordered by the Lord; the meaning of which they were now inquiring: *ye shall not cover your lips*; as a token of mourning; nor use any other of their country rites and ceremonies, for fear of provoking their enemies, in whose hands they shall be: *nor eat the bread of men*: or *of mourners*, as the Targum; there shall be none to comfort them, or send bread to them; they shall all be alike mourners.

Ver. 23. *And your tires shall be upon your heads, and your shoes upon your feet*, &c.] As will be necessary whilst travelling, and when carrying captive to a foreign country, as now will be their case: *ye shall not mourn nor weep*; shall not dare to do it, because of their enemies; and, moreover, so great should be their miseries and calamities, that they should be struck dumb, and quite astonished and stupified with them; that they should not be able to vent their sorrow by an outward act of mourning: *but ye shall pine away for your iniquities*; without any true sense of them, or godly sorrow for them, but in wretched hardness of heart, and black despair: *and mourn one towards another*; not to God, confessing their sins, being contrite and penitent; but to one another, fretting, murmuring, and complaining at the hand of God upon them: this seems to denote the private way of mourning they should use for fear of the enemy, when they could get together by themselves, as well as their disregard to God, against whom they had sinned.

Ver. 24. *Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign*, &c.] These are the words of the prophet concerning himself; observing that in all the above things he was a sign to the Jews of what should befall them, and what should be their case: *and according to all that he hath done shall ye do*; however it might be then a matter of scorn and derision: *and when this cometh*; when this prophecy comes to pass, and all these calamities come upon the city and temple: *ye shall know that I am the Lord God*; omniscient, omnipotent, true, and faithful.

Ver. 25. *Also, thou son of man*, shall it *not* be *in the day*, &c.] This question is to be answered in the affirmative: *when I take from them their strength*; their king and kingdom, their princes and nobles, their soldiers and men of might and war, their wealth and substance, their city and the inhabitants of it; or rather their temple, in which they placed their strong confidence: so the Targum, "in the day when I shall take "from them the house of their sanctuary:" and which is called *the joy of their glory*; what they rejoiced and gloried in: *the desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set their mind, their sons and their daughters*; for to these may those phrases be applied, as well as to the temple; they being desirable to them, to be spared and continued, and on whom the affections of their hearts were set, and for whose welfare they were very solicitous. So some render it *the burden* or *care of their souls**; though the Targum applies this, as the other, to the temple, paraphrasing it, "and the delight of "their eyes shall be taken from them, and the beloved "of their souls, which is better to them than their "sons and their daughters."

Ver. 26. That *he that escapeth in that day shall come unto thee*, &c.] That is, that one that should escape the hands of the Chaldeans, when the city should be taken, should directly make the best of his way to the prophet: *to cause* thee *to hear it with thine ears*; all the particulars of the destruction of the city and temple, as it had been represented to him in vision; when he would see the exact agreement between prophecy and facts; see ch. xxxiii. 21.

Ver. 27. *In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is escaped*, &c.] And shall freely converse with him about the several facts and circumstances of taking and burning the city and temple, and of the usage of the inhabitants: *and thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb*; for from this time to the taking of Jerusalem, which was about eighteen months, the prophet had nothing to say to the people of the Jews, and so was dumb with respect to them; but was employed in prophesying against other nations, as the following chap-

* את משא נפשם onus animæ eorum, Munster; curam, vel solicitudinem, so some in Vatablus.

ters shew, unto the 33d chapter, in which we have an account of the messenger that escaped to him; but after that his mouth was opened, and he prophesied to them again: *and thou shalt be a sign unto them;* as they will then own and acknowledge: *and they shall own that I am the Lord:* who have foretold these things, and accomplished them.

CHAP. XXV.

IN this chapter the prophet foretels the judgments of God upon the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, and Philistines, for their ill usage of the Jews; on the Ammonites, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. on the Moabites, ver. 8, 9, 10, 11. on the Edomites, ver. 12, 13, 14. on the Philistines, ver. 15, 16, 17.

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord came unto me,* &c.] After he had done prophesying to the Jews, he is bid to prophesy against the Gentiles, the nations that lay nearest the Jews: *saying;* as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, set thy face against the Ammonites,* &c.] Who were of the posterity of Lot, implacable enemies of the Jews; who hated their religion, and envied their wealth and happiness; against these the prophet is bid to *set* his *face;* to look that way where they lived, and to put on a frowning countenance, and a menacing aspect: *strengthen thy face,* as the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it; look boldly at them: *and prophesy against them;* deliver out the following prophecy concerning them.

Ver. 3. *And say unto the Ammonites,* &c.] Either to their ambassadors at Babylon, or merchants there; or by letters to them, the prophet being in Chaldea, at a distance from them: *hear the word of the Lord God;* not Chemosh their idol, nor their lying oracles, but the word of the true and living God; which is always accomplished, and is never frustrated: *thus saith the Lord God, because thou saidst, aha, against my sanctuary, when it was profaned;* that is, expressed joy, as the Targum paraphrases it, at the destruction of the temple, when it was burnt by Nebuchadnezzar; it was foreknown by the Lord that they would do so, and are here threatened before-hand; for as yet the temple was not destroyed; a proof this of God's prescience of future contingencies: *and against the land of Israel, when it was desolate;* the country of the ten tribes, which had been desolate from the sixth of Hezekiah, when the people of it were carried captive by Salmaneser king of Assyria; this also was matter of joy to the Ammonites: *and against the house of Judah, when they went into captivity;* the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who were carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar; part of which had already been carried captive under Jeconiah, and the rest would be, and were, under Zedekiah; which completed the destruction of Israel and Judah, and gave the utmost pleasure to their enemies the Ammonites; who were so impious as to rejoice at the destruction of their temple, the place of their religious worship, which they abhorred; and so inhuman as to express the delight and satisfaction they had in the ruin of their fellow-creatures and neighbours, and who were originally related to them; this brutish and barbarous behaviour of theirs is resented by the Lord.

Ver. 4. *Behold, therefore, I will deliver thee to the men of the east for a possession,* &c.] The Chaldeans and Syrians, which were on the east side, as Jarchi; or the Medes and Persians, as Kimchi, which lay more eastward; or it may be the Arabians, who are commonly called the men of the east; who were a part of Nebuchadnezzar's army, and whom he might reward with this country, when taken by him; for this prophecy, according to Josephus[q], was fulfilled five years after the destruction of Jerusalem: *and they shall set their palaces in thee, and make their dwellings in thee;* or, *their camps* and *their tents*[r]; and so the Syriac version renders it, their armies and their tents; who should subdue them, and take possession of their cities and fields, and enjoy what they found there: *they shall eat thy fruit, and drink thy milk;* the fruit of their land, their vineyards and fields, and the milk of their flocks and herds, which was commonly drank in those countries; these are put for the whole of their substance. So the Targum, " they shall eat the good of thy land, " and spoil thy substance."

Ver. 5. *And I will make Rabbath a stable for camels,* &c.] Creatures much used by the eastern nations, especially the Arabians; who pitching their tents about Rabbath, the royal city, the metropolis of the children of Ammon, would convert the houses, and even palaces in it, into stables for their camels. This city, in Jerom's time, as he says, was called Philadelphia, from Ptolemy Philadelphus, who rebuilt it. *And the Ammonites a couching-place for flocks;* that is, the land of the Ammonites should be made a place for flocks of sheep to lie down in, which the Arabians would bring and feed upon it: *and ye shall know that I am the Lord;* omniscient, and sees and observes all your insults upon the children of Israel and Judah; and omnipotent, able to perform all that is threatened; and immutable, bringing about all that is here prophesied of.

Ver. 6. *For thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Their sin and punishment are further enlarged upon: *because thou hast clapped thine hands, and stamped with thy feet;* gestures expressive of joy and gladness, Isa. lv. 12. Lam. ii. 15. Jer. xlviii. 27. the Ammonites clapped their hands together, and leaped and skipped for joy, when they heard of the calamities of the Jews; who yet had more reason to be sorrowful, since they might expect their turn would be next; for the king of Babylon had a design against them, at the same time he came against Jerusalem, and was in doubt for a while which he should attack first; see ch. xxi. 20: *and rejoiced in heart with all thy despite against the land of*

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[q] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7.

[r] טירותיהם arces suas, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, Cocceius. משכניהם tentoria sua, V. L.; tabernacula sua, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, Cocceius, Starckius.

Israel: they had a secret joy in their heart, which they expressed by gestures, in the most spiteful and scornful manner they were capable of: which shewed the wretched malignity of their dispositions against the children of Israel; they hated them with a perfect hatred.

Ver. 7. *Behold, therefore, I will stretch out mine hand upon thee*, &c.] In just retaliation for clapping their hands against his people; and which hand of the Lord they would find to be a heavy one, and which they would not be able either to resist or bear. The Targum is, "I will lift up the stroke of my power upon thee:" *and will deliver thee for a spoil to the Heathen*: to the Chaldeans first, and then to the Arabians, to be spoiled and plundered by them of their wealth and substance: some render it, *for meat*[s] unto them; to be devoured and consumed by them: *and I will cut thee off from the people, and I will cause thee to perish out of the countries*: so as to be no more a people and a country; or be reckoned among the people and countries; or have any alliance with them, or help from them: *I will destroy thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord*: who has said and done all this; see the note on ver. 5.

Ver. 8. *Thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] By his servant the prophet, to whom the word of the Lord came; as concerning the Ammonites, so likewise concerning the Moabites, as follows: *because that Moab and Seir do say*; that is, the Moabites, and the Edomites, which latter are meant by Seir, that being the seat of them; these lived near one another, and bore a like enmity to the Israelites and Jews, and had the same sentiments concerning them, and said the same things of them: only Moab is mentioned in the Septuagint and Arabic versions: the Moabites are first prophesied of, and then the Edomites, who both joined in saying, *behold, the house of Judah is like unto all the Heathen*; it fares no better with them than with the rest of the nations, who don't profess and serve the same God they do; they are fallen into the hands of the king of Babylon, as well as others; and have no more security against him, nor protection from him, than other people; they pretend to serve and worship the one only living and true God, and to be his covenant-people, and to be favoured with privileges above all other nations; and yet are brought into the same miserable circumstances, and left in them, as others are; where is the God they boast of, and their superior excellence to the rest of the world? thus blasphemously, as well as wickedly, did they insult them, which was provoking to the Lord. The Targum renders it interrogatively, "in what do "the house of Judah differ from all people?" and so the Septuagint, "behold, are not the house of Israel "and Judah in like manner as all nations?" Jerom, on the place, relates a fable of the Jews, that when the city and temple were opened, the Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites, went into the temple, and saw the cherubim over the mercy-seat, and said, as all nations worship images, so Judah hath the idols of their religion. Jarchi makes mention of such a Midrash, but with some difference.

Ver. 9. *Therefore, behold, I will open the side of Moab from the cities*, &c.] Or, *the shoulder of Moab*[t]; that part of their country where their greatest strength lay. So the Targum renders it, "the strength of Moab;" where their principal cities were, their frontier towns, and fortified places, as appears by what follows: *from his cities* which are *on his frontiers*; or, *from his Ars*[u], *from his cities* which are *at his end*; at the extreme part of the land, upon the borders of his countries; the two cities of Ar and Aroer, Numb. xxi. 28. Deut. ii. 36: *the glory of the country*; as the above cities were, and what follow: *Beth-jeshimoth*; this was formerly in the tribe of Reuben, now in the possession of the Moabites, and one of their principal cities, Josh. xiii. 20: *Baal-meon*; the same with Beth-baal-meon, and which was also of the tribe of Reuben, Josh. xiii. 17. Numb. xxxii. 38. in Jerom's time it was a large village in Moab, about nine miles from Heshbon: some think by Meon is meant Menes, or Osiris the god of the Egyptians, and so this might be a temple of his; or at least he might have a temple in it, from whence it had its name: *and Kirjathaim*; or the double city, built also by the Reubenites, Numb. xxxii. 37. Josh. xiii. 19. now in the hands of the Moabites, ten miles from Medeba; on this side of the country of Moab, and through these cities, the Lord threatens to open a way for their enemies to enter in and destroy them, as follows:

Ver. 10. *Unto the men of the east with the Ammonites, and I will give them in possession*, &c.] Or, *against the Ammonites*, as the Targum; that is, way should be made for the same people of the east, the Chaldeans or Arabians, that came against the Ammonites and destroyed them, to enter into the land of Moab and possess it, as they had done the land of Ammon: *that the Ammonites may not be remembered among the nations*: the name of that people, which is entirely lost; and Moab likewise, which underwent the same fate.

Ver. 11. *I will execute judgments upon Moab*, &c.] For though the Chaldeans and Arabians were the instruments of their ruin, their destruction was of the Lord; it was his hand that was upon them, and his vengeance that was executed on them, for their hard sayings against his people; for though he had spoke against them in his providence, and chastised them for their sins, yet he will not suffer others to speak against them: *and they shall know that I am the Lord*; that takes part with Judah, and will avenge himself of all their enemies.

Ver. 12. *Thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Concerning Seir or the Edomites, the prophecy concerning the Moabites being finished: *because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance*: or, *revenging a revenge*[w]; the Edomites bore an old grudge against the Jews, not only because their father Jacob had got the birth-right and blessing from their father Esau; but because they were made tributaries to them in David's time, and afterwards severely chastised by

[s] לבג in cibum, Montanus, Gussetius. This is the Cetib or textual writing; but the Keri or marginal reading is לבז, in direptionem, Pagninus, Cocceius; in prædam, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. Both come to much one and the same sense, as Ben Melech observes, for food was of the spoil; and one word answers to another by atbash, which is a certain form of placing the alphabet; see the note on Jer. xxv. 26.

[t] כתף τον ωμον, Sept.; humerum, V. L. Montanus.

[u] מהערים ab ipsis Haris, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.

[w] בנקם נקם in ulciscendo ultionem, Montanus, Starckius.

Amaziah; these things they laid up in their minds, and vowed revenge whenever they had an opportunity; and now one offered at the destruction of Jerusalem, which they took: *and hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them;* not only by rejoicing at the destruction of the Jews, but by encouraging the Babylonians in it; assisting them therein, joining with them in plundering the city, and in cutting off those with the sword who endeavoured to make their escape; see Psal. cxxxvii. 7. Obad. ver. 12, 13, 14.

Ver. 13. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.* Because of such base and barbarous usage, from a people that were originally brethren: *I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it;* by the army of Nebuchadnezzar, by the sword of the Chaldeans, and by famine and pestilence, and such-like sore judgments; in which the hand of God is manifestly seen: *and I will make it desolate from Teman;* a very principal city of Edom, so called from Teman, the son of Eliphaz, the son of Esau, Gen. xxxvi. 15. it lay in the south o' the land of Idumea; the Targum renders it, "from the south:" *and they of Dedan shall fall by the sword;* of the Babylonians; this was another city of Edom, it lay in the north of that country; so that hereby is signified that destruction should go through it from the southern to the northern parts of it.

Ver. 14. *And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel, &c.*] This was fulfilled in the times of the Maccabees, when Judas Maccabæus overthrew and conquered them, 1 Maccab. v. 3. and when Hyrcanus took their cities, and subdued them, and they became Jews, as Josephus[x] relates; though Kimchi thinks this refers to future time, and is yet to be accomplished; and it is, by the ancient Jews[y], understood of the times of the Messiah: some choose to understand the phrase, *by the hand of my people Israel,* the same hand by which judgment was inflicted upon Israel; suggesting that by the same hand vengeance would be inflicted on the Edomites, namely, by the Babylonians: *and they shall do in Edom according to mine anger and according to my fury;* that is, shall execute all the anger and fury, or all that punishment in anger and fury, which the Lord in righteous judgment has appointed them to, and has determined shall be performed upon them, by the children of Israel or the Babylonians, as his instruments: *and they shall know my vengeance, saith the Lord God;* the meaning is, they shall feel it, and be sensible of it, and know that it comes from the Lord himself; full of resentment against them, and highly displeased at their behaviour towards his people Israel.

Ver. 15. *Thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Once more, and concerning another enemy of the people of Israel, and who had been of old an implacable one: *because the Philistines have dealt by revenge;* for what they suffered in the times of Saul, when Goliah was slain by David, and their army was discomfited; and for the overthrow of them by David, when he came to the throne; and for his burning their images, and subduing them, 1 Sam. xvii. 51, 52. 2 Sam. v. 20, 21, 25. and viii. 1. this revenge they took in the time of Ahaz, 2 Chron. xxviii. 18. and very probably also shewed their spite at the time of Jerusalem's destruction: *and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy it for the old hatred;* which they bore to the people of Israel, from their first settlement in Canaan; from the times of the judges, particularly Samson; and from the times of Saul and David: it was an old grudge they bore, they had spite and malice in their hearts, and wanted an opportunity to vent it; having determined to take vengeance when they could, and utterly destroy them from being a people; very likely, through despite, they assisted the Chaldean army: or, this they did *with a perpetual hatred*[z]; they did every thing they could, in a spiteful and malicious way, to perpetuate the hatred between them and Israel.

Ver. 16. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Because of such wretched malice and despiteful usage: *behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines;* as is foretold, Jer. ch. xlvii: *and I will cut off the Cherethim;* one of the tribes of the Philistines, a principal part of their country, which lay to the south, 1 Sam. xxx. 14. see Zeph. ii. 5. there is a beautiful paronomasia[a] in the words: *and destroy the remnant of the sea-coast;* as that of Ashdod, Caphtor, and Ashkelon, formerly spoiled by other persons; what they left should now be utterly destroyed; see Isa. xx. 1. Jer. xxv. 20. and xlvii. 45.

Ver. 17. *And I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes, &c.*] By way of retaliation for their vengeance and fury, wrath and malice, against his people; suggesting, that the judgments inflicted on them, for quantity and quality, should be very great: *and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them;* they shall see the hand of God in it, acknowledge his justice, and confess that their gods were idols, and that the God of Israel is the only true God.

CHAP. XXVI.

THIS chapter contains a prophecy of the destruction of Tyre. The time of the prophecy, ver. 1. the cause of the destruction of it, rejoicing at the ruin of Jerusalem, ver. 2. the instruments of it, many nations, particularly the king of Babylon, ver. 3—7. the manner in which it shall be done, ver. 8—14. the lamentation of other isles, and the princes of them, on account of it, ver. 15—18. the utter destruction of it, so as never to be found any more, ver. 19—21.

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass in the eleventh year, &c.*] Of Jehoiachin's captivity and Zedekiah's reign, the same year that Jerusalem was taken: *in the first day of*

[x] Antiqu. l. 13. c. 9. sect. 1.
[y] In Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 179. 3.

[z] איבת עולם inimicitias perpetuas, Pagninus; inimicitia perpetua, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[a] והכרתי את כרתים.

the month; but what month is not mentioned; some have thought the first month, and so it was the first day of the year; others the fourth, the same in which the city of Jerusalem was taken; but more probably the fifth, the first of which was twenty days after the taking it; in which time the news of it might be brought to Tyre, at which she rejoiced; and for which her destruction is threatened, and here prophesied of: that *the word of the Lord came unto me, saying;* as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, aha,* &c.] As rejoicing at her destruction, and insulting over her in it; which was barbarous and inhuman, and resented by the Lord: *she is broken* that was *the gates of the people;* through whose gates the people went in and out in great numbers; a city to which there was great resort, not only for religion, from all parts, at their solemn feasts, but for merchandise from several parts of the world; and was now full of people before its destruction, the inhabitants of Judea having fled thither for safety, upon the invasion made by the king of Babylon; but now the city was broken up, as it is said it was, by the Chaldean army, Jer. lii. 7. its gates and walls were broken down, and lay in a ruinous condition. The Targum is, "she is broken down that afforded merchandise to "all people." *She is turned unto me;* either the inhabitants of Jerusalem, which escaped and fled to Tyre for refuge; or the spoil taken out of it, which was carried there to be sold; and even the captives themselves to be sold for slaves, which was one part of the merchandise of Tyre; see ch. xxvii. 13. or the business, trade, and merchandise carried on in Jerusalem, were brought to Tyre upon its destruction; so Jarchi and Kimchi. The Targum is, "she is turned to come "unto me;" which favours the first sense; all may be intended. *I shall be replenished,* now *she is laid waste;* or, *I shall be filled* [b]; with inhabitants, riches, and wealth, with merchants and merchandise, Jerusalem her rival being destroyed; this was what gave her joy; and is a common thing for persons to rejoice at the fall or death of those of the same trade with them; hoping for an increase of theirs by means of it, which yet is sinful.

Ver. 3. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Who knew the thoughts of the inhabitants of Tyre, and what joy possessed their hearts, and which their lips expressed; and who informs the prophet of it, though at a great distance, and declares his resentment at it: *behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus;* and nothing can be more dreadful and formidable than to have God against a nation, city, or a particular person: Tyre was a type of antichrist, who will express a like joy at the death of the witnesses; thinking that the merchandise of Rome will be increased greatly, and there will be nothing to interrupt it, Rev. xi. 10. but God will shew his displeasure, and bring sudden destruction on it: *and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up;* the Chaldean army, consisting of soldiers of many nations; who for their number, noise, and fury, are compared to the raging waves of the sea. So the Targum, "I will bring up "against thee an army of many people, as the sea "ascendeth in the raging of its waves;" the ten kings shall hate the whore, and destroy her, even those very people she reigns over, compared to many waters, Rev. xvii. 15, 16.

Ver. 4. *And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus,* &c.] Undermining them, or breaking them down with their battering-rams: *and break down her towers;* with axes, ver. 9. built upon the walls; erected for the defence of the city, and for watchmen to stand in, to look out from them for the enemy, and observe his motions, as well as for soldiers to fight from: *and I will scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock;* a bare smooth rock, which has not any surface of earth upon it. So the Targum, "I will "give her for the smoothness of an open rock." Tyre was built upon a rock; and whereas the inhabitants had brought earth thither, and laid it upon it, in order to make gardens and orchards, and plant flowers and trees; this should be all removed, and it should become a bare rock, as it was at first. It denotes the utter destruction of it. It has its name from a word which signifies a rock; see the note on Isa. xxiii. 1.

Ver. 5. *It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea,* &c.] Where only fishermen would be seen washing their nets, and then spreading them upon this rock, where Tyre stood, to dry them; and this has been confirmed by travellers, who have seen fishermen spreading and drying their nets, and having no other habitations on it but the huts of these men. Huetius [c] relates, that he remembered one Hadrian Parvillarius, a Jesuit, a candid and learned man, particularly in the Arabic language, who lived ten years in Syria; and to have heard him say, that when he saw the ruins of Tyre, its rocks to the sea, and scattered stones on the shore, and made clean smooth by the sun, waves, and wind, and only used for drying fishermen's nets, it brought to his mind this passage of the prophet; as it did to Mr. Maundrell [d] when on the spot, a few years ago; who says, "you see nothing "here but a mere Babel of broken walls, pillars, "vaults, *&c.* there being not so much as one entire "house left; its present inhabitants are only a few "poor wretches, harbouring themselves in the vaults, "and subsisting chiefly upon fishing; who seem to "be preserved in this place by divine Providence, as "a visible argument how God has fulfilled his word "concerning Tyre, viz. *that it should be as the top of a "rock,*" &c.: so Dr. Shaw [e] says, this port, small as it is at present, is choked up to that degree with sand and rubbish, that the boats of these poor fishermen, who now and then visit this once renowned emporium and *dry their nets upon its rocks and ruins,* can with great difficulty only be admitted: *for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God;* and therefore it should certainly come to pass, as it has: *and it shall become a spoil to the nations;* the army of many nations, that besieged it for thirteen years under Nebuchadnezzar.

Ver. 6. *And her daughters which are in the field shall be slain by the sword,* &c.] That is, the inhabitants of the cities, towns, and villages, on the shore near it, and

[b] אמלאה impleber, Coccerius, Starckius.
[c] Evangel. Demonstrat. prop. 6. p. 328.
[d] Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 48, 49. Ed. 7.
[e] Travels, p. 273. Ed. 2.

which were subject to it; as such cities are frequently in Scripture called the daughters of the place to which they belong: or their daughters literally, that should get out of the city, and endeavour to make their escape; yet should fall into the enemies' hands, who would not spare them on account of their sex or age. The Targum favours the former sense, as most of the Jewish writers do, which is, "and the inhabitants of "the villages which are in the field shall be killed "by the sword:" *and they shall know that I am the Lord*; the true God, and not Hercules or Apollo, or any other idols they worshipped; when they shall see all these things exactly accomplished, now prophesied of; which none but the omniscient God could foretel.

Ver. 7. *For thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] What follows; and declares by name the person that should be the instrument of this ruin, and the manner in which it should be brought about: *I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon*: a prince whose name was terrible, having conquered many nations; the Lord is said to bring him against Tyre, because he inclined his heart to steer his course this way; encouraged him to this work; led and protected his army; and, at last, gave him success: it held out thirteen years against him, and then was taken. The siege began, according to Mr. Whiston[f], A. M. 3650, and of the Julian period 4128, and before Christ 586; and was taken A. M. 3663, and of the Julian period 4141, and before Christ 573; according to Bishop Usher[g], it began A. M. 3419, and of the Julian period 4129, and before Christ 585; and was taken A. M. 3432, and of the Julian period 4142, and before Christ 572. The Phœnician historians make mention of the siege of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar; and Berosus speaks of his subduing the whole country of Phœnicia, in which Tyre was; with whom agree Philostratus and Megasthenes[h]: *a king of kings from the north*: who had many kings tributaries to him; the metropolis of whose kingdom lay somewhat, though not fully, north to Tyre: *with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and much people*: with a very numerous army, consisting of a large cavalry; horses being very numerous in the countries subject to him; and which he mounted his men on, both for their more easy travelling, and for their better fighting, and for the terror of their enemies.

Ver. 8. *He shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field*, &c.] The first thing he would do would be to destroy the cities, towns and villages on the continent, near to Tyre, and dependent on it, as in ver. 6. and so the Targum is here, as there: *and he shall make a fort against thee, and cast a mount against thee*; a fort built of wood, and a mount made of earth, from which stones might be cast out of their engines, and arrows shot from their bows into the city, to the damaging of the houses, and the hurt of the inhabitants: *and lift up the buckler against thee*: or *shield*; that is, as the Targum paraphrases it, "set against thee such "who are armed with shields;" to repel the arrows shot out from the city, and so defeat the design of them.

Ver. 9. *And he shall set engines of war against thy walls*, &c.] Which some Jewish writers understand of cross-bows, out of which stones or arrows were cast; but rather, according to Kimchi and Jarchi, they were warlike machines, invented to throw large stones against the walls of a place, to beat them down. Some think they were the same with the battering-rams, used in sieges for the demolishing of walls; which was a late invention of those times, Ezekiel being the first writer, it is said, that makes mention of them: *and with his axes he shall break down thy towers*; the word here used signifies any thing made of iron, as swords, spears, hammers, and axes; the latter, being more proper to demolish towers, is here pitched on by our translators. The Targum renders it, with stones of iron; that is, with iron balls cast out of their engines.

Ver. 10. *By reason of the abundance of his horses their dust shall cover thee*, &c.] The dust raised by the feet of the horses so numerous, should rise in such quantities, and to such a height, as to be like a cloud, which should cover the city; an hyperbolical way of speaking, as Kimchi observes; as is also the following clause: *thy walls shall shake at the noise of the horsemen, and of the wheels, and of the chariots*; at the shouts of the horsemen upon every attack, and the rattling of the chariot-wheels running to and fro, in carrying on their designs: *when ye shall enter into thy gates*; that is, then particularly shall such a shout be made by the horsemen, and such rattling of the chariots, as will even make the walls of the city to shake; an excess of expression, signifying the prodigious noise made at their entrance into it: *as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach*; or, *according to the entrance of a city broken up*[i]; when its walls are broken down, and a gap is made; at which men rush in in great numbers, and with great force and clamour.

Ver. 11. *With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets*, &c.] Such a number of horses running to and fro in the streets, and prancing upon the pavements, shall break them up, and destroy them, so that they shall be mere mire and dirt: *he shall slay thy people by the sword*; such as would not lay down their arms and submit; or their principal ones, who encouraged the inhabitants to hold out the siege to such a length of time as they did; which might provoke Nebuchadnezzar to use them with more severity: *and thy strong garrisons shall go down to the ground*; where their soldiers were placed for defence; their citadel and other towers: or, *the statues of thy strength*[k]; their strong statues made of marble, &c. erected as trophies of victories obtained by them; or to the honour of some worthy magistrates, and principal citizens; or of their confederates and allies; or rather of their deities, such as Hercules and Apollo, their tutelar gods; which, though chained as they were, that they might not depart, shall now fall to the ground, unable to protect themselves or their votaries: all that is here said, concerning the destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, seems to be understood of old Tyre,

[f] Chronological Tables, cent. 10.
[g] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3419, 3432.
[h] Apud Joseph. adv. Apion. l. 1. c. 19, 20, 21.
[i] כמבואי עיר מבקעה tanquam introitus civitatis diruptæ, Montanus; dissipatæ, Pagninus; quemadmodum ingrediuntur urbem diruptam, Piscator; quemadmodum intratur urbs prærupta, Cocceius.
[k] מצבות עזך statuæ fortitudinis tuæ, Pagninus, Montanus; columnas tuas robustas, Cocceius; columnas roboris tui, Starckius.

which was upon the continent; for this account agrees not with the isle.

Ver. 12. *And they shall make a spoil of thy riches*, &c.] The Chaldean army, when they entered the city, and got possession of it, would plunder it, and divide the riches of it among them: *and make a prey of thy merchandise*; of the merchants' goods, laid up in their warehouses for sale, which was greatly hindered by this long siege; compare with this Rev. xviii. 11, 12: *and they shall break down thy walls*; the walls of their houses; mention being made before of breaking down the walls of the city, towers, and garrisons: *and destroy thy pleasant houses*: or, *houses of thy desire*[l]: the most desirable ones in the city; the houses of their princes and chief magistrates; their summer-houses; or which were most delightfully situated towards the sea, to have the prospect and advantage of that: *and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water*; of the sea, near unto or about it; into which they cast the rubbish of the demolished houses, stones, timber, and dust, and so left it bare and naked: or rather this was fulfilled when Alexander, with the ruins of old Tyre, its stones, timber, and rubbish, and trees from Lebanon, made a causeway from the continent to the island; and by that means took it, after seven months' toil and labour of this sort[m].

Ver. 13. *And I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease*, &c.] As this city abounded with riches, so with carnal mirth and pleasure; it was a *joyous city*, Isa. xxiii. 7. the inhabitants lived merrily and jovially; were much given to music, which was very diverting and amusing to foreigners that traded with them; but now it would be all over with them; there would be no more songs, nor any to sing them: *and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard*; neither vocal nor instrumental music; and this will be one day the case of Rome, of which Tyre was a type, Rev. xviii. 22.

Ver. 14. *And I will make thee like the top of a rock*, &c.] Smooth and bare; see the note on ver. 4: *and thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon*; see the note on ver. 5: *thou shalt be built no more*; this must be understood with some restriction and limitation; as that it should not be built any more in the same stately manner; or be raised to royal dignity, and be governed in the grand manner it had been: or be built upon the same spot; or after its last destruction, to which the prophecy may have respect; it being usual in Scripture for prophecies to regard what is more remote as well as more near; for, upon the destruction of it by Nebuchadnezzar, it was to be restored after seventy years, according to Isaiah's prophecy, ch. xxiii. 15, 17. and, many years after this, new Tyre was besieged, taken, and destroyed by Alexander; and after this it was rebuilt; we read of it in the New Testament; see the note on Acts xxi. 3. and in Jerom's time it was a most noble and beautiful city, as he on this passage observes; indeed, as Kimchi says, who lived near a thousand years after Jerom, the city then built in his time called Tyre was built upon the continent near the sea-shore; whereas Tyre destroyed by Alexander was built in the midst of the sea, and was as the top of a rock. It has since been destroyed by Saladine, in the year 1291; and now quite uninhabited, unless by fishermen, who wash, dry, and mend their nets here: *for I the Lord have spoken it, saith the Lord God*; and therefore it shall be accomplished, as it has been; no word of his returning void, and becoming of no effect. The Targum is, "because I the "Lord have decreed by my word, saith the Lord God;" it is a determination and resolution of his, and none can disannul it. Abendana thinks that hitherto the prophecy is concerning the first destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, and what follows is concerning the destruction of it by Alexander.

Ver. 15. *Thus saith the Lord God to Tyrus*, &c.] By his prophet, who very probably delivered this prophecy to the ambassadors of Tyre at Babylon; or to some of their merchants that traded there; or sent it in a letter to them: *shall not the isles shake at the sound of thy fall*; when they hear the noise of Tyre being taken, it will make them tremble, as fearing their turn will be next; that if a city so well fortified by nature and art, so well supplied with men and money, that had held out the siege so long, should at last surrender; what should they, the neighbouring isles, do, if attacked, who were so inferior to it? and besides, they might have much of their goods in it, in which they traded with the inhabitants of it, trusting to its great strength, and which would now give them a sensible concern. The Targum renders it, the suburbs; and another Jewish[n] writer, the villages; those that were near to Tyre: *when the wounded cry, when the slaughter is made in the midst of thee?* upon the enemy's entrance, putting to the sword all they meet with; when those that are wounded shall cry, either to have their lives spared, or through the pain and distress occasioned by their wounds.

Ver. 16. *Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones*, &c.] The kings of the islands of the sea shall lay aside their regalia, all their royal grandeur, and the ensigns of it; leave their thrones of state, and sit in an humble posture: *and lay away their robes, and put off their broidered garments*; their royal robes and raiment of needle-work curiously embroidered, and richly wrought, such as princes wear; so did the king of Nineveh in token of humiliation, Jon. iii. 6. The Septuagint and Arabic versions understand the first clause of their taking their mitres, or diadems, from their heads: *they shall clothe themselves with trembling*; they shall tremble from head to foot in every joint, as if they were covered with it, as with a garment; or, being clothed with sackcloth, as mourners used to be, shall shake and tremble, being used to other and better clothing: *they shall sit upon the ground*; as Job did, and his friends, with dust and ashes on their heads, as persons in distress were wont to do, Job ii. 8, 13: *and shall tremble at every moment*; continually, every hour, minute, and moment of the day: or, *at the breaches*[o]; so Jarchi; that is, those made upon Tyre; fearing lest the same should be made upon them; so the Targum, *because of their breaches*;

[l] בתי חמדתך domos desiderii tui, Montanus, Vatablus.
[m] Curt. Hist. l. 4. c. 2. 4.

[n] R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 42. 2.
[o] לרגעים super repentino casu suo, Vulg. Lat.

or at the ruin and destruction they fear will be their case also: *and be astonished at thee;* that a city so wealthy and mighty should be brought so low; see Rev. xviii. 9, 10.

Ver. 17. *And they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say unto thee,* &c.] The following mournful song: *how art thou destroyed that wast inhabited of sea-faring men; or, of the seas:* by men who used the seas, and traded by sea to different parts of the world; and was frequented by persons that came by sea thither, by the great ocean, by the Red sea, the Mediterranean sea, and others; or, which was surrounded by the sea. So the Targum, "that dwellest in the midst "of the sea:" *the renowned city, which wast strong in the sea;* fortified by the sea, and against it; strong in shipping and naval stores; so as to be formidable to others, and mistress of the sea. The Targum is, "which dwell in the strength of the sea;" and had the strength and riches of it brought unto it; and so was famous all the world over for its commerce, wealth, and power; but now ruined and undone: *she and her inhabitants, which cause their terror to be on all that haunt it!* the sea; on all that used the seas; or on all the inhabitants of the islands of the sea: who all stood in fear of Tyre and her inhabitants, and were obliged to strike their sails to their ships.

Ver. 18. *Now shall the isles tremble in the day of thy fall,* &c.] The isles near unto it, the isles of the Mediterranean sea; the inhabitants of them, the merchants who from thence traded with Tyre, the sea-faring men of those places; partly on account of losses sustained hereby, and partly through fear of the same calamities coming upon themselves; see Rev. xviii. 11, 15, 17: *yea, the isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure;* as at the cry of the wounded, and the number of the slain; so on account of those that should be carried away captive by the Babylonians; as well as at the departure of those that should be obliged to fly to other colonies, Isa. xxiii. 6. so that, upon one account or another, it shall be entirely stripped of its inhabitants.

Ver. 19. *For thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Both to the terror of Tyre, and for the comfort of his people: *when I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited;* whose trade is ruined, whose inhabitants are destroyed, and whose walls are broken down, and become a mere waste and desert; where no person or any thing of value are to be seen: *when I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and the great waters shall cover thee;* the waters of the sea shall rush in and overflow the city, the walls of it being broken down; just as the old world, and the cities of it, were overflowed with the deluge, to which the allusion may be; whether this was literally accomplished on Tyre is not certain; perhaps it is to be taken in a figurative sense, and to be understood of the large army of the Chaldeans that should come up against it, and overpower it. So the Targum, "when I shall bring up against "them an army of people, who are many as the waters "of the deep, and many people shall cover thee;" see Rev. xvii. 15, 16.

Ver. 20. *When I shall bring thee down with them that descend into the pit,* &c.] The grave, and make thee like to them: *with the people of old time;* either the people of the old world, or, however, who have been dead long ago: *and shall set thee in the low parts of the earth;* where the dead are laid: *in places desolate of old;* long ago unfrequented by men; as such places be as are for the burial of the dead: *with them that go down to the pit, that thou be not inhabited;* all the inhabitants being free among the dead; a heap of words made use of to express the same thing, for the confirmation of it; namely, that the condition of Tyre should be like that of dead men, who have been of old dead, and are remembered no more. Jarchi interprets the *pit,* of hell; as if this respected their everlasting perdition, as well as temporal ruin; it may be applied to the beast which goeth into perdition, Rev. xvii. 8; *and I shall set glory in the land of the living;* in the land of Israel; so the Targum; and it is interpreted by the Jewish expositors and others the same way; and which may be called *the land of the living;* because the living God was worshipped in it; living men in a spiritual sense dwelt there, who offered up living sacrifices unto God, and who had the promise and pledge of eternal life; and which was the *glory* of all lands, as it is sometimes called, where the same word is used as here, ch. xx. 6. which had its accomplishment in some respects at the Jews' return from Babylon; but, as Tyre here is a type of antichrist, it may be observed, that, at the time of his fall and destruction, God will put a glory upon his church and people, upon which there shall be a defence; see Isa. iv. 5. and lx. 1. This is interpreted by the Talmudists* of the resurrection of the dead, when they that die in the land of Israel shall live.

Ver. 21. *I will make thee a terror,* &c.] To all the isles round about, who shall shake and tremble at the ruin of Tyre, as before observed; or to herself, being brought into a most terrible and distressed condition: *and thou shalt be no more;* in the same place and situation, in the same happy state and condition: *though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord God;* this is true of the antitype, Babylon, or antichrist, Rev. xviii. 21.

CHAP. XXVII.

THIS chapter contains a lamentation on Tyre; setting forth her former grandeur, riches, and commerce; her ruin and destruction; and the concern of others on that account. The prophet is bid to take up his lamentation concerning it, ver. 1, 2. observing her situation and magnificence, of which she boasted, ver. 3, 4. describing the excellency of her shipping and naval stores, ver. 5, 6, 7. declaring who were her mariners, pilots, and caulkers, ver. 8, 9. her military men, ver. 10, 11. her several merchants, and the things they

* Vid. Kimchi in loc. & T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 111. 1.

traded in with her in her fairs and markets, ver. 12—25. then follows an account of her destruction, ver. 26, 27. the lamentation of pilots and mariners because of it, ver. 28—32. and of the kings and inhabitants of the isles, and merchants of the people, ver. 33—36.

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord came again unto me, &c.*] Upon the same subject, the destruction of Tyre: *saying;* as follows:

Ver. 2. *Now, thou son of man, take up a lamentation for Tyrus.*] Compose an elegy, and sing it; make a mournful noise, and deliver out a funeral ditty; such as the *præficæ*, or mournful women, made at funerals, in which they said all they could in praise of the dead, and made very doleful lamentations for them: this the prophet was to do in a prophetic manner, for the confirmation of what was prophesied of by him; and it may teach us, that even wicked men are to be pitied, when in distress and calamity.

Ver. 3. *And say unto Tyrus, O thou that art situate at the entry of the sea, &c.*] Of the Mediterranean sea; at the eastern part of it, not above half a mile from the continent; and so fit for a sea-port, and a harbour for shipping; so mystical Tyre sits on many waters, Rev. xvii. 2: which art *a merchant of the people for many isles;* the inhabitants of many isles brought the produce of them to her; who took them off their hands, or sold them for them to others; these came from several quarters to trade with her in her markets; and who supplied other isles and countries with all sorts of commodities, for which they either resorted to her, or she sent by ships unto them; so Rome is represented as the seat of merchandise, Rev. xviii. 7, 11, 12, 13: *thus saith the Lord God, O Tyrus, thou hast said;* in thine heart, in the pride of it, and with thy mouth, praising and commending thyself; which is not right: *I am of perfect beauty;* built on a good foundation, a rock; surrounded with walls and towers; the streets arranged in order, and filled with goodly houses; having a good harbour for shipping, and being a mart for all manner of merchandise. Jerusalem being destroyed, Tyre assumes her character, Psal. xlviii. 2. and l. 2. Lam. ii. 15.

Ver. 4. *Thy borders are in the midst of the seas, &c.*] Fixed by the Lord himself, and which could never be removed. Tyre stood about four furlongs from the continent, surrounded with the waters of the sea, till it was made a peninsula by Alexander: *thy builders have perfected thy beauty.* The Sidonians were the first builders of the city, as Justin[q] says; who began and carried on the building of it to the utmost of their knowledge and skill; and which was afterwards perfected by other builders, who made it the most beautiful city in all those parts; unless this is to be understood of her shipbuilders, who brought the art of building ships in her to such a perfection, as made her famous throughout the world; since they are immediately spoken of without any other antecedent.

Ver. 5. *They have made all thy ship-boards of fir-trees of Senir, &c.*] The same with Sion and Hermon, which the Sidonians called Sirion, and the Amorites Shenir, Deut. iii. 9. and iv. 48. here, it seems, grew the best of fir-trees, of which the Tyrians made boards and planks for shipping; of these the two sides of the ship, as the word[r] here used in the dual number is thought to signify, or the fore and hind decks, were made. The Targum is, "with fir-trees of Senir they "built for thee all thy bridges;" the planks from which they went from one ship to another; but these are of too small consequence to be mentioned; rather the main of the ship is intended, which was built of fir-planks; but our oaken ones are much preferable: *they have taken cedars from Lebanon, to make masts for thee;* large poles for the yards and sails to be fastened to, for receiving the wind necessary in navigation; called the main-mast, the fore-mast, the mizen-mast, and the boltsprit; all these are only in large vessels; whether the Tyrians had all of these is not certain; some they had, and which were made of the cedars of Lebanon; which, being large tall trees, were fit for this purpose. The Tyrians[s] are said to be the first inventors of navigation.

Ver. 6. *Of the oaks of Bashan have they made thine oars, &c.*] To row the ships with; for their ships probably were no other than galleys, which were rowed with oars, as were the ships of first invention. Bashan was a country in Judea where oaks grew; see Isa. ii. 13. The country of Judea in general was famous for oaks; it abounded with them in the times of Homer[t], who speaks of Typho being buried in a country abounding with oaks, among the rich or fat people of Judea; and he seems to design Bashan particularly, of which Og was king, whom he calls Typho, and of whose bed he makes mention in the same place; hence several places in Judea had their names from the oaks which grew there, as Elon-moreh, Allon-bachuth, Elon-meonenim, Elon-tabor, and Elon-beth-hanan, Gen. xii. 6. and xxxv. 8. Judg. ix. 37. 1 Sam. x. 3. 1 Kings iv. 9. and which one would have thought were fitter to make their ships of; but of these only their oars were made: *the company of the Ashurites have made thy benches of ivory, brought out of the isles of Chittim;* the benches for the rowers to sit on, or for others in the cabin and decks; but that these should be wholly of ivory is not very probable; nor was ivory brought from the isles of Chittim, but from other parts; nor is it easy to say who the company of the Ashurites were; some say the Assyrians; but why they should be so called is not plain. Jarchi makes בת אשרים to be but one word, which signifies box-trees, as it is used in Isa. xli. 19. and he supposes that these benches, or be they what they will, were made of box-trees covered or inlaid with ivory. So the Targum, "the lintels of thy gates (the hatches) were planks of "box-tree inlaid with ivory;" which box, and not the ivory, was brought from the isles of Chittim; either from Cyprus, where was a place called Citium; or from Macedonia, from whence box was fetched; or from the province of Apulia, as the Targum; where there might be plenty of it, as in Corsica, and other places, where particularly the best box grows, as Pliny[u]

[q] Ex Trogo, l. 18. c. 3.

[r] לחותים tabulata duplicia, Munster; duas tabulas, Vatablus.

[s] Prima ratem ventis credere docta Tyros. Catullus.

[t] Χωρῳ ὑλήεντ', Ὕδης ἐν πίονι δήμῳ. Homer. Iliad. 2. Vid. Dickinson. Delphi Phœnicis. c. 2. p. 13, 16.

[u] Nat. Hist. l. 16. c. 16.

says. Jerom interprets Cittim of Italy; and Ben Gorion says[w] that Cittim are the Romans.

Ver. 7. *Fine linen with broidered work from Egypt,* &c.] From whence came the finest and whitest linen; and which they embroidered with needle-work, which looked very beautiful. Pliny[x] says there were four sorts of linen in Egypt, called Tanitic, Pelusiac, Butic, and Tentyritic, from the names and provinces where they were produced; of the second sort the garments of the high-priest among the Jews were made; for they say[y], on the day of atonement he was in the morning clothed with Pelusiac garments; that is, with garments made of linen which came from Pelusium, a well-known city in Egypt; and which Jarchi[z] says was the best, and in the greatest esteem; and one of the Misnic commentators says[a] that the linen from Pelusium is fine and beautiful, and comes from the land of Raamses; and observes, that, in the Jerusalem Targum, Raamses is said to be Pelusium; but though they are not one and the same place, yet they are both in the same country, Egypt, and near one another; and with this sort of linen the priests of Hercules were clothed, according to Silius[b]; and so the שש, *shesh*, or linen, of which the garments of the Jewish priests in common were made, was linen from Egypt; and which their Rabbins[c] say is the best, and is only found there. The Phœnicians, of which Tyre was a principal city, took linen of Egypt, and traded with other nations with it, as well as made use of it for themselves; particularly with the Ethiopians, the inhabitants of the isle of Cernes, now called the Canaries, who took of them Egyptian goods, as linen, *&c.*; in lieu of which they had of them elephants' teeth, the skins of lions, leopards, deer, and other creatures[d]: now such fine linen as this *was that which thou spreadest forth to be thy sail*; not content with canvass or coarse linen, which would have done as well, they must have the finest Egyptian linen, and this very curiously embroidered, to make their sails of they spread upon their masts, to receive the wind; at least this they spread *for a flag*[e], standard or ensign, as the word may be rendered; when they hoisted up their colours on any occasion, they were such as these; *blue and purple, from the isles of Elishah, was that which covered thee;* meaning not garments made of cloth of these colours, which the master of the vessel or mariners wore; but the tilts, or tents, or canopies erected on the decks, where they sat sheltered from the rain, wind, or sun; these were made of stuff died of a violet and purple colour, the best they could get; and which they fetched from the isles of Elishah, or the Egean sea, from Coa, Rhodis, Nisyrus, and other places famous for purple, as Tyre itself afterwards was. The Targum is, " from the " province of Italy;" or of Apulia, as others[f]; see Rev. xviii. 12, 16.

Ver. 8. *The inhabitants of Zidon and Arvad were thy mariners,* &c.] Zidon was a city in Phœnicia, near to Tyre, and older than that, by whose inhabitants it was built; see the notes on Isa. xxiii. 2, 4. and Arvad was an island in Phœnicia, to the south of Zidon, not far from Tyre. Mr. Maundrell[g] says it is about a league distant from the shore; and is now called by the Turks Ru-ad. It seemed to the eye to be not above two or three furlongs long, and wholly filled up with tall buildings like castles; its ancient inhabitants, he observes, were famous for navigation, and had a command upon the continent as far as Gabale after mentioned. Dr. Shaw[h] says it is at present called Rou-wadde; and that the prospect of it from the continent is wonderfully magnificent; promising at a distance a continued train of fine buildings and impregnable fortifications; but this is entirely owing to the height and rockiness of its situation; for at present all the strength and beauty it can boast of lies in a weak unfortified castle, with a few small cannon to defend it; so that the prophecy of Jeremiah appears to be fulfilled, *Arpad is confounded*, Jer. xlix. 23. This is the Aradus of Strabo, and other writers; and which he says is distant from the land twenty furlongs, and is about seven furlongs in circumference; and is said to be built by the Sidonians[i]; the inhabitants of it are the same with the Arvadite, Gen. x. 18. these places brought up abundance of seafaring men, and which furnished Tyre with *rowers*, as the word[k] signifies; which was the most slavish work in navigation: *thy wise men, O Tyrus, that were in thee, were thy pilots;* such as had learnt the art of navigation; were well versed in geography; understood the charts; knew the shores of different places; where were creeks and promontories, rocks and sands; these were brought up among themselves, and made pilots or governors, as the Targum renders it; who have their names here from the *ropes*[m] the sails are fastened to; and which they loosened or contracted, as they saw fit.

Ver. 9. *The ancients of Gebal,* &c.] A promontory of the Phœnicians, the same with the Gabale of Pliny[n], and with the land of the Giblites, Josh. xiii. 5. 1 Kings v. 18. see Psal. lxxxiii. 7. It was by the Greeks called Byblus; and so the Septuagint here render the words, the elders of Bybli or Byblus, a place once famous for the birth and temple of Adonis; it is now called Gibyle. Mr. Maundrell[o] says it is pleasantly situated by the sea-side, and that at present it contains but a little extent of ground, yet more than enough for the small number of its inhabitants; it is compassed with a dry ditch, and a wall with square towers in it, at about every forty yards' distance; on its south side it has an old castle; within it is a church; besides which it has nothing remarkable; though anciently it was a place of no mean extent, as well as beauty, as may appear from the many heaps of ruins, and the fine pillars that are scattered up and down in the gardens

[w] Heb. Hist. l. 1. c. 1. p. 7.
[x] Nat. Hist. l. 19. c. 1.
[y] Misn. Yoma, c. 3. sect. 7.
[z] Gloss. in T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 34. 2.
[a] Bartenora in Misn. Yoma, ib.
[b] ——— Velantur corpora lino,
Et Pelusiaco præfulget stamine vertex. L. 3. de Bell. Punic.
[c] Aben Ezra in Exod. xxv. 4.
[d] Vid. Reinesium de Lingua Punica, c. 2. sect. 12.
[e] נס in signum, sive vexillum, Gussetius; so some in Bootius.
[f] So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 48. 1.
[g] Journey from Aleppo, &c. p. 19. Ed. 7.
[h] Travels, p. 267. Ed. 2.
[i] Geograph. l. 16. p. 518.
[k] שטים remiges, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, Cocceius, Starckius.
[l] חובליך a חבל funis, ita dicuntur a contrahendis aut laxandis funibus veli, Vatablus.
[m] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 20.
[n] Journey, &c. p. 33, 34.

near the town. The old experienced workmen of this place were employed by the Tyrians in mending and renting their ships, and in the caulking of them, as follows: *the wise men thereof were in thee thy caulkers*; or, *the strengtheners of thy breaches*[r], or *chinks*; the seams and commissures of the planks; which they stopped with tow, oakum, or such-like stuff; at least this is what is used now, whatever might be by those wise men; and it seems by this that it was reckoned a very great art and mystery, and which only wise men were masters of, at least such the Tyrians employed. The Targum renders it, "providing thy "necessaries;" as if they were the ships' husbands: *all the ships of the sea with their mariners were in thee to occupy thy merchandise*: ships from all parts were in her harbours, which brought goods into her, and carried goods out of her, by way of merchandise. So the Targum, "all that go down into the sea, and the "ships; they were rowers, and they brought mer- "chandise into the midst of thee:" the goods of merchants from divers places; and carried back commodities again they traded for at Tyre; see Rev. xviii. 19.

Ver. 10. *They of Persia, and of Lud, and of Phut, were in thine army, thy men of war*, &c.] As the Tyrians were a trading people, they hired foreign troops into their service, to fill their garrisons, defend their city, and fight for them in time of war; and these were of various nations, and the most famous for military skill and valour; as the Persians, a people well known, and famous for war in the times of Cyrus, and before, and well skilled in shooting arrows; and they of Lud, or the Lydians, a people in Greece, renowned for war before the times of Crœsus their king, as well as in his time; and they of Phut, the Lybians, a people in Africa, skilful in drawing the bow, Isa. lxvi. 19: *they hanged the shield and helmet in thee*; in their garrisons and towers, or places of armoury; which were defensive weapons, the one for the body, the other for the head; this they did in times of peace, when there was no occasion to use them, or when they were off their guard, and not on duty; see Cant. iv. 4: *they set forth thy comeliness*; it being an honour to the Tyrians to have such soldiers in their service. The Targum is, "they increased thy splendour;" added to their glory.

Ver. 11. *The men of Arvad with thine army were upon thy walls round about*, &c.] Placed there for the defence of the city, to watch against an enemy, lest it should be surprised; here they were upon the patrole day and night; see Isa. lxii. 6. these were the men of the same place before mentioned, ver. 8. which furnished Tyre both with mariners and soldiers: *and the Gammadim were in thy towers*, not the Medes, as Symmachus renders it; nor the Cappadocians, as the Targum; much less were they images of their tutelar gods, as Spencer thinks, of a cubit long; nor *pygmies*, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; which to mention would not be to the honour of their militia; though Kimchi and Ben Melech call them dwarfs, men of a small stature, of a cubit high, from whence they are supposed to have their name; so Schindler[s]; rather they were the inhabitants of some place in Phœnicia; either of Ancon, which in Greek signifies a cubit, as Gamad does in Hebrew; or of Gammade, the same which Pliny[t] corruptly calls Gamale. Hillerus[u] thinks the word signifies *ambidexters*, or left-handed men, such as Ehud: *they hanged their shields upon thy walls round about*. Kimchi and Ben Melech observe it was a custom in some places to hang such weapons upon the tops of towers, and upon the walls of them; which might be done, either that they might be ready to take up and make use of, whenever occasion required; or to dismay their enemies, and to shew them that they were provided for them: *they have made thy beauty perfect*; besides the beauty of her buildings and shipping, there was the beauty of her militia; which was increased by the soldiers from Persia, Lydia, and Lybia, and added to by the men of Arvad, but completed by the Gammadim; and particularly being gilded, as probably they were, looked very glittering and beautiful in the rays of the sun.

Ver. 12. *Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all* kind *of riches*, &c.] Some understand this of the *sea*, which is sometimes called Tarshish; so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it here: and the Targum, "from the sea, or they of the sea bring merchandise "into the midst of thee:" that is, those who lived upon the coasts, or on the isles, of the Mediterranean sea. The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions, render it the Carthaginians, who were a colony of the Tyrians, and no doubt traded with them; but it seems most likely, with others, to intend Tartessus in Spain, a place not far from that where Cadiz now stands; a country which abounded with riches, and with the following things: *with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs*; Pliny[w] says, that almost all Spain abounded in metals of lead, iron, brass, silver, and gold; which takes in the several things here mentioned, excepting tin; and that the Spaniards might have from our Cornwall, which they might import into Tyre; though the Phœnicians carried on a commerce with our isle of Britain themselves, whither they came for tin, and disposed of other goods they brought with them. Gussetius[x] observes, that the word עזבוניך does not signify the place of trade and traffic, as it is commonly rendered; but respects the goods traded in, and the manner of trafficking with them, by way of *exchange*, as the word should be rendered; and the sense is, that the things before mentioned were what they gave in exchange, bartered, and *left*, with the Tyrians, for other goods they took of them; and so it is to be understood in all the following places where the word is used. So Ben Melech says it is expressive of merchandise.

Ver. 13. *Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they were thy merchants*, &c.] Javan designs Greece, as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it; especially that part of it called Ionia, from Javan the son of Japhet, Gen. x. 2. and Tubal, and Meshech, were also sons of Japhet; the former are the Iberi and Albanians, as Jerom and others, among whom

[r] מחזיקי בדקך [illegible] sarcinatores scissuram tuam, Montanus; instaurantes fissuras tuas, [illegible], Tigurine version; rimas tuas, Vatablus; instauratores rupturarum tuarum, Piscator.

[s] Lexic. Pentaglott. col. 319, 320.

[t] Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 91.

[u] Onomast. Sacr. p. 159.

[w] Nat. Hist. l. 3. c. 3.

[x] Ebr. Comment. p. 594, 595.

were a city called Thabilaca, by Ptolemy [w]; and the latter the Cappadocians, with whom is a city called Mazaca [x]. *They traded the persons of men and vessels of brass in thy markets*; or, *the souls of men* [y]; they bought up men and women in the several countries to which they belonged, or where they traded, and brought them to Tyre, and sold them for slaves; and the Ionian and Grecian slaves were had in great esteem: and the best brass, of which vessels were made, was had from Corinth, Delus, and Æginetus; according to Pliny [z], Cappadocia was famous for it also: in the first of these merchandises Tyrus was remarkably a type of antichrist, who is said to deal in such wares, the souls of men, Rev. xviii. 13. The word here rendered *markets*, Gussetius [a] also observes, does not design the place of commerce, but the act of negotiation or trade; and so it is rendered by many [b].

Ver. 14. *They of the house of Togarmah*, &c.] The Targum is, "they of the province or country of Germany." Jerom understands it of Phrygia, near to which was Cappadocia; and perhaps is here meant, since it abounded with what these people are said to trade with Tyre in: these *traded in thy fairs with horses, horsemen, and mules*; for the Cappadocians paid for their yearly tribute to the Persians fifteen hundred horses, and two thousand mules, as Bochart [c] from Strabo observes; and as they sold horses and mules to the Tyrians, so likewise horsemen, men that were skilled in riding and taking care of horses; and these were sold along with the horses, as servants for that purpose.

Ver. 15. *The men of Dedan* were *thy merchants*, &c.] Not Dedan in Idumea or Edom, but in Arabia, from Dedan the son of Raamah, Gen. x. 7: *many isles* were *the merchandise of thine hands*; that is, many isles took off their manufactures from them, in lieu of what they brought them, which were as follow: *they brought thee for a present*; that they might have the liberty of trading in their fairs and markets; or rather for a reward, or as a price, for the goods they had of them: *horns of ivory and ebony*; Kimchi reads them as separate things; and which the Targum confirms, *horns, ivory*, and *ebony*; elks' horns, or horns of goats, as the Targum; and *ivory*, or the teeth of elephants; and *ebony*, which is a wood of a very black colour, hard and heavy, and of which many things are made. The Targum takes it for the name of a fowl, and renders it peacocks; so Jarchi; see 2 Chron. ix. 21. but Ben Melech much better interprets it of a tree, called in Arabia *ebenus*. Solinus makes it peculiar to India [d]; and so Virgil [e].

Ver. 16. *Syria was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of the wares of thy making*, &c.] Which they took off of their hands, and for them brought the following things: *they occupied in thy fairs with emeralds*; precious stones of a green colour: Jarchi renders it *carbuncles*, other precious stones of a different colour;

[w] Geograph. l. 5. c. 12.
[x] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 1.
[y] בנפש אדם animabus hominum, Pagninus, Vatablus, Cocceius, Starckius.
[z] Nat. Hist. l. 34. c. 2.
[a] Ebr. Comment. p. 612.
[b] במערבך [illegible], Sept.; negotiationem tuam, Tigurine ver-

and so the word is translated by Pagninus, Montanus, Grotius, the French, and Diodate; sometimes called *carchedonies*, and which the Apostle John calls the *chalcedony*, Rev. xxi. 19. the same with rubies; and so the word here used is rendered by Luther; and, by Abarbinel, precious stones of great value; see Prov. iii. 15. from whence the Syrians had these to trade with at Tyre cannot be easily said; the modern rubies, which are thought to be the true and genuine carbuncles of the ancients, seldom exceed the weight of twenty carats; yet some say the Emperor Rudolphus the second had a ruby as big as a little hen's egg, bought at sixty thousand ducats, and supposed to be worth more; and that Regulus Decan had one of thirty-four carats, bought at six minæ of gold, that is, a hundred and ninety-two pounds of gold; and that the great Mogul had one, which cost a million four hundred and twenty-five thousand florins; and that there are some which exceed the weight of fifty carats [f]; but there were few, if any of these, that came to the market of Tyre; however, no doubt, some valuable ones were here sold. *Purple, and broidered work, and fine linen*; cloth of purple-colour, raiment of needle-work curiously embroidered, and linen of the best sort. So the Targum, "purple clothes, and "wrought with a needle, and linen of different co-"lours;" and of such they made their sails, tilts, and tents; see ver. 7. *And coral, and agate*; the first is a sea-plant. "This opinion is now so well established, "that all other sentiments seem almost precluded. "P. Kircher supposes entire forests of it at the bottom "of the sea; and M. Tournefort, that able botanist, "maintains, that it evidently multiplies by seed, "though neither its flower nor seed be known. How-"ever, the count de Marsigli has discovered some "parts therein, which seem to serve the purpose of "seeds and flower—it vegetates the contrary way to "all other plants; its foot adhering to the top of the "grotto, and its branches shooting downwards—there "are properly but three kinds of coral, red, white, "and black; the white is the rarest and most esteemed; "but it is the red that is ordinarily used in medicine—"the places for fishing it are the Persian gulf, Red "sea, coasts of Africa towards the bastion of France, "the isles of Majorca and Corsica, and the coasts of "Provence and Catalonia [g]." Perhaps the Syrians might have theirs from the Red sea, or the Mediterranean. The other, the *agate*, is a precious stone, the same with the *achates*, first found in Sicily, as Isidore says [h], by a river of the same name; is of a black colour, according to him, having in the middle black and white circles joined and variegated; but they are of different colours, and of different degrees of transparency. The word is variously rendered; by some the ruby; by others the carbuncle; by others the chalcedony; and by others crystal; it is hard to say what is meant. Now the Phœnicians or Tyrians were so deeply engaged in trade

sion; in commercio tuo, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; mercaturam tuam, Cocceius.
[c] Phaleg. c. 11. col. 178.
[d] Polyhistor. c. 65.
[e] ——— Sola India nigrum fert ebenum.——Virgil. Georgic. l. 2.
[f] Vid. Braunium de Vestitu Sacerdot. Hebr. l. 2. c. 11. p. 669.
[g] Chambers's Cyclopædia in the word *Coral*.
[h] Origin. l. 16. c. 11.

with the Syrians, that it became a common proverb, the Phœnicians against the Syrians [i]; when like are set against like, as the Egyptians against the Egyptians, Isa. xix. 2.

Ver. 17. *Judah, and the land of Israel, they were thy merchants*, &c.] The inhabitants of Judah and Israel; the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the other ten tribes of Israel, they all merchandised with the Tyrians, being near unto them: *they traded in thy market wheat of Minnith*; the name of a place, Judg. xi. 33. where probably the best wheat grew; so the Targum renders it; the Tyrians were supplied with wheat from the land of Israel, in the times of Solomon, long before this, 1 Kings v. 11. as they were in the times of Herod, long after, Acts xii. 20. it was four miles from Esbus or Heshbon, in the way to Philadelphia, according to Eusebius: *and Pannag*; which some take to be the name of a place, where the best wheat also was; which some say was Phœnicia, or the land of Canaan. The Septuagint render it *ointments*; and the Latin interpreter of the Targum *balsam*; with which agrees Josephus ben Gorion [k], who says that at Jericho grew the balsam-tree, from whence came a precious oil, which oil is *pannag*: and Hillerus [l] translates it balsam: it follows, *and honey, and oil*; with which the land of Canaan abounded; for it was a land of oil-olive and honey, a land that flowed with milk and honey, Deut. viii. 8. so that they had enough for themselves, and to spare for their neighbours, and which they carried to the market of Tyre: *and balm*; or balsam, of which there was plenty at Gilead, and near Jericho, however at the latter; we read of the balm of Gilead, Jer. viii. 22. and xlvi. 11. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it *rosin*; and so the Targum; and this the Tyrians might make use of in their ships [m]. The balm, or balsam-plant, was peculiar to Judea, as Pliny [n]; at least it was the place of it until transplanted into other countries; and so says Solinus [o].

Ver. 18. *Damascus was thy merchant in the multitude of the wares of thy making*, &c.] Of the many things manufactured at Tyre, the inhabitants of Damascus, once the chief city of Syria, took some: *for the multitude of all riches*; in lieu of the vast quantity of rich things there made, they traded with them for them: *in the wine of Helbon, and white wool*: Helbon very probably is the same with the Chalybon of Ptolemy [p], which he places in Syria; a place famous for wine, as Strabo [q] reports; the kings of Persia, he says, through riches fell into luxury, so that they would have wheat brought from Assos in Æolia, and Chalybonian wine out of Syria, and water from Eulæus (the river Ulai in Dan. viii. 2), which was lightest of all; and so Athenæus [r] says, the kings of the Persians drink only Chalybonian wine; which, says Posidonius, was made at Damascus in Syria, from whence the Persians transplant vines: Helbon is thought to be the same with Aleppo; the grapes there are all white, and make a strong wine, as Monsieur Thevenot [s] relates; and who also observes, that the wines of Damascus are treacherous and strong: and the *wool* they bought was such as it came off of the backs of the sheep, and the purer and whiter sort of it; which was brought to Tyre, and by them bought, and died purple, for which die the Tyrians were famous.

Ver. 19. *Dan also and Javan, going to and fro, occupied in thy fairs*, &c.] Either the inhabitants of the tribe of Dan in general; or of Laish, sometime called Dan, and in after-times Cæsarea Philippi, which was in that tribe: though Grotius thinks that Taprobane, or the isle of Zeilan, is meant, where, and not in Dan, were the things after mentioned, in plenty; and where also, according to Ptolemy [t], was a city called Dana or Dagana; and Bochart takes Javan not to be Greece, but a people of a country in Arabia, the metropolis of which was Uzal; and so he renders it, as some of the Greek versions do, Javan of Uzal, or Asel, to distinguish it from the other Javan, ver. 13. where also, and not in Greece, the sweet spices grew, which these are said to trade in: *bright iron, cassia, and calamus, were in thy market*; brought from the above places; polished iron or steel, and the sweet spices of cassia and calamus, or the aromatic cane or reed, which came from afar, Jer. vi. 20.

Ver. 20. *Dedan was thy merchant in precious cloths for chariots*.] Or, *cloths of freedom* [u]; such as freemen and even nobles wore; and yet so extravagant were the Tyrians, that they bought these to line or cover their chariots with; this is different from the Dedan in ver. 15. and is either Dedan in Edom or Idumea, Jer. xlix. 8. or in Arabia, the inhabitants of which descended from Dedan, a grandson of Abraham, Gen. xxv. 3. which agrees with the following.

Ver. 21. *Arabia, and all the princes of Kedar*, &c.] Arabia was a large country, divided into three parts; Arabia Deserta, or the desert; Arabia Petræa, or the rocky; and Arabia Felix, or the happy. Kedar was in Arabia Petræa; its inhabitants were called Kedarenes, descended from Kedar, a son of Ishmael, Gen. xxv. 13. they were chiefly shepherds, and dwelt in tents, to which the allusion is in Cant. i. 5. these princes were the rich and wealthy among them, who bought up the cattle of the meaner sort, and brought them to Tyre. In Jerom's time Kedar was the country of the Saracens. The Targum calls them the princes of Nebat, the same with Nebaioth, the first-born of Ishmael, and brother of Kedar, Gen. xxv. 13. *They occupied with thee*: or, *they were the merchants of thine hand* [w]; that took off her manufactures from her, in lieu of the *lambs, and rams, and goats*, they brought to market, for her food and sacrifices; keeping of sheep being their chief employment: *in these were they thy merchants*: they supplied them with their cattle, and took their wares of them for them.

[i] Vid. Reinesium de Lingua Punic. c. 2. sect. 12.
[k] Hist. l. 4. c. 22. p. 339.
[l] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 903.
[m] Vid. Scheffer. de Militia Navali, p. 42. 319.
[n] Nat. Hist. l. 12. c. 25.
[o] Polyhistor. c. 48.
[p] Geograph. l. 5. c. 15.
[q] Ibid. l. 15. p. 505.

[r] L. 1. c. 22.
[s] Travels, part 2. B. 1. ch. 5. p. 25. and ch. 7. p. 33.
[t] Geograph. l. 7. c. 4.
[u] בבגדי חפש pannis libertatis, Vatablus, Piscator; ingenuorum, Junius & Tremellius. So Ben Melech, and R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 30. 2.
[w] סחרי ידך negotiatores manus tuæ, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; mercatores manus tuæ, Cocceius, Starckius.

Ver. 22. *The merchants of Sheba and Raamah, they were thy merchants*, &c.] This Sheba was the son of Raamah, Gen. x. 7. who settled in Arabia Felix; where, according to Ptolemy [x], is a city called Rhegma; and so Raamah is pronounced in the Septuagint version of Gen. x. 7: *they occupied in thy fairs with chief of all spices*: as with myrrh and frankincense, with which they abounded: Pliny [y] says that the Arabians paid annually to the kings of Persia a thousand talents of frankincense; and that the Sabæans [z] boiled their food, some with wood of frankincense, and others with wood of myrrh: *and with all precious stones, and gold*: as jaspers, emeralds, carbuncles, and others, which Pliny [a] says are found in Arabia; and mention is made of the gold of Sheba, Psal. lxxii. 15. and Bochart thinks that Ophir, from whence the famous gold of that name was fetched, was in Arabia Felix: and it may be observed, that the queen of Sheba gave great quantities of gold, of spices, and of precious stones, to Solomon; and that he had much of these kinds yearly from the spice-merchants, and kings of Arabia, 1 Kings x. 10, 14, 15. see the note on Isa. lx. 6.

Ver. 23. *Haran, and Canneh, and Eden*, &c.] Haran was a city of Mesopotamia, the same with Charran, where Abraham dwelt awhile, Acts vii. 2. the Charræ of the Parthians, famous for the defeat of Crassus. Canneh is thought to be the same with Calneh, Gen. x. 10. afterwards called Ctesiphon; and here, by the Targum, Netzibin, a place not far from Tigris; and Eden also was between Tigris and Euphrates. All three places seem to be in Mesopotamia, and not far from each other; the latter is thought by some to be the place where the garden of Eden was. *The merchants of Sheba*: this was another Sheba, distinct from that in *ver.* 22. this Sheba was the son of Jokshan, a son of Abraham by Keturah, Gen. xxv. 3. these were the Sabæans, who were not far from the former, and dwelt near the Persian sea. *Ashur and Chilmad* were *thy merchants*: or dealt in *thy merchandise*: took goods of them. Ashur designs the Assyrians, who had their name from Ashur, the builder of Nineveh, Gen. x. 11. and Chilmad is by the Targum rendered Media; and by Grotius thought to be the Gaala of Media in Ptolemy [b]; and so Hillerus [c] takes it to be a city of Media.

Ver. 24. *These* were *thy merchants in all sorts* of things, &c.] Either all before mentioned throughout the chapter, or rather those only in the preceding verse; also these were merchants in various things after mentioned, and which were the best and most perfect of the kind, as the word [d] used signifies: *in blue cloths, and broidered work*: these the Assyrians took of them, a colour in which they much delighted; see ch. xxiii. 6: *and in chests of rich apparel bound with cords, and made of cedar, among thy merchandise*; rich apparel, such as scarlet cloaks, as the Targum, and blue cloths as before; these were well packed up in chests made of *cedar*, which they had from Lebanon, and so fit to be put on board a ship, and carried into any part of the world. The Targum adds, "and sealed with a signet;" as things well packed up and bound sometimes are, being of worth and value. Some render it, *in chains*: or, *chains were among thy merchandise* [e]; such as chains of gold, wore about the neck; and take the word to be of the same signification with that in Cant. i. 10.

Ver. 25. *The ships of Tarshish did sing of thee in thy market*, &c.] The ships of the sea in general; for Tarshish is used for the sea; these from all parts came to Tyre with their several wares, the product of their country from whence they came, and, finding a good market for them at Tyre, spoke greatly in her praise: or, *were thy princes*, or *thy chief ones, in thy market* [f]; these brought the principal things into it, and took off the chief that were in it, which were of the produce of Tyre: *and thou wast replenished*: with goods from all parts, with every thing for their necessity, convenience, pleasure, and delight, and to carry on a traffic with all nations: *and made very glorious in the midst of the seas*: with great riches, stately towers and buildings. Here ends the account of Tyre's greatness; next follows her ruin and destruction.

Ver. 26. *Thy rowers have brought thee into great waters*, &c.] Here the city of Tyre is compared to a vessel at sea, with great propriety, it being built in the sea, and its trade chiefly there; and its rulers and governors, or the inhabitants of it, to *rowers*; literally the men of Zidon and Arvad were her rowers, *ver.* 8. the straits, difficulties, and distresses these brought Tyre into, are compared to *great waters*: who, by some unadvised step or another, provoked the king of Babylon to come against them with his army, and lay siege unto them: *the east wind hath broken thee in the midst of the seas*: a wind very fatal to ships and mariners; see Psal. xlviii. 7. by it are meant Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldean army; so called, because of their great force and fury; and because Babylon, from whence they came, lay somewhat to the east of Tyre. So the Targum, "a king who is strong "as the east wind hath broken thee in the midst of "the seas."

Ver. 27. *Thy riches*, &c.] That vast mass of wealth Tyre had got by her trade and merchandise, were all lost at once, and came to nought, which had been many years gathering: see Rev. xviii. 17: *and thy fairs*; to which there were such great resorts from all parts, and where such a prodigious traffic was carried on, were now interrupted by the siege, and put to an end upon the ruin of the city: *thy merchandise*; the goods both imported and exported; the wares that were brought in from foreign parts, and sold in her, and what was taken from her in lieu of them; now nothing more of this kind; and what goods were in her, whether her own or others, were all lost and de-

[x] Geograph. l. 6. c. 7.
[y] Nat. Hist. l. 12. c. 17.
[z] —— Solis est thurea virga Sabæis. Virgil. Georgic. l. 2.
[a] Nat. Hist. l. 37.
[b] Geograph. l. 6. c. 2.
[c] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 188.

[d] במכללים rebus perfectissimis, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Cocceius, Starckius.
[e] וארזים במרכלתך & torquibus in negotiatione tua, Pagninus; & torques fuerunt in nundinis tuis, Vatablus. So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 71. 2.
[f] שרותיך principes, V. L. Montanus, Castalio, Starckius; præcipuæ, Tigurine version, Grotius. So same in Vatablus.

stroyed: *thy mariners:* who were the inhabitants of Zidon and Arvad, ver. 8. these perished with her: *and thy pilots:* who were the wisest, most skilful, and best learned in the art of navigation, and who were of the city itself, these were no more, ver. 8: *thy calkers:* the wise and ancient men of Gebal, ver. 9: *and the occupiers of thy merchandise:* that traded in her markets and fairs, mentioned from ver. 12 to 25: *and all thy men of war that are in thee:* to fight for her and defend her; the Persians, Lydians, and Lybians, the men of Arvad, and the Gammadim, ver. 10, 11: *and in all thy company, which is in the midst of thee:* the great concourse of people, whether natives or foreigners: these all *shall fall into the midst of the seas in the day of thy ruin:* the walls and banks being demolished, the sea broke in upon it, and washed all away in it, and left it a bare rock; see ch. xxvi. 4. 12. 14.

Ver. 28. *The suburbs shall shake at the sound of the cry of thy pilots.*] Or governors, as the Targum; and so the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions: the allegory of a ship wrecked is still continued: the sense is, that such should be the cry of the principal men of the city when it should be taken, that the noise of it would be heard upon the continent, and in the towns and villages belonging to Tyre, which would make the inhabitants of them tremble: or, *at the sound of the cry of thy pilots the waves are moved,* or *tremble*[g]; which beat very strong at the time of her fall into the sea.

Ver. 29. *And all that handle the oar, the mariners, and all the pilots of the sea,* &c.] Inferior officers, and the common people; though this may be literally understood of all sorts of seafaring people, differently employed in ships; some at the oar; some at the sails; and others at the helm; but all shall quit their posts, and *shall come down from their ships;* either there being no further business for them, an entire stop being put to trade, through the fall of Tyre; or because of danger, and to save themselves, would leave the ship, and betake to their boats, and make for land: hence it follows, *they shall stand upon the land;* upon the continent, being safely arrived; looking upon the shipwrecks, and bewailing the loss of Tyre, as in the next verse.

Ver. 30. *And shall cause their voice to be heard against thee,* &c.] The rulers and governors of the city, for having taken a false step in provoking the enemy, and then holding out the siege no longer, as it was thought they might and would: or rather *over thee,* or, *for thee*[h]; mourning over the city, and lamenting its sad case; see Rev. xviii. 9, 11: *and shall cry bitterly;* with great weeping, howling, and shrieking: *and they shall cast dust upon their heads;* a custom used in the eastern countries, in time of mourning and sorrow; see Rev. xviii. 19: *and they shall wallow themselves in ashes* or roll themselves in them, another custom used in mourning; see Jer. vi. 26. Mic. i. 10.

Ver. 31. *And they shall make themselves utterly bald for thee,* &c.] Either by shaving their heads, or tearing off their hair, as mourners in distress have been used to do: *and gird them with sackcloth;* about their loins, as was very customary in such distressed cases: *and they shall weep for thee with bitterness of heart and bitter wailing;* not in shew only, but in reality; not like the *preficæ* or mourning women, though the allusion may be to them, who only mourned outwardly; but these from the very heart, and in great bitterness of spirit; this is expressive of the inward grief of their minds on this melancholy occasion, as what follows declares the lamentation they expressed vocally; see Rev. xviii. 19.

Ver. 32. *And in their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for thee,* &c.] A mournful song, such as was used at funerals, or in times of calamity; and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it: *and lament over thee;* saying the following ditty: *what city is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea?* as there was none like it a few years ago for riches, splendour, and glory, so now there's none like it for misery and ruin; see Rev. xviii. 18. The Targum is, "who is as Tyre? there is none like unto her in the "midst of the sea;" she is not now Tyre the renowned, but Tyre the destroyed; destroyed in the midst of the sea, from whence she had her riches and her glory: or, *as one dumb* or *silent in the midst of the sea;* she, in whom was heard the voice of joy and singing, is now mute, and nothing more of that kind is heard in her; see Rev. xviii. 22.

Ver. 33. *When thy wares went forth out of the seas,* &c.] When they were took out of ships, which came to Tyre from all parts, and were landed on the shore, and put up in warehouses, and exposed in markets and fairs. The Targum is, "when thy merchandise went "out from among the nations;" being brought from all parts thither: *thou filledst many people;* by selling them in their markets commodities they wanted, for which they came from all quarters; and by sending them to others in ships, where they knew they stood in need of them, and would fetch them a good price; and they had enough to answer the demands of all, and to supply them to the full: *thou didst enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and of thy merchandise;* by taking off the goods of their subjects, whereby they were able the better to pay their taxes, and support them in their grandeur and dignity; as well as by furnishing them gold and silver, and precious stones, which they gave for the produce of their country; or by the toll and custom of the goods imported or exported.

Ver. 34. *In the time when thou shalt be broken by the seas in the depths of the waters,* &c.] By the Chaldean army, which came upon them like the waves of the sea, ch. xxvi. 3, by which they were overpowered and destroyed; just as a ship on the mighty waters is dashed and broke to pieces by the waves thereof: *thy merchandise, and all thy company in the midst of thee, shall fall;* trade shall cease, and the mixed multitude of traders from all parts shall be seen no more; the natives of the place shall perish, mariners and soldiers, and persons of every rank and degree, age, and sex. The Targum renders it, "all thine armies." Abendana suggests that this respects the destruction of Tyre by Alexander the great.

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[g] ירעשו מגרשות commoti sunt fluctus jactati, Junius & Tremellius; contremiscent fluctus, Piscator.

[h] עליך de te, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; super te, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.

Ver. 35. *All the inhabitants of the isles shall be astonished at thee, &c.*] Both near and afar off; and not only the inhabitants of the isles, properly so called, but all that dwelt on the continent by the sea-side; who would all be amazed when they heard of the ruin of Tyre, which they thought inexpugnable, by reason of its natural and artificial strength: *and their kings shall be sore afraid*; that it will be their turn next; and as well knowing that they were less able to contend with so mighty a monarch as the king of Babylon, or Alexander the great, than Tyre was; see Rev. xviii. 9, 10: *they shall be troubled in their countenance*; their inward passions of grief and fear shall be seen in their countenances; which will wax pale, be dejected, distorted, and furrowed.

Ver. 36. *The merchants among the people shall hiss at thee, &c.*] As Tyre had done at Jerusalem, ch. xxvi. 2. as she hoped to make better markets upon the fall of Jerusalem, and therefore rejoiced at it; so these merchants upon her fall will hope that her trade will come into their hands, and therefore despise her, hiss and laugh at her in her abject state. The Targum is, " shall be astonished at thee; struck with wonder, and even with a stupor at her fall: *and thou shalt be a terror*; not only to thyself, but to kings and merchants, and to all the inhabitants of the isles, and to all that trade by sea; who will be struck with surprise and dread when they hear of thy destruction; see Rev. xviii. 9, 10, 11, 15, 17: *and never* shall be *any more*; upon the same spot, and in the same grandeur and glory: some understand this only of a long time, as 70 years, when it was rebuilt; see Isa. xxiii. 15, 17. it may respect its last destruction, since which it has not been, nor now is, or ever will be: this will be true of mystical Babylon, the antitype of Tyre, Rev. xviii. 21.

CHAP. XXVIII.

THIS chapter contains a prophecy of the destruction of the prince of Tyre; a lamentation for the king of Tyre; a denunciation of judgments on Zidon, and a promise of peace and safety to Israel. The order given the prophet to prophesy of the ruin of the prince of Tyre, ver. 1, 2. the cause of his ruin, his pride on account of his wisdom and riches, which rose to such a pitch, as to make himself God, ver. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. the manner in which his destruction shall be accomplished, ver. 7, 8, 9, 10. the lamentation for the king of Tyre begins ver. 11, 12. setting forth his former grandeur and dignity, ver. 13, 14, 15. his fall, and the cause of it, injustice and violence in merchandise, pride because of beauty and wisdom, and profanation of sanctuaries, ver. 16, 17, 18, 19. next follow the judgments on Zidon, ver. 20, 21, 22, 23. and the chapter is concluded with a promise of the restoration of the Jews to their own land, and of great tranquillity and safety in it, ver. 24, 25, 26.

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord came again unto me, &c.*] With another prophecy; as before against the city of Tyre, now against the king of Tyre: *saying*; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyre, &c.*] Whose name was Ethbaal, or Ithobalus, as he is called in Josephus; for that this was Hiram that was in the days of Solomon, and lived a thousand years, is a fable of the Jewish Rabbins, as Jerom relates: this prince of Tyre is thought by some to be an emblem of the devil; but rather of antichrist; and between them there is a great agreement, and it seems to have a prophetic respect to him: *thus saith the Lord God, because thine heart is lifted up*; with pride, on account of his wisdom and knowledge, wealth and riches, as after mentioned: *and thou hast said, I am a god*; this he said in his heart, in the pride of it, and perhaps expressed it with his lips, and required divine homage to be given him by his subjects, as some insolent, proud, and haughty monarchs have done; in which he was a lively type of antichrist, who shews himself, and behaves, as if he was God, taking upon him what belongs to God; pardoning the sins of men; opening and shutting the gates of heaven; binding men's consciences with laws of his own making, and dispensing with the laws of God and man; and calling himself or suffering himself to be called God, and to be worshipped as such; see the note on 2 Thess. ii. 4: *I sit in the seat of God*; in a place as delightful, safe and happy, as heaven itself, where the throne of God is; so antichrist is said to sit in the temple of God, in the house and church of God; where he assumes a power that don't belong to him, calling himself God's vicegerent, and Christ's vicar; see 2 Thess. ii. 4. and the Arabic version here renders it *in the house of God*: it follows, *in the midst of the seas*; surrounded with them as Tyre was, and lord of them as its king was; sending his ships into all parts, and to whom all brought their wares; thus the whore of Rome is said to sit upon many waters, Rev. xvii. 2: *yet thou art a man, and not God*; a frail, weak, mortal man, and not the mighty God, as his after-destruction shews; and as the popes of Rome appear to be, by their dying as other men; and as antichrist will plainly be seen to be when he shall be destroyed with the breath of Christ's mouth, and the brightness of his coming: *though thou set thine heart as the heart of God*; as if it was as full of wisdom and knowledge as his; and thinkest as well of thyself, that thou art a sovereign as he, and to be feared, obeyed, and submitted to by all.

Ver. 3. *Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel, &c.*] That is, in his own opinion; or it is ironically said. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it by way of interrogation, *art thou not wiser than Daniel?* who was now at the court of Babylon, and was famous throughout all Chaldea for his knowledge in politics, his wisdom and prudence in government, as well as his skill in intrepreting dreams. The Jews have a saying, that " if all the wise men of the nations were in one " scale, and Daniel in the other, he would weigh them " all down." And perhaps the fame of him had reached the king of Tyre, and yet he thought himself wiser than he; see Zech. ix. 2. antichrist thinks himself wiser than Daniel, or any of the prophets and

apostles; he is wise above that which is written, and takes upon him the sole interpretation of the Scriptures, and to fix the sense of them: *there is no secret that they can hide from thee*; as he fancied; he had sagacity to penetrate into the councils of neighbouring princes, and discover all plots and intrigues against him; he understood all the *arcana* and secrets of government, and could counterwork the designs of his enemies. Antichrist pretends to know all mysteries, and solve all difficulties, and pass an infallible judgment on things; as if he was of the privy-council of heaven, and nothing was transacted there but he was acquainted with it, and had full knowledge of the mind of God in all things.

Ver. 4. *With thy wisdom and with thy understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, &c.*] Through skill in navigation and trade, for which the Tyrians and their princes were famous, they acquired great wealth: so antichrist, by carnal policy, and hellish subtlety, has amassed vast treasures together; the sale of pardons and indulgences has brought immense riches into the pope's coffers: *and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures*; in great quantities; see Rev. xviii. 3, 17.

Ver. 5. *By thy great wisdom and by thy traffic, &c.*] Or, *by thy great wisdom in thy traffic*[t]; through great skill in trade and commerce: *hast thou increased thy riches*; to a very great degree, a prodigious bulk; so antichrist has done, especially through trafficking with the souls of men, which is one part of his merchandise, as it was of Tyre, Rev. xviii. 13. Ezek. xxvii. 13: *and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches*; which are apt to puff up and make men high-minded, and swell them with a vain opinion of themselves, and to make haughty, insolent, and scornful, in their behaviour to others; thus elated with worldly grandeur and riches, the whore of Rome is represented as proud, vain, and haughty, Rev. xviii. 7.

Ver. 6. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Now follows the punishment threatened, because of all this pride, haughtiness, and blasphemy: *because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God*; seeking thine own glory; setting up thyself above all others; assuming that to thyself which belongs to God; and making thyself equal to him, or shewing thyself as if thou wast God; see the note on ver. 2.

Ver. 7. *Behold, therefore, I will bring strangers upon thee, &c.*] The Chaldean army, who not only lived at a distance from Tyre, but were unknown to them, not trading with them; nor are they mentioned among the merchants of Tyre: these, in the mystical sense, may design the angels that shall pour out the vials on the antichristian states, the kings of Protestant nations: *the terrible of the nations*; as the Babylonians were, very formidable to the world, having conquered many countries, and their armies consisting of men of all nations, mighty, courageous, and expert in war; and alike formidable will the Protestant princes be to the antichristian powers, when they shall with their united strength attack them: *and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom*; their beautiful city and spacious buildings, the palaces of their king and nobles, their walls and towers erected with so much art and skill; or their forces, the men of war within their city, which made their beauty complete, so well skilled in military affairs, ch. xxvii. 10, 11. or their ships, and the merchandise of them, and the curious things brought in them: even every thing that was rich and valuable, the effect of their art and wisdom: all which may be applied to the city of Rome, when it will be taken, ransacked, and burnt, Rev. xviii. 8—19: *and they shall defile thy brightness*; profane thy crown, cast down thy throne, destroy thy kingdom, and all that is great and glorious in thee; thus the whore of Rome shall be made bare and desolate, Rev. xvii. 16. The Targum renders it, "the brightness of thy terror;" which shall no more strike the nations, or affect them.

Ver. 8. *They shall bring thee down to the pit, &c.*] Or, *to corruption*[x]; to the grave, the pit of corruption and destruction; so antichrist shall go into perdition, into the bottomless pit from whence he came, Rev. xvii. 8: *and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas*; that die in a sea-fight, whose carcasses are thrown overboard, and devoured by fishes.

Ver. 9. *Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? &c.*] When thou art in the enemies' hands, and just going to be put to death, wilt thou then confidently assert thy deity, and to his face tell him that thou art God? surely thy courage and thy confidence, thy blasphemy and impiety, will leave thee then: a bitter sarcasm this! and so the pope of Rome, the antichristian beast, when taken, and just going to be cast into the lake of fire along with the false prophet, will not have the impudence to style himself God, or to call himself Christ's vicar on earth: *but thou shalt be a man, and no god, in the hand of him that slayeth thee*; that is, thou shalt appear to be a poor, weak, frail, mortal, trembling, dying man, when got into the hand of the enemy, and he is just going to put an end to thy life; where will be then thy boasted deity?

Ver. 10. *Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised, &c.*] Or the death of the wicked, as the Targum; the first and second death, temporal and eternal: the former *by the hand of strangers*, the Chaldeans, in various shapes; and the latter will follow upon it: it may denote the various kinds of death which the inhabitants of Rome will die when destroyed, some by famine, some by pestilence, and others by fire; when these plagues shall come upon her in one day, Rev. xviii. 8: *for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God*; and therefore it shall surely come to pass; strong is the Lord that will judge, condemn, and destroy mystical Babylon, or Tyre.

Ver. 11. *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, &c.*] After the prophecy concerning the ruin of the prince of Tyre, the word of the Lord came to the prophet, ordering him to take up a lamentation on the king of Tyre: *saying*; as follows:

Ver. 12. *Take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, &c.*] Who is before called the prince of Tyre; and who he was, see the note on ver. 2. the bishop of Rome was first only a *nagid*, a prince, ruler, governor,

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[t] ברכלתך in negotiatione tua, V. L. Pagninus, Starckius; in mercatura tua, Junius & Tremellius.

[x] לשחת ad corruptionem.

and leader in the church; afterwards he became a king, a head, even over other kings, princes, and states; perhaps this may also point to his two-fold power, secular and ecclesiastical, and so he is represented by two beasts, Rev. xiii. 1, 11. here a lamentation or funeral ditty is ordered to be taken up and said for him, to denote his certain destruction and ruin; though some have thought the fall of the angels, and others the fall of Adam, is referred to; several passages are interpreted of Adam in the Talmud[l]: *and say unto him, thus saith the Lord God, thou sealest up the sum*; or *pattern*[m]; of every thing that is excellent; thou art in all things, consummately so, as that nothing could be added; that is, in his own esteem and account. Junius thinks it refers to the sealing of goods exported, for which a duty was to be paid, without doing which merchandise was not allowed. Antichrist would not suffer any to buy or sell but such as receive his mark or seal on their right hand, or in their forehead, Rev. xiii. 16, 17. Cocceius renders it, *the sealer of the measure*[n]; and takes it to be an allusion to the custom of sealing measures, used in buying and selling; and that it respects the man of sin, who takes upon him the power of making rules and canons for faith and practice: *full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty*: a most accomplished man for parts and person in his own conceit: antichrist assumes to himself a perfect knowledge of the Scriptures, and sets up himself as an infallible judge of controversies; and glories in the splendour and order of his church, and the government of it.

Ver. 13. *Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God, &c.*] Not only in Eden, but in the garden which was in Eden, and was of the Lord's immediate planting; and therefore called the garden of God, as well as because of its excellency, fragrancy, and delight; not that the king of Tyre was literally there, or ever dwelt in it; but his situation in Tyre was as safe, and as pleasant and delightful, as Adam's was in the garden of Eden, at least in his own imagination. So the Targum, "thou delightedst thyself with plenty of all good things "and delectable ones, as if thou dwelledst in the gar- "den of God;" in the mystical sense, this designs the church of God, which is an Eden, a garden, a paradise; see Cant. iv. 12, 13. and where antichrist first appeared, and took his seat, and seated himself as if he was God, 2 Thess. ii. 4: *every precious stone was thy covering*; not only the covering of his head, his crown, was decked with jewels and precious stones of all sorts; but his clothes, the covering of his body, were adorned with them. So the Targum, "all pre- "cious stones were set in order upon thy garments." Kimchi renders it *thine hedge*, or *fence*[o]; and takes it to be an hyperbole, as if his house, or garden, or vineyard, were fenced with precious stones. This fitly describes the whore of Rome arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones, Rev. xvii. 4. The pope's triple crown is stuck with them, and a cross of precious stones is upon his slipper, when he holds out his toe to be kissed: *the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold.* Writers differ very much about these stones; and it is difficult to say what answer to the Hebrew words here used. The stone *sardius*, or the sardine stone, is of a blood colour, commonly called a cornelian, and is found in Sardis and Sardinia, from whence some say it has its name. The *topaz* is a hard transparent stone, said to be of a beautiful yellow or gold colour by those who confound it with the chrysolite; otherwise the true topaz is of a fine green colour, as Pliny[p] and Isidore[q]; the best is what is found in Ethopia, Job xxviii. 19. The *diamond* is a precious stone, the first in rank, value, hardness and lustre; the most perfect colour is the white. The *beryl* is a stone of a pale green colour, thought to be the diamond of the ancients: the word is *tarshish*, and thought by some the *chrysolite*. The *onyx* resembles a man's nail, from whence it has its name: the word *shoham* here used is supposed to mean the *sardonyx*, a compound of the *sardian* and *onyx* stones. The *jasper* is a stone of various colours and spots, variegated like a panther; hence the Targum here renders it *pantherin*: the most valuable is the green spotted with red or purple. The *sapphire* is a stone of an azure colour or sky-blue, exceeding hard and transparent. The *emerald* is of an exceeding fine green colour, very bright, and clear, and delightful to the eye; but is rather intended by the next word, as the *carbuncle* by this, which is a stone of the ruby kind, and very rare; see Isa. liv. 12. *Gold* is mentioned along with them, and last of all, as being less valuable; but chiefly because these stones were set in gold, as the Targum paraphrases it; these are nine of the stones which were in the breast-plate of the Jewish high-priest[r], whom the king of Tyre might have knowledge of and imitate, as it is certain the pope of Rome does in some things: *the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created*; either born into the world; or made a crowned king; against which time, drums, and pipes, and such-like instruments of music, were prepared in Tyre, and at them made use of by way of rejoicing: and as this was literally true of the king of Tyre at his coronation, so of the bishop of Rome at his creation and inauguration, which is attended with bells ringing, drums beating, trumpets sounding; and so in mystical Babylon is heard, though the time is coming when it will not be heard, the voice of harpers, musicians, pipers, and trumpeters, Rev. xviii. 22.

Ver. 14. *Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth, &c.*] In allusion to the cherubim over the mercy-seat, which covered it with their wings; and which, as the ark of the testimony and all the vessels of the tabernacle were anointed, were so likewise: in all probability the king of Tyre is called a *cherub* because of his wisdom and power; *anointed*, because of his royal dignity; and *that covereth*, because of his office, which was to protect his people; all which he either was, or ought to be, or was in his own opinion so: antichrist

[l] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 75. 1.
[m] תבנית exemplar, *sive specimen*, Tigurine version, Castalio.
[n] Signator mensuræ, Cocceius, Starckius.
[o] So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 14. 2.
[p] Nat. Hist. l. 35. c. 8.
[q] Origin. l. 16. c. 7.
[r] Vid. Braunium de Vestitu Sacerdot. Heb. l. 2. c. 12—19.

makes great boasts of his wisdom, power, and authority, as a teacher, pastor, or bishop, the cherubim being symbolical of the ministers of the word; and of his being anointed by men, that he may be the cover and shield of the church; and of his being the Lord's anointed, and the vicar of Christ, and head and protector of the church, as he calls himself[s]. The Targum understands all this of regal power, and renders it, "thou art a king anointed for a kingdom:" *and I have set thee so*; from whom all kings have their sceptres, crowns, and kingdoms; and by whom they reign; and who can put them down as well as set them up at his pleasure. It may be rendered, *I have given thee*[t]; or suffered thee to be so, as the word *give* is often used; it is by divine permission that antichrist has taken such power to himself, and in judgment to them over whom he rules, who are given up to believe a lie; yea, God *put*, or, as it is in the original text, *gave* it into the hearts of the kings to agree and give their kingdom to the beast, Rev. xvii. 17: *thou wast upon the holy mountain of God*: not on Sinai, nor on Zion; on neither of which was the king of Tyre; nor was this literally true of him; for to say, as Kimchi does to illustrate it, that Hiram king of Tyre assisted Solomon with materials to build the temple, is very foreign; but this is true of the antitype of the king of Tyre, antichrist; who has set his foot on God's holy mountain the church; here he first appeared and stood, as before observed on the preceding verse: *thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire*: which some understand of the precious stones with which the king of Tyre was adorned, which glittered like fire; though rather they design the people of God, those living and lively stones of which the spiritual house is built; who, for their clear light, and burning zeal and love, may be said to be as stones of fire; and among these the bishop of Rome, or the antichristian king of Tyre, first walked: so Kimchi interprets them of the Israelites, who were a holy people; and Jarchi of the kings of Israel, who were as the ministering angels; the seraphim perhaps he means, so called from their burning and flaming love. The Targum is, "and over the "holy people thou hast thought to rule."

Ver. 15. *Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created*, &c.] From the time that Tyre became a kingdom, or this king was set over it, every thing was wisely conducted, and all things happily succeeded; so when the church of Rome was first formed in the times of the apostles, it was laid on a good foundation; it was set up according to the rule of the word; its bishop or pastor was one of a sound judgment, a good life and conversation, and so continued in succession for a considerable time; these held the true faith and doctrine of Christ, and kept it incorrupt, and lived holy lives: *till iniquity was found in thee*: pride, blasphemy against God, and contempt of his people, as well as violence and deceit; all this was found in the king of Tyre in later times: so in the church of Rome, when the man of sin was revealed, there were pride, haughtiness, and ambition, found in it; blasphemy against God and Christ, and the saints; false doctrine, false worship, superstition, and idolatry.

Ver. 16. *By the multitude of thy merchandise*, &c.] With the several nations of the earth, who came to the markets and fairs of Tyre, and to whom she sent her goods: *they have filled the midst of thee with violence*; or, as the Targum, "thy treasures are filled with rapine;" with ill-gotten goods, as the pope's coffers are through his merchandise of the souls of men, and the great trade that is driven in pardons and indulgences: *and thou hast sinned*; by this unjust and ungodly way of dealing: *therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God*; Mount Zion, the church of the living God, where he dwells, and is worshipped, and on which the Lamb stands with his hundred and forty and four thousand, having his name and his father's on their foreheads, Rev. xiv. 1. these will have no communion with the church and pope of Rome; will not receive his mark, nor worship his image; from this mountain, and the inhabitants of it, he stands excluded as a profane person, with whom they will have nothing to do; and hence he persecutes them to the utmost of his power: *and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire*; from among the people of God, who have the clear light of the Gospel, and a sincere love for Christ; these withdrew themselves from his jurisdiction and government; and with whom his name, power, and authority perish, especially when they shall have got the victory over him, Rev. xv. 1. Kimchi paraphrases it, "from the midst of the saints who are the Israel-"ites, comparable to stones of fire;" and Jarchi's note is, "that thou mayest not take a portion with the "righteous;" have no part, lot, or fellowship with them. The Targum is, "I will destroy thee, O king "that art anointed, because thou thoughtest to rule "over the holy people."

Ver. 17. *Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty*, &c.] Riches, wealth, power, and authority; see ver. 5. as the pope of Rome is, because of his dignity, the pomp and splendour of the Roman church, and the gaudy appearance it makes: *thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness*; outward lustre and glory, which dazzled his eyes so that he could not see things in a true light; but neglecting the word of God, and setting up his own infallibility, corrupted his doctrine and worship, and became foolish, stupid, and sottish: *I will cast thee to the ground*; from the throne and pinnacle of honour, to the lowest state and condition: *and I will lay thee before kings*; prostrate at the feet of them, who heretofore has set his feet on the necks of them; or he shall fall before them, and be destroyed by them, when they shall hate the whore, and make her desolate, and burn her flesh with fire, Rev. xvii. 16: *that they may behold thee*; with contempt and disdain, and as an instance and example of divine vengeance.

Ver. 18. *Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities*, &c.] Or, *thy palaces*, as Kimchi; the palace of the king, and the palaces of the nobles, where much iniquity was committed, and which was the cause of their being defiled or destroyed by the Chaldeans; or it may design their sacred places, their temples, where their gods were worshipped, and

[s] Vid. Gurtler. Voc. Typic. Prophet. Explicat. p. 238.

[t] נתתיך & dedi te, Montanus.

idolatry committed. This may be applied to the places of religious worship among the Papists, their churches; which, instead of being adorned, are defiled with their images and image-worship, and other acts of superstition and will-worship: *by the iniquity of thy traffic*; as by bringing in ill-gotten goods into the sacred places of Tyre, as they were accounted, so by selling pardons; praying souls out of purgatory for money; by simony, or buying and selling ecclesiastical benefices; and such-like spiritual merchandise in Roman churches: *therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee*; sin, and the punishment of it, as Kimchi; which, for sin committed in the midst of them, should consume as fire; or some from among themselves, that should stir up and cause intestine divisions, which should issue in their ruin: as the unclean spirit that shall go out of the mouth of the beast, dragon, and false prophet, to gather the antichristian kings to battle, will end in their ruin, Rev. xvi. 14, 16. The Targum is, "I will bring "people who are strong as fire, because of the sins of "thy pride they shall destroy thee." Alexander, when he took Tyre, ordered all the inhabitants to be slain, excepting those that fled to the temples, and the houses to be set on fire*; which literally fulfilled this prophecy; and which may also have respect to the destruction of Rome by fire, because of the sins committed in it, Rev. xviii. 8: *and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth, in the sight of all them that behold thee*; the kings and merchants of the earth, who shall stand and look on the city as it is burning, and when reduced to ashes; which denotes the utter destruction of it, Rev. xviii. 9, 10, 11, 18. The Targum is, "I will "give thee as ashes on the earth," &c. and shall be no more accounted of.

Ver. 19. *All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee*, &c.] At thy fall; that such a mighty city, and powerful prince, should be destroyed at once; that, from such a height of prosperity, they should be brought to so low an estate of adversity; this will be the astonishment of kings, merchants, and others, that knew the riches, power, and flourishing estate of Rome, as before observed: *thou shalt be a terror*; to the said persons, who will be afraid to come nigh for fear of the same torments and punishment, Rev. xviii. 10, 15. or, though thou *hast been a terror*: or *terrors*; exceeding terrible to others in time past, yet now, as the Targum, "I will give thee (or "make thee) as if thou wast not:" *and never shalt thou be any more*; as thou hast been, or after thy last destruction; so mystical Tyre or Babylon shall be no more, when once destroyed, Rev. xviii. 21.

Ver. 20. *Again, the word of the Lord came unto me*, &c.] After the prophecy of the destruction of the prince and king of Tyre, concerning a neighbouring city: *saying*; as follows:

Ver. 21. *Son of man, set thy face against Zidon*, &c.] An ancient city, near to Tyre, and in confederacy with it, greatly given to idolatry and superstition; and may design all the antichristian states in the communion of the church of Rome: *and prophesy against it*; the prophet is bid to look towards this place with a stern countenance, as before against Tyre; threatening it with ruin, and prophesying of it, in the following manner.

Ver. 22. *And say, thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] The eternal Jehovah, the only true God, the Maker of heaven and earth; this is said by way of preface to the prophecy, and to assure of the fulfilment of it, as well as in opposition to the gods of the Zidonians: *behold, I am against thee, O Zidon*; angry with thee, and will come out against thee in my wrath, because of thine idolatries and impieties. The Targum is, "behold, I send my fury upon thee, O Zidon:" *I will be glorified in the midst of thee*: not by the conversion of them: nor by acts of religious worship truly performed by them: by prayer, confession of sin, or thanksgiving; but by his judgments executed in the midst of them; by pouring out the vials of his wrath on them, as it follows: *and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall have executed judgments in her*; for the Lord is known, by the judgments he executes, to be that pure, holy, just, and sin-avenging God he is, as well as omniscient and omnipotent; and this even Heathens and antichristian persons are obliged to acknowledge, Psal. ix. 15, 16: *and shall be sanctified in her*: that is, shall appear, be declared and owned, to be a God, just and holy, in all his ways and works.

Ver. 23. *And I will send into her pestilence, and blood into her streets*, &c.] The plague and the sword, which are two of God's sore judgments, and often go together; the pestilence slays them that are within, and the sword those the enemy meets with in the streets: *and the wounded shall be judged*; that is, punished; or *shall fall**, die and perish: *in the midst of her by the sword upon her on every side*; this was literally fulfilled in Zidon, either by Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldean army, which besieged it on every side; or by Artaxerxes Ochus the Persian, who took it, and destroyed it; and will have its accomplishment on the antichristian states, eastern and western, when the vials shall be poured out upon them, Rev. xvi.: *and they shall know that I am the Lord God*; who am able to foretel things to come, and to accomplish them.

Ver. 24. *And there shall be no more a pricking brier to the house of Israel*, &c.] To the church of God, Jews or Gentiles, particularly to the Jews, who will now be converted; all the enemies of Christ and his people will now be destroyed, who have been very grievous and distressing to them by their furious persecutions; the pope and Turk will be no more, nor any of the antichristian powers; the beast and false prophet will be taken and cast into the lake of fire; and there will be none to hurt and destroy in all the holy mountain, Rev. xix. 20. Isa. xi. 9: *nor any grieving thorn of all that are round about them that despised them*; the same thing in other words as before; wicked men, especially tyrannical princes, furious persecutors of the saints, are like thorns and briers, not only unfruitful, useless, and unprofitable, but pricking, grieving, and hurtful to good men, by their persecutions, revilings, and reproaches, and whose end is to be

* Curtius, Hist. l. 4. c. 4. p. 75.

* ונפלל πεσουνται, Sept.; corruent, Pagninus, Vatablus; cadet, Montanus; so Kimchi and Ben Melech; and which is approved of by Gussetius.

burned. The Targum of the whole is, "and there "shall be no more to the house of Israel a king that "doth evil (or hurt), or a governor that oppresses all "round about them that spoil them:" *and they shall know that I am the Lord*: the house of Israel, the Jews now converted, they shall know the Lord Christ, and acknowledge him to be their Lord and King.

Ver. 25. *Thus saith the Lord God, when I shall have gathered the house of Israel*, &c. Not at the return of them from captivity in Babylon; for the ten tribes or house of Israel did not then return; though there might some few of those tribes, as a pledge of what would be hereafter; but in the latter day, upon the destruction of antichrist, when all Israel shall be saved: and when they will be collected *from the people among whom they are scattered*: in the several nations of the world, in Asia, Africa, and Europe: *and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the Heathen*; being believed in by them; prayed unto and worshipped in a spiritual manner by them; professed and owned to be their Saviour and Redeemer in the face of the whole world, Christians and even Heathens, whom before they rejected: *then shall they dwell in their land that I have given to my servant Jacob*: the land of Canaan, given by promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; which last is only here mentioned, because it was his posterity that was to possess it; not all Abraham's, only those in the line of Isaac; nor all Isaac's, only those in the line of Jacob; but all his; and this they will do when they are converted in the latter day, and be no more a vagabond people, as they now are.

Ver. 26. *And they shall dwell safely therein*, &c.] There being none to make them afraid, all their enemies being destroyed, and they also under the protection of Christian princes: *and they shall build houses and plant vineyards*: signifying their continuance in their land, and their enjoyment of the blessings of it. Cocceius understands this of churches gathered in the name of Christ; of which no doubt there will be many in Judea, as in the first times of the Gospel, and more abundantly: *yea, they shall dwell with confidence*: in the utmost safety and security, having nothing to fear from any quarter: *when I have executed judgment upon all those that despise them round about them*: took vengeance on them, and utterly destroyed them that despised or spoiled them, even all around them; they'll all be cut off, so that there will be none to give them the least disturbance: *and they shall know that I am the Lord their God*; not only God, as before, ver. 24. but their God, their Lord and their God, their Redeemer and Saviour, whom they formerly denied, persecuted, and pierced.

CHAP. XXIX

THIS chapter contains a prophecy against Pharaoh king of Egypt; and of the destruction of the land of Egypt; and of the restoration of it after a certain time. The time of prophecy is noted, ver. 1. the order to prophesy against Pharaoh, who is described as a large fish lying in his rivers, and boasting of them, ver. 2, 3. his destruction, and the manner of it, ver. 4, 5. the reason of it, his treachery to the Jews, ver. 6, 7. hence the whole land of Egypt is threatened with desolation from one end to the other, so as to be uninhabited by man or beast for the space of forty years, ver. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. but shall not arrive to their former glory as a kingdom, nor be any more the confidence of the house of Israel, ver. 15, 16. then follows a prophecy seventeen years after this, shewing the reason why Egypt was given to the king of Babylon, ver. 17, 18, 19, 20. and the chapter is closed with a promise of happiness to Israel, ver. 21.

Ver. 1. *In the tenth year, in the tenth* month, *in the twelfth day of the month*, &c.] In the tenth year of Jeconiah's captivity, and Zedekiah's reign. The Septuagint version has it, the twelfth year; and the Arabic version, the twelfth month; and the Septuagint version again, the first day of the month; and the Vulgate Latin, the eleventh day of it. This month was the month Tebet, and answers to part of December, and part of January. This prophecy was delivered before that concerning Tyre, though placed after it, because fulfilled after it, which gave Nebuchadnezzar Egypt as a reward for besieging and taking Tyre: *the word of the Lord came unto me, saying*: as follows.

Ver. 2. *Son of man, set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt*, &c.] Pharaoh was a name common to all the kings of Egypt; the name of this king was Pharaoh-hophra, Jer. xliv. 30. and who, by Herodotus [x], is called Apries: *and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt*: prophesy of his destruction, and of the destruction of the whole land that is under his dominion.

Ver. 3. *Speak, and say, thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] The one only, living, and true God, the almighty, eternal, and unchangeable Jehovah, which the gods of Egypt were not: *behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt*: who, though so great a king, was not a match for God, yea, nothing in his hands; nor could he stand before him, or contend with him; or, *I am above thee* [y]; though the king of Egypt was so high above others, and thought so highly of himself, as if he was a god; yet the Lord was higher than he: *the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers*; the chief river of Egypt was the Nile, which opened in seven mouths or gates into the sea, and out of which canals were made to water the whole land; and which abounding with rivers and watery places, hence the king of it is compared to a great fish, a dragon or whale, or rather a crocodile, which was a fish very common, and almost peculiar to Egypt; and with which the description here agrees, as Bochart observes; and who also remarks, that Pharaoh in the Arabic language signifies a crocodile; and to which he

[x] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 161.

[y] עליך super te, Montanus.

may be compared for his cruel, voracious, and mischievous nature; and is here represented as lying at ease, and rolling himself in the enjoyment of his power, riches, and pleasures: *which hath said, my river is mine own, and I have made it for myself;* alluding to the river Nile, which his predecessors had by their wisdom cut out into canals, for the better watering of the land; and which he might have improved, so that it stood in no need of rain, nor of the supplies of other countries, having a sufficiency from its own product; though he chiefly designs his kingdom, which was his own, and he had established it, and made himself great in it; for the last clause may be rendered, either, *I have made it*, as the Syriac version, the river Nile, ascribing that to himself which belonged to God; or, *I have made them*, the rivers among whom he lay, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions; or, *I have made myself*, as the Vulgate Latin version; that is, a great king. So the Targum, "the kingdom "is mine, and I have subdued it." Herodotus says of this king, that he was so lifted up with pride, and so secure of his happy state, that he said there was no God could deprive him of his kingdom [a]. This proud tyrannical monarch was an emblem of that beast that received his power from the dragon, and who himself spake like one; of the whore of Babylon that sits upon many waters, and boasts of her sovereignty and power, of her wealth and riches, of her ease, peace, pleasure, prosperity, and settled estate, Rev. xiii. 2, 11. and xvii. 1. and xviii. 7.

Ver. 4. *But I will put hooks in thy jaws*, &c.] The allusion is to fish-hooks, which are taken by fishes with the bait into their mouths, and stick in their jaws, by which they are drawn out of the river, and taken. The king of Egypt being before compared to a fish, these hooks design some powerful princes and armies, which should be the ruin of Pharaoh; one of them, according to Junius and Grotius, was Amasis, at the head of the Cyreneans and Greeks; and another was Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; see Job xli. 1, 2. Isa. xxxvii. 29: *and I will cause the fish of thy rivers to stick unto thy scales;* the people of his kingdom, especially his soldiers, generals, princes, and great men, to cleave to him, follow him, and go out with him in his expedition against Amasis. The Targum is, "I will kill the princes of thy strength "with thy mighty ones:" *and I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy rivers;* alluding to the crocodile, to which he is compared, which sometimes comes out of the river, and goes on dry land. The king of Egypt was brought out of his kingdom by the following means: Amasis, with the Cyreneans and Greeks, having seized upon Lybia, and drove the king of it from thence, he applied to Pharaoh for help, who gathered a large army of Egyptians, and led them out into the fields of Cyrene, where they were defeated by Amasis, and almost all perished, and the king saved himself by flight; upon which the Egyptians mutinied and rebelled against him, and Amasis became their king: *and all the fish of thy rivers shall stick unto thy scales;* the common people of Egypt; for the above numerous army consisted only of Egyptians, whom he gathered from all parts, drained his rivers of them, and almost exhausted his country hereby; he had indeed in an army, after this battle with Amasis, thirty thousand auxiliaries, Carians and Ionians; but these were not the fish of his rivers. The Targum is, "I will make "thy kingdom to cease from thee, and all the princes "of thy strength with thy mighty ones shall be killed;" with which the history agrees. The allusion to the crocodile is here very just and pertinent, which is a fish full of scales. Monsieur Thevenot [a], who saw many of them, says, that "the body of this fish is large, "and all of a bigness; the back is covered with high "scales, like the heads of nails in a court-gate, of a "greenish colour, and so hard that they are proof "against a halberd; and it has a long tail covered with "scales like the body;" and another traveller says [b], they have scales on their back musket-proof, and therefore must be wounded in the belly; but another traveller [c] says, this is a vulgar report that a musket-shot will not pierce the skins of the crocodiles, for upon trial it is found false; yet all writers, ancient and modern, allow it to have very firm scales on its back, which render it capable of bearing the heaviest strokes, and to be in a measure impenetrable and invincible; so Herodotus [d] says, it has a skin full of scales, on the back infrangible; or, as Pliny [e] expresses it, invincible against all blows and strokes it may be stricken with; and so says Aristotle [f], with which Ælian [g] agrees, who says that the crocodile has by nature a back and tail impenetrable; for it is covered with scales, as if it was armed as one might say, not unlike to hard shells.

Ver. 5. *And I will leave thee* thrown *into the wilderness, thee, and all the fish of thy rivers*, &c.] Where fish in common cannot live, but die as soon almost as out of the water, and on dry land, excepting those that are of the amphibious kind. This wilderness designs the deserts of Lybia and Cyrene, where the battle was fought between Hophra and Amasis; and where the Egyptian army perished, only their king, before compared to a crocodile, which lives on land, as well as in water, escaped. The Targum is, "I will cast thee "into a wilderness, and all the princes of thy strength:" *thou shalt fall upon the open fields: thou shalt not be brought together, nor gathered*: this is to be understood of his army; for what is proper to an army is sometimes ascribed to the head or general of it; which fell by the sword in the fields of Lybia and Cyrene, and was so discomfited, that the remains of it could not be brought and gathered together again: or the sense is, that those that were slain were left in the open fields, and had no burial; they were not gathered to the grave, as Kimchi interprets it; and so the Targum, "upon the face of the field thy carcass shall be cast: it "shall not be gathered, nor shall it be buried:" this was only true of the carcasses of the soldiers slain in battle, not of the king, who fled, and afterwards in another battle was taken by Amasis, and strangled in the city of Sais, where he was buried among his ances-

[a] Herodot. Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 169. & l. 11. c. 163.
[a] Travels, par. 1. B. 2. ch. 72. p. 245.
[b] Mandelsloe in Harris's Voyages, &c. vol. 1. p. 759.
[c] Tavernier in ib. p. 832.
[d] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 68.
[e] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 25.
[f] Hist. Animal. l. 2. c. 10.
[g] De Animal. l. 10. c. 24.

tors, as Herodotus [h] relates: *I have given thee for meat to the beasts of the field and to the fowls of the heaven*: that is, his army; as the armies of the kings, beast, and false prophet, will be at the battle of Armageddon, when the two latter will be taken and cast alive into the burning lake, of which this monarch was an emblem, Rev. xix. 17—20.

Ver. 6. *And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the Lord*, &c.] Who could eject their king from his kingdom, and deliver him into the hands of his enemy; though he thought no God could, as he boastingly said, before observed: *because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel*: alluding to the country of Egypt, which abounded with reeds that grew upon the banks of the river Nile, and other rivers. This signifies that either the Egyptians were weak, and could not help the people of Israel when they applied to them; or rather that they were treacherous and deceitful, and would not assist them, according to agreement; and were even pernicious and hurtful to them, as a broken reed; see Isa. xxxvi. 6. The Targum renders it, "the staff of a reed broken."

Ver. 7. *When they took hold of thee by thy hand*, &c.] When the Israelites entered into an alliance and confederacy with the Egyptians, called for their assistance according to treaty, and put their confidence in them: *thou didst break and rend all their shoulder*; as a reed which a man puts under his arm-hole, and leans upon, and it breaks under him, the splinters run into the flesh up to the very shoulder, and tear the flesh to pieces; so, through Zedekiah's trusting to the king of Egypt, he rebelled against the king of Babylon, which brought on his ruin, and the destruction of his kingdom: *and when they leaned upon thee thou brakest, and madest all their loins to be at a stand*; when they put their confidence in the king of Egypt, and sent to him for succour when besieged by the king of Babylon, and he failed them, they were obliged to raise up themselves, as a man is forced to do when his staff breaks under him, whose loins before were bowed, but now erects himself, and stands and walks as well as he can without it; so the Jews were forced to stand upon their own legs, and exert all the force they had, and make all the efforts they could against the king of Babylon, being left in the lurch by the king of Egypt; in which, though they were rightly served for their vain confidence and not trusting in the Lord, yet the treachery of the Egyptians was resented by him, as follows:

Ver. 8. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Because of the pride of the king of Egypt, asserting the river to be his own, and made by him for himself; and because of his perfidy to the house of Israel: *behold, I will bring a sword upon thee*; or those that kill with the sword, as the Targum; first an intestine war, occasioned by the murmurs of the people, on account of the defeat of their army at Cyrene; which issued in the dethroning and strangling of this king, as before observed, and setting up another; which intestine commotions Nebuchadnezzar took the advantage of, and came against Egypt with a large army: *and cut off man and beast out of thee*; for what with the civil wars among themselves, and what with the devastations of the king of Babylon's army, putting men to the sword, and seizing upon the beasts for their food, to support such an army in a foreign land, it was pretty well stripped of both.

Ver. 9. *And the land of Egypt shall be desolate and waste*, &c.] Men few or none being left in it, to till it, nor cattle found upon it: *and they shall know that I am the Lord*; by these judgments executed upon them, now foretold; and which when come to pass, they will be obliged to acknowledge the omniscience and omnipotence of Jehovah: *because thou hast said, the river is mine, and I have made it*; see the note on ver. 3. this insolent expression was highly resented by the Lord, as appears by the repetition of it. The Targum is here, as before, "the kingdom is mine, and I have "subdued it;" but, notwithstanding this vaunt, he could not keep it.

Ver. 10. *Behold, therefore, I am against thee, and against thy rivers*, &c.] Against the king of Egypt, and against his subjects, the many people he ruled over; as the Lord is against spiritual Egypt, and the head of it, and the antichristian states, signified by many waters, rivers, and fountains; see Rev. xi. 8. and xvii. 1, 15. and xvi. 4: *and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate*; partly by a civil war, and partly by a foreign enemy; especially those parts of it which were the seat of war: *from the tower of Syene even unto the border of Ethiopia*; or the tower of Seveneh; according to Herodotus [i], Syene was a city of Thebais, where he was told were two mountains, which gave rise to the Nile. Pliny [k] says it was five thousand furlongs from Alexandria; and it is by him, as well as Strabo [l], placed under the tropic of Cancer; who both say, in the summer solstice, at noon, no shadow is cast there; to which the poet Lucan [m] refers. It is now called Essuaen; which city, as Mr. Norden [n] says, who lately travelled in those parts, is situated on the eastern shore of the Nile; and he relates that there remain still some marks of the place where the ancient city stood; as to the rest, it is so covered with earth, that there is nothing but rubbish, from which, in some places, one would judge that there were formerly magnificent buildings here. The utter destruction of which, with the rest of Egypt prophesied of, appears to have been fulfilled. This place is famous for being the place of the banishment of Juvenal the poet, where he died, being eighty years of age. The tower of Syene, Jerom says, remained to his days, and was subject to the Roman government, where are the cataracts of the Nile; and to which place, from our sea, he says, the Nile is navigable: but, according to Pliny [o], Syene itself was on the border of Ethiopia; and so say Pausanias [p] and Solinus [q]: and, according to Seneca [r], it was the extreme part of Egypt. So Josephus [s] says the south border of Egypt is Syene, which separates it

[h] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 169.
[i] Ib. c. 28.
[k] Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 73.
[l] Geograph. l. 2. p. 65, 78.
[m] Umbras nusquam flectente Syene. Pharsal. l. 2. v. 587.
[n] Travels in Egypt and Nubia, vol. 1. p. 143. vol. 2. p. 97, 103.

[o] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 9.
[p] Arcadica, sive l. 8. p. 519.
[q] Polyhistor. c. 45.
[r] Apud Servium in Virgil. Æneid. l. 6. p. 1011.
[s] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 10. sect. 5.

from Ethiopia; and that between Pelusium (the entrance of Egypt) and Syene are two thousand furlongs. It lay between Egypt and Ethiopia, so that it might seem doubtful to which it belonged. It seems better therefore to take *Migdol*, rendered a *tower*, for the proper name of a place, as the Septuagint do; and such a place there was in Egypt, Jer. xliv. 1. and xlvi. 4. a town on the Red sea, Exod. xiv. 2. so that the one was on the border of Egypt on one side, and the other on the other: and the words may be rendered [r], *from Migdol to Syene, even to the border of Ethiopia*; from one end of it to the other: it denotes the utter desolation of the country, from one end to the other. Unless by Cush, rendered *Ethiopia*, is meant Arabia, as it often is, and is thought by some to be intended here; which was on the northern border of Egypt, as Syene was, a city in Thebais, near to Ethiopia, on the southern border of it; so that this describes Egypt from south to north; but the former account seems best.

Ver. 11. *No foot of man shall pass through it, &c.*] This must be understood not strictly, but with some limitation; it cannot be thought that Egypt was so depopulated as that there should not be a single passenger in it; but that there should be few inhabitants in it, or that there should be scarce any that should come into it for traffic; it should not be frequented as it had been, at least there should be very few that travelled in it, in comparison of what had: *no foot of beast shall pass through it*: no droves of sheep and oxen, and such-like useful cattle, only beasts of prey should dwell in it: *neither shall it be inhabited forty years*; afterwards, ver. 17. a prophecy is given out concerning the destruction of it by Nebuchadnezzar, which was in the twenty-seventh year, that is, of Jeconiah's captivity; now allowing three years for the fulfilment of that prophecy, or forty years, a round number put for forty-three years, they will end about the time that Cyrus conquered Babylon, at which time the seventy-years' captivity of the Jews ended; and very likely the captivity of the Egyptians also. The Jews pretend to give a reason why Egypt lay waste just forty years, because the famine, signified in Pharaoh's dream, was to have lasted, as they make it out, forty-two years; whereas, according to them, it continued only two years; and, instead of the other forty years of famine, Egypt must be forty years uninhabited: this is mentioned both by Jarchi and Kimchi.

Ver. 12. *And I will make the land of Egypt desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, &c.*] As Judea and others, made desolate by the king of Babylon: *and her cities among the cities that are laid waste shall be desolate forty years*; such as Thebes, Sais, Memphis, and others; which should share the same fate as Jerusalem and other principal cities in other countries, which fell into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar: *and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries*; such as were not carried captive into Babylon fled into other countries, as Arabia, Ethiopia, and other places. Berosus [s] makes mention of this captivity of the Egyptians under Nebuchadnezzar the son, which no other writer does.

Ver. 13. *Yet thus saith the Lord God, at the end of forty years, &c.*] Reckoning from its devastation by Nebuchadnezzar to the taking of Babylon by Cyrus; *will I gather the Egyptians from the people whither they were scattered*: from Babylon, and other places; Cyrus very probably being stirred up by the Lord to proclaim liberty to the Egyptians, as he did to the Jews, to return to their own land; and at the same time restored Amasis to the quiet possession of his kingdom, who must be still alive; since, according to Diodorus Siculus [t], he reigned fifty-five years; though, according to Herodotus [u], he reigned but forty-four years.

Ver. 14. *And I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, &c.*] For what is done by men, under the direction and influence of divine Providence, is said to be done by the Lord, as this was, though by the means of Cyrus: *and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros*; which was a part of the land of Egypt; perhaps so called from Pathrusim, the son of Mizraim, from whom Egypt had its name, Gen. x. 14. Bochart takes it to be Thebais, a principal country in Egypt: *into the land of their habitation*; or nativity, where they were born, and where they before dwelt: *and they shall be there a base kingdom*; as it is at this day more especially, to which it has been gradually reduced, having passed into various hands, and come under the power and dominion of different states: whatever might be the case and circumstances of it under Cyrus, Cambyses his son entered into it, made sad devastation in it, and an entire conquest of it; and though it revolted under Darius Hystaspes, it was subdued again, and brought into a worse state than before by Xerxes: it revolted again in the reign of Darius Nothus, and was at last by Ochus totally subdued; and from that time the Egyptians never had a king of their own nation to reign over them. Along with the Persian empire it came into the hands of Alexander without any opposition; and, after his death, fell to the share of Ptolemy, one of his captains; and, though some of the first kings of that name were of considerable note and power, yet Egypt made a poor figure under the reigns of several of them. When the Roman empire obtained, it became a province of that, and continued so for six or seven hundred years; and then it fell into the hands of the Saracens, when it sunk into ignorance and superstition, the Mahometan religion being established in it, with whom it continued until about the year of Christ 1250; when the Mamalucks, or Turkish and Circassian slaves, rose up against their sovereigns, the sultans of Egypt, and usurped the government, in whose hands it was until the year 1517; when Selim the ninth, emperor of the Turks, conquered the Mamalucks, and put an end to their government, and annexed it to the Ottoman empire; of which it is a province to this day, being governed by a Turkish basha, with twenty-four begs or princes under him, who are raised, from being ser-

[r] See Prideaux's Connection, part 1. B. 2. p. 93. So the words are rendered by Hillerus, Onomast. Sacr. p. 672. who observes, that Syene is now called by the Arabs *Asuan*, from the Ethiopic word *Wasa*, which signifies to terminate or finish, this being the border of Ethiopia.

[s] Apud Joseph. Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 1.
[t] Bibliother. l. 1. p. 69. Ed. Rhodoman.
[u] Thalia, sive l. 2. c. 10.

vants, to the administration of public affairs; and so it is become a base kingdom indeed, if to be called one[y].

Ver. 15. *And it shall be the basest of the kingdoms,* &c.] That belonged to the Persian monarchy, or to the Macedonian empire, being more kept under than the rest, lest it should regain its former strength and glory; though it became more famous in the times of some of the Ptolemies, yet never recovered its former greatness; and is now exceeding base indeed, as appears from the preceding note: *neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations*; so as to conquer them, and make them tributary to it, as it had done: *for I will demolish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations*; for though they made war upon other nations in the time of the Lagidæ, yet they did not subdue them, and annex them to their kingdom, being much weakened both as to men and money.

Ver. 16. *And it shall be no more the confidence of the house of Israel,* &c.] It having been treacherous to them, and moreover subdued by the Chaldeans, the Jews, even after their return from captivity, put no more confidence in them; it being now become, as it is here prophesied it would, the basest of the kingdoms, more weak, and in a more abject state, than the rest, and so despised by its neighbours, as it was by the Jews: *which bringeth* their *iniquity to remembrance, when they shall look after them*; as they had done in time past, when they looked after them for help, and expected it from them, and trusted in them, and served their idols; which brought to the Lord's remembrance former iniquities and idolatries, for which he punished them; but now they should do so no more: *but they shall know that I* am *the Lord God*; not the Egyptians, but the Israelites; who being returned from captivity, shall acknowledge and serve the only true God, and no more worship the idols of the nations.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass in the seven-and-twentieth year,* &c.] Of Jeconiah's captivity; or of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, as Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abendana, from Seder Olam Rabba[z], observe; though it was in the 35th year of his reign that Tyre was taken by him, and after that Egypt was given him: *in the first* month, *in the first* day *of the month*: the month Nisan, which answers to part of March, and part of April. According to Bishop Usher[a], it was on the 20th of April, on the third day of the week (Tuesday), in the year of the Julian period 4142, and before Christ 572. Mr. Whiston[b] makes it to be a year sooner. This prophecy is not put in its proper place, as to order of time, since it was sixteen or seventeen years after the preceding, and the last of Ezekiel's prophecies; but is here placed, because it relates to the same subject as the former, the destruction of Egypt. *The word of the Lord came unto me, saying*; as follows:

Ver. 18. *Son of man, Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon,* &c.] The same with Nebuchadnezzar; he goes by both names in Scripture, nor is the difference very great: *caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus*; in besieging it thirteen years[c] before he was able to take it; during which time his army suffered much hardship, was greatly fatigued and wearied, by the various military works they were engaged in, to carry on the siege so long a time: *every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled*; the heads of the soldiers became bald with wearing their helmets so long, or carrying baskets of earth and timber upon them, to make mounts with; and the skin of their shoulders was peeled off, either with their armour, or by carrying burdens on them for the above purpose; or, as Jerom says, from the Assyrian annals, to make a causeway to join the island to the continent, that so they might come at it with their battering-rams, and demolish it: *yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus*, for besieging it; for, as the same Jerom observes, when the Tyrians found that the city was like to be taken by him, their gold and silver, and whatsoever that was valuable that was with them, they put on shipboard, and sent it to other islands; or, as others say, that when Tyre on the continent, which was what Nebuchadnezzar besieged, was about to be taken, the inhabitants transplanted their riches to the island at some distance, where new Tyre was afterwards built; however, what with the consumption of their riches during this thirteen-years' siege, and the removing their effects to other places before the taking of the city, there was scarce any thing left for the plunder of the king of Babylon's army, so that he and that had nothing to requite them: *for the service that he had served against it*; it must have cost him a great deal of money to support such a numerous army for so long a time, as well as the siege was very toilsome and laborious; and yet, when the city was taken, there was nothing found in it to answer this expense and labour.

Ver. 19. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Since this was the case, that the king of Babylon had been working for nothing, and had spent much blood and treasure, as well as time, to little purpose and advantage to himself; *behold, I will give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon*; which will make him a sufficient recompense for his loss of time, men, and money, before Tyre; and though the conquest of Egypt was made easy to him, by the intestine divisions and wars which were among the Egyptians; yet these were suffered, and ordered by the providence of God, to bring about this his will, by way of righteous punishment of the Egyptians, for their treachery to his people, and other sins: *and he shall take her multitude*; of soldiers, and of inhabitants, and carry them captive: *and take her spoil, and take her prey*; that which the Egyptians had spoiled other nations of, and made a prey of, that should now become the spoil and prey of the Chaldeans: *and it shall be the wages for his army*; with this the king of Babylon would be able to pay off the arrears of his army, which had lain so long against Tyre; or this would be a recompense to them for all the hardships they there sustained.

Ver. 20. *I have given him the land of Egypt for his*

[y] See all this at large, with the proofs of it, in Dr. Newton's Dissertations on Prophecies, from p. 382 to 394.
[z] C. 26. p. 77.

[a] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3432.
[b] Chronological Tables, cent. 10.
[c] Hist. Phœnic. apud Joseph. adv. Apion, l. 1. c. 21.

labour wherewith he served against it, &c.] That is, against Tyre; meaning not Nebuchadnezzar merely or only, but his army also, who did the main of the service and labour, and had the plunder of the country for it; though the kingdom itself was given to their king, and annexed to his monarchy: *because they wrought for me, saith the Lord God*; not intentionally, but eventually; they did not design to do any service for God; they only sought to serve themselves with the riches and wealth of those they subdued; and yet whilst they besieged Tyre, and when they took it, and while they were ravaging, plundering, and subduing Egypt, they were doing the Lord's will and work, and executing his righteous judgments on these enemies of his for their sins; wherefore he rewarded them sufficiently: none ever are employed by him but he gives them their wages; even though they are wicked and ungodly men, verily they have their reward.

Ver. 21. *In that day will I cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud forth*, &c.] Not at the time of Egypt's destruction, unless it can be thought that this refers to the advancement of Daniel in the court of Babylon; or to the taking of Jehoiachin out of prison, and setting his throne above the rest of the kings; which events came to pass a little after this: but rather this respects the time of Egypt's restoration forty years after, when Cyrus came to the throne, and proclaimed liberty to the Jews to return to their own land, and build their city and temple, under the government of Zorobabel their prince: besides, it may not be limited to either of these times, but may regard the famous day, when the kingdom of Israel, in a spiritual sense, should flourish under the Messiah, the Horn of salvation, and Branch of David, often promised to bud forth, and was fulfilled in Jesus, Psal. cxxxii. 17. Jer. xxiii. 5. Luke i. 68, 69. The Targum is, "in that day will I "bring redemption to the house of Israel." *And I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the midst of them*; in prophecy among them, as the Targum: who after this might deliver other prophecies, though we have no account of them; or he should have boldness and courage when he and they should see his prophecies fulfilled, by which it would appear that he was a true prophet of the Lord: *and they shall know that I am the Lord*: who sent the prophet, and from whom he had these prophecies, and by whom they were fulfilled.

CHAP. XXX.

THIS chapter is a continuation of the prophecy against Egypt, both against the country and the king of it. It is introduced with expressions of lamentation, because of the destruction coming on, ver. 1, 2, 3. and not only Egypt, and the cities thereof, should be destroyed, but all her friends, associates, and allies; the Ethiopians, Lydians, Lybians, and others, ver. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. Nebuchadnezzar and his army were to be the instruments of her ruin, ver. 10, 11, 12. particular cities are mentioned by name, which should suffer much, and become desolate, ver. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. and then Pharaoh king of Egypt himself is threatened with broken arms, and his people to be scattered among the nations, ver. 20, 21, 22, 23. and the king of Babylon is again mentioned, whose arms should be strengthened to do all this, ver. 24, 25, 26.

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord came again unto me*, &c.] Whether this prophecy was delivered about the time of that in the former part of the preceding chapter, namely, in the tenth year, tenth month, and twelfth day of it; or whether about the time that was which is recorded in the latter part of the chapter, in the seven-and-twentieth year of Jehoiachin's captivity, is not easy to say; I am inclined to think it was about the time of the latter, since the time of the fulfilment of it is said to be near, ver. 3: *saying*; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, prophesy and say, thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Prophesy against Egypt's king and inhabitants, and in the name of the Lord thus bespeak them: *howl ye*; ye Egyptians, and also ye Ethiopians, and all others after named, which should share in the destruction of Egypt; this is said to give them notice of it, and prepare them for it: *woe worth the day! or, alas for the day**! O the unhappy day! what a sad dismal day is this! O that we should ever live to see such wretched times!

Ver. 3. *For the day* is *near*, &c.] The day of Egypt's destruction, the time fixed for it: *even the day of the Lord* is *near*; the day appointed by him, and in which he would make himself known by the judgments he executed: Kimchi observes, that, the same year this prophecy was delivered, Egypt was given into the hands of the king of Babylon: *a cloudy day*: or, *a day of cloud*†; which was seldom seen in Egypt in a literal sense, rarely having any rain, their country being watered by the Nile; but now, in a figurative sense, the clouds would gather thick and black, and threaten with a horrible tempest of divine wrath, and of ruin and destruction: *it shall be the time of the Heathen*: both when the Heathen nation of the Chaldeans should distress and conquer others; and when Heathen nations, as the Egyptians, Ethiopians, and others, should be destroyed by them. The Targum is, "it shall "be the time of the breaking or destruction of the "people."

Ver. 4. *And the sword shall come upon Egypt*, &c.] The sword of the Chaldeans shall come upon the Egyptians, by which they should be cut off; it having a commission from the Lord for that purpose: *and great pain shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt*; Ethiopia being a neighbouring nation to Egypt, shall be in a panic when it shall hear of the sword of the Chaldeans being in Egypt, and of the

* הה ליום hah diei, Munster, Vatablus; heu diei, Cocceius, Starckius.

† יום ענן dies nubis, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius.

ravages made by it, of the multitudes slain with it; fearing it will be their turn next to fall into the same hands, and in the same manner: and the rather, not only as they were neighbours, but allies: *and they shall take away her multitude*; that is, the Chaldeans shall carry captive vast numbers of the Egyptians; such as fell not by the sword should not escape the hand of the enemy, but be taken and carried into other lands. Egypt was a very populous country; according to Agrippa's speech in Josephus[f], there were in it 7,500,000 persons from Ethiopia to Alexandria, besides the inhabitants of the latter, as might be gathered from the tribute each person paid; hence they are compared to the trees of a forest that can't be searched, and to grashoppers innumerable, Jer. xlvi. 23. but now their numbers should be lesser: *and her foundations shall be broken down*; either in a literal sense, the foundations of the cities, towers, and fortified places in Egypt, should be undermined and destroyed, and consequently the buildings on them must sink and fall; or in a figurative sense, her king, princes, magistrates, laws, and government, which are the support of a state, should be removed, and be of no more service.

Ver. 5. *Ethiopia, Lybia, and Lydia*, &c.] Or, *Cush, Phut, and Lud*. Cush and Phut were both sons of Ham, from whom Egypt is sometimes called the land of Ham; and Lud or Ludim was the son of Mizraim, the son of Ham, the common name of Egypt in Scripture, Gen x. 6, 13. Cush is by us rendered Ethiopia; and is thought by some to be a part of Arabia, which lay near to Egypt. Phut and Lud are properly enough rendered Lybia and Lydia; and both these, with Ethiopia, are represented as the allies and confederates of Egypt, Jer. xlvi. 9. *And all the mingled people*; the Syriac version renders it, *all Arabia*; and so Symmachus, according to Jerom; though others think they are the Carians, Ionians, and other Greeks, which Pharaoh-apries got together to fight with Amasis[g]: *and Chub*; or *Cub*; the inhabitants of this place are thought to be the Cobii of Ptolemy[h], who dwelt in Mareotis, a country of Egypt; though some, by a change of a letter, would have them to be the Nubians, a people in Africa; and so the Arabic version here reads it. Of these Strabo[i] says, on the left of the stream of the Nile dwell the Nubians, a large nation in Lybia; and which he afterwards mentions along with the Troglodytes, Blemmyes, Megabarians, and Ethiopians, that dwell above Syene: and so Ptolemy[k] speaks of them along with the Megabarians, and as inhabiting to the west of the Avalites: and Pliny[l] calls them Nubian Ethiopians, whom he places near the Nile: and a late traveller[m] in those parts informs us that the confines of Egypt and Nubia are about eight leagues above the first cataract (of the Nile); Nubia begins at the villages of Ell-kalabsche, and of Teffa; the first is to the east of the Nile, and the second to the west. *And the men of the land that is in league shall fall with them by the sword*; all the nations above mentioned, with whomsoever should be found that were confederates with Egypt, should share the same fate with them. The Septuagint render it, *and those of the children of my covenant*; as if the Jews were meant that were in Egypt, who are sometimes called *the children of the covenant*, and of *the promise*, Acts iii. 25. Rom. ix. 8. and so some interpret the place; but it takes in all the allies of Egypt, and does not design the Jews, at least not them only.

Ver. 6. *Thus saith the Lord, they also that uphold Egypt shall fall*, &c.] That is, by the sword; either their allies and auxiliaries without, that supported the Egyptians with men and money; or their principal people within, their nobles that supported their state with their estates, their cousellors with their wisdom, their soldiers with their valour and courage: *and the pride of her power shall come down*; or the power they were proud of, the dominion and grandeur they boasted of; the greatness of their king, and the largeness of their empire, with the wealth and riches of it: *from the tower of Syene shall they fall in it by the sword, saith the Lord God*; or rather, *from Migdol to Syene*; so the Septuagint and Arabic versions, from one end of Egypt to the other; the sword would ravage, and multitudes fall by it, in all cities and towns, between the one and the other; which denotes the general slaughter that snould be made; see the note on ch. xxix. 10.

Ver. 7. *And they shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate*, &c.] Or among them, shall be ranked with them, and be as desolate as they are; as Judea and other countries, ravaged by the same enemy: and *her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted*; undergo the same fate as they have done, as Jerusalem and others. The cities of Egypt were very numerous; Diodorus Siculus[n] says, that in ancient times Egypt had cities and villages of note, more than 18,000. Herodotus[o] writes, that it was said, that under King Amasis there were 20,000 cities in it; and the first mentioned writer[p] says, under Ptolemy Lagus they were reckoned more than 30,000; and, according to Theocritus[q], under Ptolemy Philadelphus they were 33,339.

Ver. 8. *And they shall know that I am the Lord*, &c.] The Egyptians shall know the Lord to be the true God, and acknowledge him to be omniscient and omnipotent, that should so exactly foretel their destruction, and accomplish it: *when I have set a fire in Egypt*; a war there; the heat of battle, very devouring and consuming, as well as very grievous and terrible, as fire is. The Targum is, "when I shall give (or set) "people that are strong as fire against Egypt;" the army of the Chaldeans: *and when all her helpers shall be destroyed*; her auxiliaries, the neighbouring nations in alliance with them, before mentioned.

Ver. 9. *In that day shall messengers go forth from me in ships*, &c.] Either by the river Nile, or by the Red sea, to Arabia Felix, which some think is meant by

[f] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 16. sect. 4.
[g] See Prideaux's Connexion, part 1. p. 93.
[h] Geograph. l. 4. c. 5.
[i] Geograph. l. 17. p. 541, 562.
[k] Geograph. l. 5. c. 8.
[l] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 29.
[m] Norden's Travels in Egypt and Nubia, vol. 2. p. 131, 132.
[n] Bibl. l. 1. p. 29.
[o] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 177.
[p] Bibl. l. 1. p. 29.
[q] Idyll. 17. v. 82.

Ethiopia. Cush or Ethiopia was encompassed about with water, so that there was no coming to it but by ships; see Gen. ii. 13. compare with this Isa. xviii. 1, 2. the messengers here were either such who under a divine impulse, or however by the providence of God, were directed to go to Ethiopia, and tell them the news of the destruction of Egypt; or these were messengers sent by the king of Babylon, to demand a surrender of their country to him, or it may design him himself, and his army, who marched thither to subdue that country also, after the conquest of Egypt. So the Targum, "at that time messengers shall go forth from "before me with legions;" and because all this was by the appointment and providence of God, they are represented as messengers sent by him: *to make the careless Ethiopians afraid*; with the news of the fall of Egypt their confederate, and of a mighty army coming against them; who had dwelt securely and confidently, at ease and unconcerned, without any sense of danger, or fear of any enemy: *and great pain shall come upon them, as in the day of Egypt*; either as of old, when the plagues were on Egypt, and especially when they were drowning in the Red sea; or as of late, when the sword was in Egypt, and ravaging there: *for, lo, it cometh*; the same day was coming on them as came on Egypt, the day of the Lord, a cloudy one, and the time of the Heathen; it was certain, just at hand, and there was no escaping it; see ver. 3, 4.

Ver. 10. *Thus saith the Lord God, I will make the multitude of Egypt to cease*, &c.] The vast numbers of people that inhabited Egypt; some of its cities were very populous, especially the city No, after mentioned; but now the numbers should be greatly lessened, and the whole land sadly depopulated: or the *noise*[r], *tumult*, and hurry of it; which is very great where there are large numbers of people, and which ceases when they are cut off. The Syriac version renders it, the riches of Egypt. Now the instrument God would make use of to do all this is mentioned by name, as follows, *by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon*; the then greatest monarch in the world.

Ver. 11. *He and his people with him*, &c.] He and his army, consisting chiefly of Chaldeans; though there were of other nations among them, as were in his army when he besieged Jerusalem, as seems to be suggested in the next clause: *the terrible of the nations shall be brought to destroy the land*; the Chaldeans, the most fierce, cruel, and terrible of all people, and others the most terrible that could be collected out of all nations under the yoke of the king of Babylon; and all of them terrible to the nations against whom they came, as now against Egypt to destroy it; see Hab. i. 6, 7: *and they shall draw their swords against Egypt, and fill the land with the slain*; go through the land with their drawn swords, and kill all they meet; and not put them up till they have quite depopulated the land, and filled it with dead carcasses.

Ver. 12. *And I will make the rivers dry*, &c.] Egypt was a country that abounded with rivers; however, with canals cut from the river Nile; its wealth and riches very much depended hereon, partly on account of the multitude of fishes taken out of them, and the paper-reeds that grew upon their banks; but chiefly because the whole land was watered by them, and made exceeding fruitful, rain being not so common in it; so that to dry up the rivers was in effect to take away their substance and dependence; besides, hereby the way was made easy and passable for the enemy; there was nothing to obstruct him, he could overrun and ravage the land at pleasure: *and sell the land into the hand of the wicked*; the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar, who were wicked idolaters, men of flagitious lives, and of merciless and cruel dispositions; who would shew no favour to the inhabitants of the land, when delivered up to them, which is called a selling it; for, as things sold are delivered to the buyer, so should this land be to them; which though they had no right to it before, yet by the event of war, and disposal of divine Providence, came to have a property in it, given them by him who is the proprietor of all lands; and after them into the hands of the Persians, under Cambyses and Ochus; who were very wicked and cruel princes, and may be reckoned among the terrible or violent ones of the nations in the preceding verse; and then into the hands of the Grecians, Romans, Saracens, Mamalucks, and now the Turks, all very wicked people: *and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers*; the Babylonians, people of another country and distant, of another language, and with whom they had no commerce, alliance, and friendship, and so would not spare them, and their land, when in their possession; and so all the rest above mentioned, into whose hands they successively fell: *I the Lord have spoken it*; determined it, prophesied of it; and it shall come to pass, as it did accordingly.

Ver. 13. *Thus saith the Lord God, I will also destroy the idols*, &c.] With which Egypt abounded, making an idol of all sorts of creatures, rational and irrational, animate and inanimate, and in which they trusted; wherefore these being destroyed, they had nothing to put their confidence in: *I will cause their images to cease out of Noph*; called Moph, Hos. ix. 6. and which we there rightly render Memphis, as many versions do here, and was very famous for idolatry: here stood the temple of Serapis, and the temple of other idols; here Isis and Osiris were worshipped; and it was in Jerom's time, as he says, the metropolis of the Egyptian superstition. It was built by Menes[s], the Mizraim of the Scriptures, the first king of Egypt; though Diodorus Siculus[t] makes Uchoreus to be the founder of it. Some interpreters take this city to be the same with what is now called Alkair, or Grand Cairo; or, however, that this is built upon the same spot, or near the same place that was, in which I have followed them on Isa. xix. 13. Jer. ii. 16. whereas Cairo stands right over-against old Memphis, the Nile being between them, on the east side of it, and Memphis on the west; as is clear from Herodotus[u], and from the charts of Dr. Shaw, and Mr. Norden; and who observe, that some take the place of it to have been where a village now stands, Dr. Shaw calls Geza,

[r] את המון strepitum, Vatablus, Coccejus.
[s] Herodot. Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 99.

[t] Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 46.
[u] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 99.

and Mr. Norden Gize: *and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt;* that is, a native of that country; or that should rule over the whole of it, and in that grandeur the kings of Egypt had before; or, however, not dwell in Memphis, which was the seat of the kings of Egypt, but now should be so no more: when Egypt was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, it was under the Babylonians; and then under the Persians; and then under the Greeks; and afterwards under the Romans; since under the Saracens and Mamalucks; and now in the hands of the Turks; so that it never recovered its former glory; and indeed, after Nectanebus was driven out of it by Ochus, king of Persia, it never after had a king: *and I will put a fear in all the land of Egypt;* a panic in all the inhabitants of it; as soon as they shall hear of the king of Babylon entering into it, their courage, bravery, and fortitude, shall at once leave them, and they shall be dispirited, and have no heart to defend themselves, and oppose the enemy.

Ver. 14. *And I will make Pathros desolate,* &c.] A country in Egypt; see the note on ch. xxix. 14. perhaps it was the first place that Nebuchadnezzar entered, and so went from place to place in the order hereafter mentioned: *and I will set fire in Zoan;* or Tanis, a famous city in Egypt in the times of Moses, Numb. xiii. 22. Psal. lxxviii. 12, 43. The Targum and Septuagint version call it Tanis here; and from hence a nome in Egypt was called the Tanitic nome. This city was burnt down by the king of Babylon: the place now built on the spot is called Mansourah, as Dr. Shaw [w] says: *and I will execute judgment in No.* The Vulgate Latin version renders it Alexandria; and so does the Targum; of which place Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech interpret it; and so does Jerom; which, though built after these times by Alexander, and called so after his name, yet is supposed to be built on or near the place where ancient No stood. The city is now called Scanderoon, or Scanderea; the Turks calling Alexander Scander: here the judgments of God were executed in the destruction of it by the Chaldean army; and great devastations have been made in it since it was rebuilt by Alexander, by the Saracens, who destroyed all places where they came; so that, as Dr. Shaw [x] observes, it is somewhat extraordinary that the greatest part of the ancient walls, together with their respective turrets, should have continued entire quite down to this time. The Septuagint version calls it Diospolis, or the city of Jupiter, as does the Arabic version, that is, of Jupiter Hammon; the city of Thebes, where he was worshipped; as it is in a following verse called Hammon No; though Hillerus [y] thinks neither of these places are meant, neither Alexandria nor Diospolis; but Memphis, as it is rendered by the Septuagint in the next verse; see the note on Nah. iii. 8.

Ver. 15. *And I will pour out my fury upon Sin, the strength of Egypt,* &c.] Either the city Sais, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions; or rather Pelusium, as the Vulgate Latin version, so called from *pelos,* which signifies *clay* in the Greek language; and the same *Sin* signifies in the Chaldee, Psal. xviii. 43. and is now called Tineh, from טין, *clay:* it had a very fine haven, and may be called the strength of Egypt, it lying at the entrance of it; and having a strong fortified tower, it was difficult to enter into it; but could not stand before the wrath and fury of the Lord of hosts, when he sent the Chaldeans to it. It is thought by some to be the same with Pithom, built by the first of the pastor-kings of Egypt, and fortified by him, Exod. i. 11. according to Manetho [z], he put into it a garrison of two hundred and forty thousand men; and the same writer says it contained ten thousand acres of land; according to Adrichomius [a], it was twenty furlongs in compass, and near it was a vast hollow, which extended to Mount Cassius, and which made the way into Egypt on that side difficult; and is now, as he says, called *campus de Gallo;* in which he is mistaken, as well as Thevenot, and others, who take it to be the same with Damieta: *and I will cut off the multitude of No;* the numerous inhabitants of it; hence called *populous* No, Nah. iii. 8. or *Hamon No;* see the note on ver. 14. here, as before observed, the Septuagint version renders it Memphis; as does also the Arabic version. Some take it, as before, to be the Egyptian Thebes, where was a temple dedicated to Jupiter Hammon; and which city, Pausanias [b] says, was reduced to nothing in his time.

Ver. 16. *And I will set fire in Egypt,* &c.] Kindle a war there, which shall consume it; see ver. 8: *Sin shall have great pain;* as a woman in travail, seeing its destruction is just at hand; the same with Pelusium, as before: *and No shall be rent asunder;* the walls of it shall be broken down by the enemy, or a breach shall be made in it, like the breach of waters which were about it; see Nah. iii. 8: *and Noph shall have distresses daily;* that is, Memphis, as before; enemies shall surround it daily, as the Targum; shall besiege and distress it, until it is taken: or, *in the day*-time; their enemies should not come as thieves in the night, but openly in the day. Abendana interprets it of their unfortunate day, their star being unlucky.

Ver. 17. *The young men of Aven and of Phi-beseth shall fall by the sword,* &c.] Aven is the same with On, of which Poti-pherah was priest in Joseph's time, and whose daughter he married, Gen. xli. 45. the same with Heliopolis, or Beth-shemesh, the city of the sun, Jer. xliii. 13. see the note there; where was the temple of the sun, and where it was worshipped; and so it is rendered by the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions. It is called here *Aven,* or *vanity,* because of the vain and idolatrous worship here performed. Phibeseth is the Bubastis of Herodotus, and called by other writers Bubastus; hence there was a nome or province in Egypt called the Bubastic nome, mentioned by Ptolemy [c], and others. In this was a temple built to the honour of Diana, where she was worshipped; and Herodotus [d] says, that Bubastis, in the Greek

[w] Travels, p. 304. Ed. 2.
[x] Idem, p. 302.
[y] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 571, &c.
[z] Apud Joseph. contr. Apion, l. 1. c. 14.

[a] Theatrum Terræ Sanctæ, p. 122, 123.
[b] Arcadica, sive l. 8. p. 509. Vid. Juvenal. Satyr. 15. ver. 6.
[c] Geograph. l. 4. c. 5.
[d] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 59, 138, 156.

tongue, is Diana; here she was worshipped in the form of a cat; and Stephanus[e] observes, that the Egyptians call a cat Bubastus; and it is also said that dead cats salted were buried in this city, as being sacred: according to Diodorus Siculus[f], it was built for the sake of Isis; and Hillerus[g] says, that in the Abyssine language it was called *Phy' mly' sith*; that is, the portion of the wife, namely of Isis married to Osiris, by whom this city was built to the honour of her; as appears by the pillar of Isis, on which these words are inscribed, "for me the city of Bubastia is built; be glad, be glad, "O Egypt, which brought me up." This place is now called Bishbesh, according to Dr. Shaw[h]: now the young men of both these places, though they might exert themselves in the defence of them, yet should fail therein, and fall by the sword of the Chaldeans: *and these cities shall go into captivity*: the rest of the inhabitants of the cities of Aven and Phi-beseth, that shall not fall by the sword, shall be carried captive into other lands. Joseph Kimchi supplies *women* instead of *cities*; and thinks, that as the males are mentioned before, the females are understood here. The Targum is, "they that served them shall go into cap-"tivity;" that served the idols worshipped in these cities.

Ver. 18. *At Tehaphnehes also the day shall be darkened*, &c.] The same with Hanes in Isa. xxx. 4. and Tahapanes in Jer. ii. 16. and Tahpanhes, Jer. xliii. 7, 8, 9. it was a royal seat of the kings of Egypt: there was in Solomon's time a queen of Egypt of this name, and perhaps it might be so called from her, 1 Kings xi. 19, 20. It is generally thought to be the Daphne of Pelusium, it being near that city; though Junius takes it to be a place in another part of Egypt, at a great distance, which Herodotus[i] calls Tahcompso, an island encompassed by the Nile; and by Ptolemy[k] called Metacompso: now at this place the day should be darkened; or should *restrain*[l], as it may be rendered; that is, its light; it should be a calamitous and mournful time with the inhabitants of it: *when I shall break there the yokes of Egypt*; the yokes they put upon the necks of others, who now should be freed from them: or, *the sceptres of Egypt*, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; the regalia of their kings, which might lie in this place; it being a royal seat where Pharaoh had a house, as appears from Jer. xliii. 9: *and the pomp of her strength shall cease in her*: all that grandeur and magnificence which appeared in the courts of the kings of Egypt in this place: *as for her, a cloud shall cover her*; as for this city, a cloud of calamity shall cover it, so as its glory shall not be seen. The Targum is, "a king with his army shall cover "her as a cloud ascends and covers the earth;" *and her daughters shall go into captivity*; which may be taken either in a literal sense for the daughters of the inhabitants of this place, which must be a great affliction to their tender parents, to have them forced away by rude soldiers, and carried captive into distant lands; or in a figurative sense, for the villages and the inhabitants of them round about this city; it being usual to represent a city as a mother, and its villages as daughters; and so the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi interpret it.

Ver. 19. *Thus will I execute judgments in Egypt*, &c.] In the several provinces, and in the several cities of it before mentioned, and in all other places; even the judgments of fire, famine, sword, and captivity: *and they shall know that I am the Lord*; God omniscient and omnipotent, by the judgments executed; and own the same: this more especially they did, when the Gospel was preached among them, and many were converted by it in the times of the apostles.

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass in the eleventh year*, &c.] Of Zedekiah's reign, and Jehoiachin's captivity; some little time after the prophecy in ch. xxix. 1. here the prophecies come into their order again, being interrupted by those of a much later date, at the end of the preceding chapter, and the former part of this: *in the first* month, *in the seventh* day *of the month*; the month Nisan, which answers to part of March, and part of April; the seventh day must be about the twenty-ninth of March; but, according to Bishop Usher[m], it was on the twenty-sixth of April, on the third day of the week (Tuesday), in the year of the Julian period 4126, and before Christ 588: this was given out three months and two days before Jerusalem was taken: that *the word of the Lord came unto me, saying*; as follows:

Ver. 21. *Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt*, &c.] Not Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt, whose army was overthrown at Carchemish by the king of Babylon, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim; when the latter took from the former all that belonged to him between the river of Egypt and the river Euphrates; by which he was so weakened and dispirited, that he could not stir any more out of his own land, Jer. xlvi. 2. 2 Kings xxiv. 7. and of him Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it; but Pharaoh-hophra, or Apries, who was defeated by the Cyreneans, and saved himself by flight; see the note on ch. xxix. 4: *and, lo, it shall not be bound up to be healed, to put a roller to bind it*; a metaphor taken from chirurgeons, who, having set broken bones, put on a bandage or rollers of linen, or such-like stuff, to keep them tight; but nothing of this kind should be done; hereby suggesting that Egypt should receive such a blow or wound as would be incurable; see Jer. xlvi. 11: *to make it strong to hold the sword*: which it should not be able to do, or to make war any more, at least with success, or to defend itself.

Ver. 22. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, behold, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt*, &c.] The then present king of Egypt, whose name was Hophra or Apries, Jer. xliv. 30: *and I will break his arms, the strong, and that which was broken*: both his arms, the sound and the broken one, his whole power, strength,

[e] De Urbibus.
[f] Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 24.
[g] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 672.
[h] Travels, p. 406. Ed. 2.
[i] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 59.
[k] Geograph. l. 4. c. 5.
[l] חשך prohibebit, Montanus; vitavit, Munster; cohibebit, Cocceius; prohibebit, arcebit, Vatablus; so Ben Melech.
[m] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3410.

and dominion; meaning that that part of his kingdom which lay between the two rivers of Egypt and Euphrates, that had been taken away by the king of Babylon, should remain so; and the other part of his kingdom should fall a prey to him also: *and I will cause the sword to fall out of his hand;* so that he should be so far from being so able to make use of the sword, that he should not be able to hold it; it should drop out of his hand; nor should he be able to take it up again, and make war, either offensive or defensive.

Ver. 23. *And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, &c.*] Among the several provinces of Babylon, and other places, where the Chaldeans should carry or send them: *and will disperse them through the countries:* the same thing repeated in different words for the confirmation of it.

Ver. 24. *And I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, &c.*] Give him a commission to make war; direct his councils; supply him with all necessaries; animate and encourage his soldiers; and give him success in all his enterprises: *and put my sword in his hand:* which confirms the above sense, that he should have power and authority from the Lord to attack the king of Egypt, and should gain a victory over him; since it was not his own sword he drew, but the sword of the Lord of hosts; which coming from him, and having his commission, cannot fail of doing execution; *but will break Pharaoh's arms;* as before in ver. 21, 22: *and he shall groan before him with the groanings of a deadly wounded man;* that is, before the king of Babalon; by whom, as an instrument, his arms shall be broken, and his power destroyed; and he be like a man in the agonies of death, just expiring, not able to speak, but groaning out his life under the inexpressible anguish of broken bones, and none to set them.

Ver. 25. *But I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, &c.*] Which is repeated for the sake of confirmation: *and the arms of Pharaoh shall fall down;* as when a man's arms are broken; and he shall not be able to lift them up and defend himself: *and they shall know that I am the Lord;* namely, the Egyptians, as in ver. 19: *when I shall have put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall stretch it out on the land of Egypt;* that is, when he shall have a commission to carry the war into Egypt; and he shall spread desolation over all the land, cutting off the inhabitants of it everywhere, as before described in this chapter.

Ver. 26. *And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them among the countries, &c.*] Of which they might assure themselves, since the Lord had before spoken it, and here again repeats it: *and they shall know that I am the Lord;* whose name alone is Jehovah, and does whatsoever he pleases; sets up kings, and puts them down; strengthens and weakens kingdoms just as seems good in his sight; none having any power but what is given by him, and which he can take away when he thinks fit.

CHAP. XXXI.

THIS chapter contains a confirmation of the preceding prophecy, of the ruin of the king of Egypt, by the example of the king of Assyria, to whom he was like in grandeur and pride, and would be in his fall. The time of the prophecy is observed, ver. 1. the prophet is ordered to give the following relation to the king of Egypt, ver. 2. in which the king of Assyria is compared to a large and flourishing cedar, for the extent of his dominions, the prosperous state of his empire, and his exaltation above all other princes, which drew upon him their envy, ver. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. wherefore because of his pride, his heart being lifted up with these things, ver. 10, ruin came upon him; which is described by the instruments and manner of it, and the effects following it; mourning and fear in some, solace and comfort to others, and destruction to his associates, ver. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. wherefore Pharaoh is called upon to consider all this, who was like to him in greatness and pride, and should have the like fate with him; nor could his greatness any more secure him than it did the Assyrian monarch, ver. 18.

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass in the eleventh year, &c.*] Of Zedekiah's reign, and Jeconiah's captivity: *in the third month, in the first day of the month;* the month Sivan, which began on the twentieth of our May, and answers to part of May, and part of June; this was about seven weeks after the former prophecy, and about five weeks before the destruction of Jerusalem; according to Bishop Usher[a], this was on the nineteenth of June, on the first day of the week, in the year of the Julian period 4126, and before Christ 588: *that the word of the Lord came unto me, saying;* as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, &c.*] To Pharaoh-hophra, the then reigning king; not to him personally by word of mouth, for the prophet was now in Chaldea; but by delivering out a prophecy concerning him, and which he might have an opportunity of sending to him: *and to his multitude;* the multitude of his subjects, of which he boasted, and in whom he trusted: *whom art thou like in thy greatness?* look over all the records of time, and into all the empires, kingdoms, and states that have been; draw a comparison between thyself and the greatest potentate that ever was; fancy thyself to be equal to him; this will not secure thee from ruin and destruction; for as they have been humbled, and are fallen, so wilt thou be: pitch for instance on the Assyrian monarch, whose empire has been the most ancient, extensive, and flourishing, and yet now crushed; and as thou art like him in greatness, at least thou thinkest so, so thou art in pride, and wilt be in thine end; to assure of which is the drift of the following account of the king of Assyria.

Ver. 3. *Behold, the Assyrian* was *a cedar in Lebanon, &c.*] Here grew the tallest, most stately, broad and flourishing ones. The sense is, that he was as one of

[a] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3416.

them: comparable to one, for his exaltation and dignity; for the largeness of his dominion, the flourishing circumstances of it, and its long duration; that empire having lasted from the times of Nimrod unto a few years of the present time; for this is to be understood, either of the monarchy itself, or of Esarhaddon; or rather of Chyniladanus, or Saracus, the last king of it. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it the *cypariss* in Lebanon; but not that, but the cedar, grew there, and which best suits the comparison: *with fair branches;* meaning not children, nor nobles, nor subjects; but provinces, many and large, which were subject to this monarch: *and with a shadowing shroud;* power, dominion, authority, a mighty army sufficient to protect all that were under his government, and subject to it: *and of an high stature;* exalted above all the kings and kingdoms of the earth: *and his top was among the thick boughs;* his kingly power, headship, and dominion, was over a multitude of petty princes and states, comparable to the thick boughs and branches of a tree: or, *among the clouds;* as the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it; above the heights of which the Assyrian monarch attempted to ascend, Isa. xiv. 14. see Dan. iv. 10, 11, 12.

Ver. 4. *The waters made him great, &c.*] The waters of the river Tigris, near to which stood the city of Nineveh, the metropolis of the Assyrian monarchy; the traffic brought by which river made it rich and great, and the whole empire, and the king of it: *the deep set him up on high, with her rivers running round about his plants;* the vast trade by sea, the profits and commodities of which were conveyed through various rivers, which ran about the provinces of the empire, which were as plants in a field; and by which they were enriched, and the whole empire, and the king of it, were raised to a prodigious pitch of wealth and power: *and sent out little rivers to all the trees of the field;* so that the common people, comparable to the trees of the field for their number and usefulness, all received profit and advantage hereby; or else by *waters* and the *deep* may be meant the multitude of people, as in Rev. xvii. 15. which increased his kingdom, filled his provinces, supplied his colonies, and enlarged his power and riches. The Targum is, "by the people he was multiplied; by his auxiliaries he became strong; he subjected kings under his government; and his governors he appointed over all the provinces of the earth.

Ver. 5. *Therefore his height was exalted above all the trees of the field, &c.*] His majesty, grandeur, and glory, were advanced above all princes, nobles, and people; all ranks and degrees of men, let them be compared to trees taller or lower: *and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long;* the provinces of his empire became more numerous, and were spread far and near, and reached to distant countries: *because of the multitude of waters, when he shot forth* either the vast number of people, which were daily increasing, and were sent out to people distant colonies, newly subdued or planted; or because of the great traffic which was carried on in different parts, and the advantages arising from it. The Targum is, "therefore he was lifted up in his strength above all the kings of the earth, and his army was multiplied, and his auxiliaries prevailed over many people, through his victories."

Ver. 6. *All the fowls of the heavens made their nests in his boughs, &c.*] People from all parts of the world, under the whole heavens, flocked to his dominions, and settled themselves in one province or another; promising themselves protection, prosperity, and peace under his government: *and under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young;* even people of a more savage disposition, being either conquered by him, and placed in his provinces; or coming thither of their own accord, took up their residence there, built houses, planted vineyards, married wives, begat children, and settled their families there: *and under his shadow dwelt all great nations;* under his protection, care, and government, many large kingdoms and states were; yea, all were either subject to him, or sought to be his friends and allies; this explains the above figurative expressions. The Targum is, "by his army he subdued all the strong towers; and under his governors he subjected all the provinces of the earth; and in the shadow of his kingdom dwelt all the numerous people."

Ver. 7. *Thus was he fair in his greatness, &c.*] Amiable, lovely, delightful to look upon in the greatness of his majesty, in his royal glory and dignity: *in the length of his branches;* in the extent of his empire, and the provinces of it: *for his root was by great waters;* his kingdom was well established, firmly rooted among a multitude of people; from whom he had a large revenue to support his throne and government, and the dignity of it; by tribute, taxes, customs, and presents; and through the large trade and traffic of his subjects in different parts, from whence he received great profit and advantage. The Targum is, "and he became victorious by his auxiliaries, by the multitude of his mighty ones, so that his terror was upon many people."

Ver. 8. *The cedars in the garden of God could not hide him, &c.*] That is, could not rise so high as this cedar, and overtop him, and obscure his glory; even those that were most excellent, which grew in Eden, near to which Babylon stood, and where a mighty king dwelt. The sense is, that the greatest kings and potentates in the whole world, which is like a garden planted by the Lord, were not equal to the king of Assyria, and much less exceeded him in grandeur, wealth, and power: *the fir-trees were not like his boughs;* lesser kings and princes, comparable to fir-trees for the beauty, regularity, order, and flourishing condition of their kingdoms; yet these were but petty states, and not to be compared even with the provinces of the king of Assyria: *and the chesnut-trees were not like his branches;* lesser states still; which, though well set, and well spread, and full of people, yet not answerable to some countries that were in the provinces that belonged to the Assyrian empire: *not any tree in the garden of God was like unto him in his beauty;* no king, prince, or potentate whatever in the whole world, was to be compared to him for royal majesty and greatness. The Targum is, "mighty kings could not prevail against him, because of the strength of his power, which he had from the Lord; rulers could not stand before his army, and mighty

" men could not prevail against his auxiliaries, because " of the strength of power he had from the Lord; there " is none like to him in his strength."

Ver. 9. *I have made him fair by the multitude of his branches*, &c.] Or provinces, the extensiveness of his dominions: all his power and strength, riches and wealth, grandeur and glory, and the vast dominions he was possessed of, were all from the Lord; as whatever kings have are, though they are too apt to ascribe it to themselves; but all are from him, by whom kings reign: *so that all the trees of Eden, that* were *in the garden of God, envied him:* all the kings of the earth, though they dared not openly speak against him, or oppose him; yet they inwardly grieved at and secretly grudged his grandeur and majesty, superior to theirs, and wished themselves in his stead; and could gladly have done any thing, were it in their power, to eclipse his glory, and bring him lower. This is the case of all that are in any eminence, or are conspicuous to others, or in any exalted station above others, be it what it will; whether they have superior gifts and endowments of mind; or greater riches, and larger possessions; or are in high places of honour, trust, and profit. The Targum is, " I have made him beautiful " by the multitude of his mighty ones; and all the " kings of the east trembled before him, because of " the strength of his power, which he had from the " Lord."

Ver. 10. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Having described the greatness of the Assyrian monarch; now follows the account of his fall, and the cause of it, pride: *because thou hast lifted up thyself in height:* this is either an address to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who, though he did not rise up so high as the Assyrian monarch in glory and grandeur; yet he lifted up himself, and thought himself superior to any; for which reason he must be brought down: or the words are directed to the Assyrian monarch, by a change of person frequent in Scripture; who, though he was raised by the Lord to the height of honour and dignity he was, yet ascribed it to himself: *and he hath shot up his top among the thick boughs;* the multitude of provinces over which he became head and governor; see the note on ver. 3: *and his heart is lifted up in his height;* with pride, insolence, and contempt of God and men; of which see the instances in Isa. x. 8—15. and xxxvi. 18, 19, 20. and xxxvii. 10, 11, 12, 13.

Ver. 11. *I have therefore delivered him into the hand of the mighty one of the Heathen*, &c.] Or, *into the hand of the mightiest of the nations* [o]; the mightiest prince among them. Some understand this of Arbaces the Mede, by whom Sardanapalus had been defeated long before this time: others of Merodach-baladan king of Babylon, by whom Esar-haddon the Assyrian monarch was vanquished; or rather Nebuchadnezzar, who was called Nabopolassar; who, in the first year [p] of his reign, in conjunction with Cyaxares king of Media, took Nineveh, the metropolis of the Assyrian monarchy; and this was by the appointment of God, and under the direction of his providence, and through the success he gave to the arms of these princes, according to his own decrees and prophecies. Some render it, *into the hand of the god of the nations* [q]; yet meaning either Cyaxares or Nebuchadnezzar; so called because of their great power and might, and which they had from the Lord: *he shall surely deal with him;* or, *in doing he shall do to him* [r]; he shall do with him as he pleases; he shall easily manage him, though so powerful; and deal with him according to his deserts; or, as the Targum, he shall take vengeance on him, as he did: *I have driven him out for his wickedness;* out of his court and palace; out of his royal city Nineveh; out of his kingdom and dominions; and he shall reside and reign no more there; and all this for his wickedness, pride, and oppression, and other sins: when God strips men of their honour, riches, power, and dominion, it is because of their abuse of them; for some sin, or sins, or wickedness they have been guilty of, both against him and men; and therefore it is but just and righteous in him to dethrone such princes, and drive them from their seats.

Ver. 12. *And strangers, the terrible of the nations, have cut him off*, &c.] Cut off the boughs and branches of this cedar, and cut him down to the ground; that is, utterly destroyed him, his empire and monarchy: these *strangers* were the Medes, who lived in a country distant from Assyria; and *the terrible of the nations*, the cruel and merciless Chaldeans, the soldiers of the king of Babylon's army; see ch. xxx. 11: *and have left him upon the mountains;* like a tree cut down there, and its boughs and branches lopped off, which roll down from thence into the valleys, and by the rivers of water; signifying his depression from a high and exalted state to a very low one, as follows: *and in all the valleys his branches are fallen, and his boughs are broken by all the rivers of the land;* signifying that many provinces and countries under his dominion were broken off, and by force taken away from him; or they broke off and revolted of themselves, and either set up for themselves, and recovered their former power and authority; or gave up themselves to the conqueror. The Targum is, " and in all valleys his army fell, and his auxiliaries " were scattered by all the rivers of the land:" *and all the people of the earth are gone down from his shadow, and have left him;* those that joined themselves to his empire, put themselves under his protection, or sought his friendship and alliance, now withdrew themselves from him, and left him alone to shift for himself; as frightened birds and beasts will do, when a tree is cut down and fallen, in the boughs or under the shadow of which they dwelt. The Targum paraphrases it, " from the shadow of his kingdom."

Ver. 13. *Upon his ruin shall all the fowls of the heaven remain*, &c.] Or, *on his fall* [s]; the fall of this tree: *and all the beasts of the field shall be upon his branches;* as when a tree is cut down, and its lopped-off branches and boughs lie here and there, either the birds and beasts that before dwelt in it or under it, though for a

[o] ביד אל גוים in manum fortissimi gentium, Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; potentissimi, Piscator.
[p] Seder Olam Rabba, p. 69.
[q] In manum dei gentium, Montanus, Starckius; deo gentium, Castalio.
[r] עשו יעשה לו faciendo faciet ei, Pagninus, Montanus; faciendo faciebat ipsi, Starckius.
[s] על מפלתו super prolapso ejus, Cocceius; super cadivum truncum ejus, Junius & Tremellius.

while frightened away, return unto it; or others come: the birds come and sit upon the boughs, and pick up what they can find on them; and the beasts browse upon the branches: this may signify that even those people who before put themselves under the protection of this monarch, or sought alliance with him, now preyed upon his dominions; or the Medes and Babylonians, the conquerors, seized on the provinces of the empire, and plundered them of their riches. The Targum understands it literally of the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, feeding upon the carcasses of the slain; which is no bad sense of the passage; thus, "upon the fall of his slain all the "fowls of heaven have dwelt, and upon the carcasses "of his army all the beasts of the field have rested."

Ver. 14. *To the end that none of all the trees by the waters exalt themselves for their height, &c.*] The end proposed by the Lord in the destruction of the king of Assyria, and the use to be made of it, is this; that the kings of the earth take warning hereby, who rule over a multitude of people, comparable to waters, and who abound in riches and wealth; that they are not elated with pride and vanity, because of their exalted estate, their grandeur, and dignity; and do not behave insolently against God, on whom they depend; nor haughtily and in an oppressive manner towards their own subjects, over whom they rule: *neither shoot up their top among the thick boughs;* affect universal monarchy, as he did; and set up themselves over all kingdoms and states, as he had over them, and make all subject to them: *neither their trees stand up in their height, that drink water;* that is, kings and potentates, who rule over the people, and are supplied and supported by them in their exalted stations, by the tribute and taxes they pay them and so abound in riches and power, should not trust in the height of honour and power they are raised to, and treat contemptuously God and man; but consider what they are, that they are but men, and are in slippery places, where there is no standing long, and especially when death comes, as follows: *for they are delivered unto death in the nether parts of the earth;* they are mortal by nature, as other men; they are appointed to die, and will be delivered into the hands of death, when the time is come, who will not spare them because of their crowns and sceptres; and when they will be laid in the grave, in the lowest parts of the earth, who used to sit upon elevated thrones of state: *in the midst of the children of men, with those that go down to the pit;* the grave, where they are upon a level with the poorest and meanest of their subjects. The Targum is, "that all "the kings of the east might not be lifted up with "their strength, nor exercise tyranny over the kingdoms; nor all that hold a kingdom lift up themselves "in their own strength, for all are delivered unto "death," &c.

Ver. 15. *Thus saith the Lord God, in the day when he went down to the grave, &c.*] The Assyrian monarch; when his monarchy was destroyed, and he ceased to be king, and was stripped of all his majesty, power, and authority, and was as one dead, and laid in the grave, and buried: *I caused a mourning;* that is, for him, in the waters, and among the trees, among the people and the kings of the earth, as follows: *I covered the deep for him;* with mourning, with thick darkness, which set him up on high ver. 4: *and I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were stayed;* which made him great, ver. 4. signifying by all this that the kingdoms of the world, comparable to the sea, of which his monarchy consisted, and all the inhabitants and people of them, comparable to floods and great waters, were affected with the fall of this great monarch, and thrown into consternation by it; not knowing what the event of things would be, stood still, and knew not what course to take; all business was stopped, especially all traffic by sea, and all trade and commerce every where, a stagnation of every thing for a while: *and I caused Lebanon to mourn for him;* where he was a cedar, ver. 3. this may respect the whole empire he was head of, particularly the kingdom of Syria, on the borders of which Lebanon was; and was a part of the Assyrian empire, which must mourn and be concerned at the fall of it: *and all the trees of the field fainted for him;* all the kings of the earth that were in alliance with him, or subject to him, trembled for fear that their destruction would be next; or as doubtful and concerned what would be their condition, under the yoke of another. The Targum is, "tribulation covered the world, and the provinces were forsaken, and many people trembled, and all the kings "of the people smote the shoulder because of him."

Ver. 16. *I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, &c.*] As, when a large cedar was cut down and fell in Lebanon, the noise of it was heard at a distance; so when this mighty monarch and monarchy fell, the nations of the world, and the kings of them, heard of it far and near, and shook through fear of what would be the consequence, lest they should fall also in like manner: *when I cast him down to hell,* or the grave, *with them that descend into the pit;* in common with other men that die, and are buried: it may refer to his subjects and soldiers that perished with him, who were slain by the sword, and were buried with him, and he with them; no distinction being made between them: *and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water;* the greatest kings and potentates of the world, the chief and principal of the Assyrian empire; all that ruled over multitudes of people, and partook of their wealth and riches, and were supported in grandeur and dignity; who had been in the state of the dead before this time: *shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth;* when they see so mighty a monarch depressed, and brought as low as they, into the same state of meanness and contempt; as it is some kind of solace for persons in distress to have partners with them: this is a poetical expression, representing the dead as rejoicing to see others in the same condition with themselves. The Targum is, "all the kings of the east, the governors, "and those that are rich in substance, all that hold a "kingdom, are comforted in the lower part of the "earth."

Ver. 17. *They also went down to hell with him, &c.*] To the grave with him; many of his nobles, princes, generals, soldiers, and subjects: *unto them that be slain with the sword;* to be buried and lie with them who had fallen by the sword, as a just punishment for their iniquities: *and* they *that were his arm;* either that

leaned on his arm, were dependents upon him; or his ministers, his instruments, whom he employed under him as his deputies, to govern the several provinces that belonged to him; or rather his allies and auxiliaries, who helped and assisted him on occasion: *that dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the Heathen*; in the midst of the nations subject to the Assyrian empire; such who put themselves under the protection of it, lived comfortably under it, and continued with it to the last; these shared the same fate as that did. The Targum is, "his governors are broken, whom he "strengthened in the midst of the kingdom."

Ver. 18. *To whom art thou thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden?* &c.] Among all the kings and potentates of the earth; pitch on whom you will, say which of them all, even the greatest of them for majesty and glory, for wealth and riches, power and authority, and extent of dominion, you are equal to; name the king of Assyria, if you please, before described, though you are not equal to him; and if you were, this would not secure you from ruin; since, as great as he was, he fell, and so will you: this is said to Pharaoh king of Egypt, and is an application of the preceding parable to him, suggesting, that let him be as high as any ever was, or he could imagine himself to be: *yet shalt thou be brought down with the trees of Eden unto the nether parts of the earth*; the grave, and lie in the same depressed and humble state as the greatest monarchs that ever were on earth do: *thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised*; the wicked, as the Targum; the uncircumcised in heart, who belong not to God, or his people, and have no communion with either, but are shut out of the kingdom of heaven, and have their portion with devils and damned spirits: *with them that be slain by the sword*; in a way of judgment for their sins: *this is Pharaoh, and all his multitude, saith the Lord God*: this account represents Pharaoh, his grandeur, his pride, and his ruin; this shews what will be the end of him, and of his numerous subjects. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, *so will be Pharaoh*, &c. in like manner will he fall, and all his people with him; for the Lord God has said it, and it shall assuredly come to pass. The Targum is, "to "whom art thou like now in glory and greatness among "the kings of the east? and thou shalt be brought "down with the kings of the east into the lower part "of the earth; in the midst of sinners thou shalt sleep, "with those that are slain by the sword; this is Pha-"raoh, and all his multitude, saith the Lord God."

CHAP. XXXII.

THIS chapter contains two more prophecies concerning the destruction of Egypt. The date of the first is given, ver. 1. in which the king of Egypt is compared to a large fish taken in a net, and brought to land, and left on it, to be the prey of the fowls of the air and beasts of the field, ver. 2, 3, 4. and the ruin of that kingdom is further amplified by the casting of it on the mountains and valleys; by the land flowing with its blood; by the darkness of the heavens; by the vexation in the hearts of many people; and by the amazement of kings and nations, ver. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. the means and instruments of all which will be the king of Babylon and his army, ver. 11, 12. the devastation made by him, which would be such as would cause lamentation in other nations, is described, ver. 13, 14, 15, 16, then follows the other prophecy, whose date is given, ver. 17. the prophet is bid to lament the fall of Egypt, which is represented under the funeral of a corpse, ver. 18, 19, 20. saluted by those gone down to the grave before, or were become desolate; which are mentioned, to assure Egypt of its destruction, ver. 21. as the Assyrian empire, and all its provinces, ver. 22, 23. the Persians and Medes, with all their dominions, ver. 24, 25. the posterity of Meshech and Tubal, or the Scythians, those warlike people, ver. 26, 27, 28. the Edomites, the princes of the north, and all the Zidonians, ver. 29, 30. which would be a comfort, though a poor one, to the king of Egypt and his subjects, to have such company with them, ver. 31, 32.

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass in the twelfth year*, &c.] Of Jeconiah's captivity, above a year and a half after the taking of Jerusalem; the Syriac version reads in the eleventh year: *in the twelfth month, in the first day of the month* the month Adar, which answers to part of our February, and part of March; the Septuagint version reads it the tenth month: according to Bishop Usher[*], this was on the 22d of March, on the fourth day of the week (Wednesday), in the year of the Julian period 4127, and 587 years before Christ: that *the word of the Lord came unto me, saying*; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, take up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt*, &c.] Pharaoh-hophra, or Apries; say a funeral dirge for him: this is ordered, not out of honour and respect to him, or in compassion for his misery and ruin, but to assure him of it: *and say unto him, thou art like a young lion of the nations*; for strength and fierceness, for cruelty and tyranny, which he exercised, not in one nation only, but in many; a a lively emblem of the beast of Rome, spiritually called Egypt and Sodom, compared to a leopard, bear, and lion, Rev. xi. 8. and xiii. 2: *and thou art as a whale in the seas*; or rather *like a crocodile*[*], which was common in the rivers of Egypt, but not the whale; which also has not scales, nor does it go upon land, nor is it taken in a net; all which is said of this creature here, and in ch. xxix. 3, 4. and to the crocodile there is an allusion in the name of Pharaoh, in the Arabic language, as Noldius from Camius observes[*]; see ch. xxix. 3: *and thou camest forth with thy rivers*; or, by

[*] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3417.

[*] כתנים similis es crocodilo, Noldius, Ebr. Concord. Part. p. 372.

[*] Ibid. No. 1306.

thy rivers[x]; as the crocodile in the river Nile, by the arms of it, or canals made out of it, sometimes went out from thence to other parts: or, *out of thy rivers*[y]; upon the land, as the crocodile does; so the king of Egypt went forth with his armies out of his own land, into other countries, to disturb them, as follows: or rather, *camest forth in thy rivers*[z]; as the crocodile puts forth its head out of the water for respiration; *and thou troublest the waters with thy feet, and foulest their rivers*: just as the feet of men or beasts, in shallow waters, raise up the mud or clay at the bottom, and so foul them; this best agrees with the crocodile, which has feet; Grotius thinks, for this reason, the sea-horse is intended; the meaning is, that Pharaoh with his soldiers entered other nations, made war upon them, and disturbed their peace and tranquillity. The Targum is, "thou "hast been strong among the people, as a whale in the "seas, thou hast fought with thine army; and thou "hast moved the people with thine auxiliaries, and "thou hast wasted their provinces."

Ver. 3. *Thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] The Lord God Almighty, who is able to manage this fierce and turbulent creature, this mighty monarch and disturber of the nations: *I will therefore spread out my net over thee with a company of many people*; meaning the Chaldean army, which the Lord would instigate, and by his providence bring against the king of Egypt, and surround him as fishes in a net, and take him and his people; see ch. xii. 13. and xvii. 20: and *they shall bring thee up in my net*; out of his rivers, out of his fortresses, out of his own land, and carry him captive, or destroy him.

Ver. 4. *Then will I leave thee upon the land*, &c.] Like a fish that is drawn out of the waters with a net or hook, and laid on dry land, and left gasping and expiring, where it can't long live: *I will cast thee forth on the open field*; the same in different words, signifying that his army should fall in battle by the sword of the Cyreneans, or Chaldeans, or both, and be left on the surface of the earth unburied: *and will cause all the fowls of the heavens to remain upon thee, and I will fill the beasts of the whole earth with thee*; which may be understood either literally of the fowls of the air, that should light upon the slain carcasses, and rest on them till they had satisfied themselves with their flesh; and of the beasts of the field that should gather about them from all parts, and fill themselves with them; see Rev. xix. 17, 18, or figuratively of the soldiers of the enemy's army, that should plunder them, and enrich themselves with the spoil.

Ver. 5. *And I will lay thy flesh upon the mountains*, &c.] The remainder of it, left by the birds and beasts of prey, and who might carry it thither; or it intends such of the Egyptians who should flee to the mountains for safety, but should fall by the hands of the enemy there. So the Targum, "and I will give the "flesh of thy slain upon the mountains." *And fill the valleys with thy height*; his huge army, and with which he prided and lifted up himself, and thought himself safe in; which should fall in such great numbers as to cover the plains and valleys where the battle was fought. Jarchi observes, that the word for *height* has with some the signification of *worms*; and so the Syriac version renders it, *and the valleys shall be filled with thy worms*; bred in the carcasses of the slain: and so the Vulgate Latin version, *with corrupt matter*, such as issues out of putrefied wounds. The Targum very rightly paraphrases it, "the valleys shall be filled with "the carcasses of thine army.

Ver. 6. *And I will also water with thy blood the land wherewith thou swimmest*, &c.] Where he resided, over which he ruled; alluding to his being compared to a fish, a whale, or a crocodile; and which land abounded with all good things, and he with them; instead of being watered with the waters of the Nile, by which it became fruitful, it should now be flooded with the blood of his army: even *to the mountains*; an hyperbolical expression, signifying the vast quantity of blood that should be shed; see the like in Rev. xiv. 20: *and the rivers shall be full of them*; of the carcasses of his army, and of the blood of them; they should lie about everywhere, on mountains and valleys, on the land and in the rivers; and which should now be turned into blood, as the rivers of Egypt of old were; and which figure is used to express the destruction of the antichristian states; see Exod. vii. 20. Rev. xvi. 3, 4.

Ver. 7. *And when I shall put thee out*, &c.] As a candle is put out, or some great light or blazing torch is extinguished; such was the king of Egypt in his splendour and glory; but now should be like a lamp put out in obscure darkness, and all his brightness and glory removed from him, Job xviii. 5. and xx. 17. Prov. xiii. 9. and xx. 20: *I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark*; with the smoke that should arise at the extinguishing of this lamp; or they should be covered with mourning, or clad in black, at the destruction of this monarch and his monarchy: *I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light*; all which figures are sometimes made use of to denote the dissolution of kingdoms and states: the *heaven* being an emblem of a kingdom itself; the *sun* of an emperor or king, or kingly power; the *moon* of the queen, or of the priesthood; the *stars* of nobles, princes, counsellors, and such-like eminent persons, useful in government; who being destroyed or removed, the light and glory, the prosperity and happiness of a kingdom, are gone; see Isa. xiii. 10. Rev. vi. 12, 13. The Targum is, "tribulation shall cover thee when I "shall extinguish the splendour of the glory of thy "kingdom from heaven; and the people of thine army "shall be lessened, who are many as the stars; a king "with his army shall cover thee as a cloud that "ascends and covers the sun, and as the moon, whose "light does not shine in the day."

Ver. 8. *All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee*, &c.] Or, *all the lights of the light*[a]; the rest of the luminaries of heaven; the other five planets, as Kimchi, besides the sun and moon: *and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God*: as there must needs be, the sun, moon, and stars, and all

[x] בנהרותיך per flumina tua, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.

[y] Ex fluminibus tuis, Starckius.

[z] In fluviis tuis, V. L. Piscator; in fluminibus tuis, Cocceius.

[a] כל מאורי אור omnia luminaria lucis, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius.

the lights of heaven, being darkened above: there seems to be an allusion to the thick darkness that was formerly over the land of Egypt; and this is a figure and representation of that darkness that shall be in the kingdom of the beast, or spiritual Egypt, yet to come; see Exod. x. 21. Rev. xvi. 10. The Targum is, "tribulation as darkness shall cover thy land."

Ver. 9. *I will also vex the hearts of many people*, &c.] With anger and grief, with fear and dread, with consternation and amazement: *when I shall bring thy destruction among the nations*; or, *thy breach*[b]; the news of it, the tidings of their destruction; which by one means or another should come to their ears, and fill them with concern and great anxiety of mind, so rich and powerful a kingdom being subdued, and the king of Babylon made so great thereby, and fearing they should fall a prey unto him also. The Targum renders it, "when I shall bring the broken of thy war;" that is, the soldiers that should be wounded in battle, their limbs broke, and they taken captive, and brought among the nations, dismal spectacles to look at; and which should be brought *into countries which thou hast not known*; at a distance from Egypt, and which had no commerce nor communication with them, nor were their friends and allies; yet as their destruction would reach their ears, so it would affect their hearts, and fill them with vexation and grief; not so much on account of Egypt, as the growing power of Nebuchadnezzar, and the danger they were in of falling into his hands.

Ver. 10. *Yea, I will make many people amazed at thee*, &c.] That so potent a state, and such a flourishing kingdom, should at once be so easily subdued and conquered: *and their kings shall be horribly afraid for thee*; because of her destruction, lest their turn should be next; so the kings of the earth will be afraid when God's judgments are executed on mystical Egypt; see Rev. xviii. 9, 10: *when I shall brandish my sword before them*; the sword of the king of Babylon after mentioned, called the Lord's, because it was by his appointment and permission, and came by the direction of his providence, and was succeeded by his power: this glittering sword being brandished over Egypt, in the sight of the nations round about, was terrible to them; dreading that it would not be put up until it was sheathed in them, or they felt the effects of it: or, *when I shall cause it to fly before them*[c]; in their sight, and upon the borders of their countries; expressive of the swiftness of its motion, the sudden destruction it brought on Egypt, and its nearness to them. The Targum is, "when I shall bring upon thee those that kill with the sword." *And they shall tremble at every moment*; from moment to moment, or continually; they shall never be free from fear: *every man for his own life, in the day of thy fall*; not kings for their subjects, or subjects for their kings, but every man for himself; expecting every moment that the sword which flew and ravaged through Egypt, and now hovered over them, would be instantly plunged in them.

Ver. 11. *For thus saith the Lord God, the sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon thee.*] Upon Pharaoh and his kingdom; having a commission and a direction from the Lord, and which would be the instrument of the destruction before threatened. The Targum is, "those that slay with the sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon or against thee;" his army, sword in hand.

Ver. 12. *By the swords of the mighty will I cause thy multitude to fall*, &c.] Pharaoh's numerous subjects; or his army, as the Targum; the vast number of soldiers in it, whose carcasses should fall in battle by the sword of the Chaldeans, the mighty men of Nebuchadnezzar's army: *the terrible of the nations all of them*; which army consisted of men of several nations, and those the most terrible, fierce, and cruel, by whose swords this slaughter should be made: *and they shall spoil the pomp of Egypt*; cut off the king, the princes of the blood, the nobility and gentry, the prime of the nation; plunder the king's palace of all the wealth and riches in it, the treasury of the kingdom; destroy the metropolis of it; demolish its cities and fortified places, and take away all its strength and glory: *and all the multitude thereof shall be destroyed*; all the people of the land, high and low, rich and poor; the destruction shall be general, all ranks and degrees of men shall share in it.

Ver. 13. *I will destroy also all the beasts thereof from beside the great waters*, &c.] Which used to graze beside the river Nile, and the canals of it, in the plains and meadows, valleys and hills, which these ran by; meaning both horses, which Egypt abounded with, and would be good booty for the Chaldeans, and oxen and sheep, which they would kill for present use, or drive away for future service: *neither shall the foot of man trouble them any more, nor the hoofs of beasts trouble them*; there should so few remain of men and beasts, that the waters of the rivers would not be disturbed, either by men passing over them, and doing any business upon them, or by beasts drinking at them.

Ver. 14. *Then will I make their waters deep*, &c.] Either the waters of Egypt literally, the waters of the Nile: no canals being cut from it, to carry the water to the several parts of the land, the land being depopulated, and no business done: or, figuratively, other nations, compared to waters for their numbers, who before had been disturbed by the Egyptians; but now they being destroyed, these would be at ease, like troubled waters, which subside, and become deep and clear, when there is none to trouble them: *and cause their rivers to run like oil, saith the Lord God*; very slowly, as if they were mourning the unhappy condition of the land; or smoothly, clearly, undisturbed, as before. The Targum is, "there will I cause the people to rest, and I will lead their kings quietly, saith the Lord God."

Ver. 15. *When I shall make the land of Egypt desolate*, &c.] The cities being demolished, the inhabitants destroyed with the sword, or carried captive: *and the country shall be destitute of that whereof it was full*; men and cattle, corn and other fruits of the earth, wealth and riches, pomp and grandeur: *when I shall*

[b] שברך fractionem tuam, Piscator, Coccejus, Starckius.

[c] בעופפי cum volare fecero, Munster, Tigurine version. Abendana mentions such a sense of the word.

smite all them that dwell therein: with the sword of the Chaldeans: *then shall they know that I am the Lord* for God is known in the perfections of his nature, omnipotence, omniscience, holiness, justice, &c. by the judgments he executes; for this is not to be understood of a spiritual knowledge of him, but of a terrible conviction of the truth of his being and attributes, by the awful dispensations of his providence.

Ver. 16. *This is the lamentation with which they shall lament her,* &c.] The Egyptians themselves, or rather they that are after mentioned. The Targum is, " the prophet said, a lamentation is this prophecy, and " it shall be for a lamentation;" he was bid at the beginning of it to take up a lamentation, and now at the end of it he pronounces it to be one, and that it should be sung as such: *the daughters of the nations shall lament for her:* either literally understood, it being the business and custom of women to say or sing the funeral dirge, or the lamentation at the interment of the deceased; or figuratively, the inhabitants of other nations. So Ben Melech and the Targum, " the villages of the " people shall lament her;" that is, the inhabitants of them, who were in alliance with Egypt, and under its protection: *they shall lament for her, even for Egypt, and for all her multitude;* for the desolation of the land, and for the vast numbers of people that should be slain with the sword, or carried captive: *saith the Lord God;* which is added for the confirmation of it; for what he has spoken shall be done.

Ver. 17. *It came to pass also the twelfth year,* &c.] Another prophecy of the like kind was delivered out the same year as before: *in the fifteenth* day *of the month:* of the twelfth month, the month Adar, which is not here expressed, because mentioned before, ver. 1. it was about a fortnight after the other prophecy. The Septuagint and Arabic versions read it, " it came to " pass in the twelfth year, the first month, the fif- " teenth day of the month;" according to which this prophecy was before the other, which is not to be supposed.

Ver. 18. *Son of man, wail for the multitude of Egypt,* &c.] Sing a funeral song or dirge, or compose one, to be sung by the mourning women, on account of the vast numbers of the inhabitants of Egypt that shall be slain; for the prophet himself would not mourn, but rejoice, on this occasion; but this is said to shew the certainty of the destruction, and the lamentation that would be made on that account: *and cast them down, even her and the daughters of the famous nations:* Egypt, and all those countries, and the inhabitants of them, that were in alliance and friendship with her; that is, declare by prophecy that they shall be cast down and destroyed, or be brought down from the height of grandeur and prosperity in which they now were: *unto the nether parts of the earth, with them that go down to the pit:* not unto stately sepulchres built on high, such as were made for the kings of Egypt; but unto common pits or graves, dug in the lower parts of the earth, where the meaner and common sort of people were buried; there should be no distinction between them and others, they should have one common burial. The Targum is, " son of man, prophesy concerning the mul- " titude of Egypt, and break her, even her, and the " villages of the mighty people; prophesy that they " shall be delivered unto the lowest earth, with those " that go down to the pit of the house of perdition."

Ver. 19. *Whom dost thou pass in beauty?* &c.] This question the prophet is bid to put to Egypt; what nation is there, or has been, that thou excellest in wisdom, in riches, or in strength, in the multitude of subjects, or extent of dominions, that thou thinkest thyself secure from destruction? look over other kingdoms and states mightier than thou, or at least equal to thee, and see how they are brought to ruin, and expect that this will quickly be thy case: *go down, and be thou laid with the uncircumcised;* go down to the grave, and take thy place, and lie there among the wicked and most profligate of mankind, and such as might be most despised by the Egyptians, since they used circumcision. The Targum is, " go down and sleep with sinners."

Ver. 20. *They shall fall in the midst of them that are slain by the sword,* &c.] The Egyptians shall fall in battle by the sword of the Chaldeans: *she is delivered to the sword;* Egypt is given to the sword, to perish by it, for her sins, according to the just appointment of God: *draw her and all her multitudes:* to the place of burial; not in pomp and splendour, as great persons are drawn in hearses; but in great disgrace, as carcasses are dragged unto a common pit or grave, and cast into it: this is said to the Chaldeans, who had a commission from the Lord to slay Egypt, and to bury her, and all her people.

Ver. 21. *The strong among the mighty shall speak to him,* &c.] The strongest of them, such who have excelled others in strength and courage, famous for military exploits, who have been generals of armies, great warriors, and conquerors; and yet with all their might and strength could not withstand death, but were subdued by it, and brought down to the grave; these are, by a poetical figure, represented as meeting Pharaoh king of Egypt, when he came to his grave, saluting and welcoming him to the state of the dead in which they were; taking a sort of comfort in it, and insulting him as being as weak as they; see Isa. xiv. 9, 10, 16. which they should do *out of the midst of hell;* or the grave, *Hades,* the state of the dead: *with them that help him;* the associates, allies, and friends of Pharaoh, his auxiliaries that fell with him, and were brought to the grave at the same time with him; these should be bespoke, saluted, and welcomed in like manner: *they are gone down* to the grave; those mighty ones that are represented as speaking, and the Egyptians and their helpers who are spoken to: *they lie uncircumcised;* among them that are so, ver. 19: *slain by the sword;* of their enemies, who got the victory over them.

Ver. 22. *Ashur is there, and all her company,* &c.] In the state of the dead, or in a most desolate and ruinous condition; the great Assyrian monarchy, the kings of it, the princes, nobles, generals, soldiers, and the vast number of subjects in all the dominions of it; all his army, as the Targum; this, with what follows, shews who the mighty are, that should meet and address the king of Egypt at his funeral: *his graves are about him:* either the graves of Pharaoh and his multitude are round about the graves of the Assyrian monarch and his subjects, as Kimchi; or rather the graves of his subjects and soldiers are round about him: it seems to represent the king of Assyria as having a

more stately monument, and the graves of his people as lesser ones round about him, but all in the same condition: *all of them slain, fallen by the sword*: of their enemies, the Medes and the Babylonians, by whom the Assyrian monarchy was destroyed.

Ver. 23. *Whose graves are set in the sides of the pit*, &c.] Or vault, where lay the king of Assyria, and those who fell by the sword with him, who are represented as lying in graves all around him; the nearest to him those who were in the highest posts, and most valiant and courageous, and next the common soldiers, as follows: *and her company is round about her grave*; not Pharaoh's company round about the grave of the Assyrian monarch; but the company of the king of Assyria, or his army, as the Targum, round about his grave, or lying about in the ruins of his kingdom: *all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which caused terror in the land of the living*: even they who now are in the state of the dead, and can no more disturb and distress any, while they were alive, or in the world, struck terror in all neighbouring states and kingdoms; threatening destruction to them, and obliging them to submit to their tyranny and exactions. Jarchi interprets this of the land of Israel; and the Jewish writers commonly understand by the land of the living the land of Canaan, wherever they meet with it; because here men worshipped the living God, and lived before him; and the inhabitants of this land were often terrified by the king of Assyria. So the Targum, "because they ruled in "the land of Israel."

Ver. 24. *There is Elam and all her multitude round about her grave*, &c.] The kingdom of the Medes and Persians lying in ruin, and the potent kings thereof in the state of the dead; with their army, as the Arabic version, slain and destroyed, and placed round about the grave of the king of Persia; for of him rather it is to be understood than of the king of Assyria, or of Egypt, as some: *all of them slain, fallen by the sword*: either of the Scythians in the reign of Cyaxares; or of Nebuchadnezzar a few years before this, in the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah; see Jer. xlix. 34—39: *which are gone down uncircumcised into the nether parts of the earth*; unholy persons, profane sinners, destitute of the grace of God; who were gone down into the grave, and even into hell and everlasting destruction, as their sins deserved: *which caused their terror in the land of the living*; made a great noise in the world, and struck a panic in neighbouring nations, invaded and conquered by them; this they did whilst living, but now, being in the state of the dead, nothing was to be feared from them: *yet have they borne their shame with them that go down to the pit*; were obliged to submit to death, and a shameful one, by the hands of their conquerors, and to be laid with ignominy in the grave with others, without any mark of distinction; all being upon a level, cast into the same pit of destruction, and into the lower parts of it; though their king might have a magnificent sepulchre erected for him, as follows:

Ver. 25. *They have set her bed in the midst of the slain, with all her multitude*, &c.] The grave is called a bed, Isa. lvii. 2. whereon is put the sepulchral chest or coffin, in which the body is laid, and rests as on a bed. It may here design a stately sepulchre or coffin in it, with a magnificent monument over it for the king of Elam, with his army, and the generals of it slain in battle, placed all around him, in less stately beds, coffins, and graves, as explained in the next clause: *her graves are round about him*; the king of Persia and his grave, surrounded with the graves of his soldiers and officers: *all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword: tho' their terror was caused in the land of the living, yet have they borne their shame with them that go down to the pit*; which is repeated for the confirmation of it: *he is put in the midst of them that be slain*; the king of Elam or Persia; he is laid among the slain, having fallen with them, and his grave is placed in the midst of them.

Ver. 26. *There is Meshech, Tubal, and all her multitude*, &c.] The Scythians, a powerful and warlike people; and all their armies, as the Targum; with their leaders, generals, and commanders, as lying in their graves next to the Assyrians and Elamites, or Persians: *her graves are round about him*; not the king of Egypt, nor the king of Assyria, nor the king of Persia; but the chief commander of the Scythians, called the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, ch. xxxviii. 2: *all of them slain by the sword*: of Halyattes, king of Lydia, and Cyaxares, king of Media, who was assisted by the former in subduing the Scythians: *though they caused their terror in the land of the living*; as they did in Media, and other countries, and especially in some parts of Asia.

Ver. 27. *And they shall not lie with the mighty* that are *fallen of the uncircumcised*, &c.] That is, shall not lie in such state, or be buried with such pomp and magnificence, and have such sepulchral monuments erected to their memory, as other heroes among the Heathens have had; such as the mighty kings of Assyria and Persia before mentioned: *which are gone down to hell*, or *the grave, with their weapons of war*; which were never taken from them, and which they held in their hands to the last, being never conquered, and died at last a natural death, and not by the sword; or which were carried in state before their hearse at the time of interment, as is the custom to this day so to do at the funeral of great warriors, generals, and officers: *and they have laid their swords under their heads*; as a sign and token, as Jarchi says, that the sword did not rule over them, that they did not fall by it; either their statues and sepulchral monuments were adorned with these, and other instruments of war, as was the grave of Misenus by Æneas [d]; and as is still the custom where the heads of such mighty ones are laid, to engrave them on them: or, literally, their swords and other weapons of war were put in their graves under their heads; as it was usual, in former times, in some places to put swords, shields, and other armour, in the graves of military men, as were in the grave of Theseus, on the bier of Alexander the great, and others, as reported by Plutarch, Diodorus Siculus, and Sophocles [e]: now the Scythians were not buried

[d] Vid. Virgil. Æneid. l. 6. & Seneca, l. 4. controvers. 4.

[e] Vid. Lydium de Re Militari, l. 6. c. 7. p. 250, 251. & Kirchman. de Funer. Roman. l. 3. c. 13.

after this grand and pompous manner: *but their iniquities shall be upon their bones;* or the punishment of their sin should be, that their bones should lie unburied and scattered about, or be dug up and broke to pieces, and treated with inhumanity and contempt, as a just reward for their savageness and cruelty: *though they were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living:* not only the terror of the common people, but even of the most powerful kings and mighty warriors.

Ver. 28. *Yea, thou shalt be broken in the midst of the uncircumcised,* &c.] Kimchi, and so others, think this is said to Pharaoh king of Egypt; but rather it respects the prince of the Scythians, who should fall into the hands of Heathens, and be destroyed by them: *and shalt lie with them that are slain with the sword;* be buried with them, or in like manner as they are; and not as mighty warriors, who die a natural death in their own country, and are buried in a stately and magnificent manner; but like those that fall by the sword of the enemy, and are thrown into one common pit.

Ver. 29. *There is Edom, her kings, and all her princes,* &c.] In the next place, near the graves of the above-mentioned, and in the same ruinous and desolate condition, lie the famous kingdom of Idumea, and the several kings and dukes of it, from the first setting of it up, to its last destruction prophesied of, ch. xxv. 12, 13, 14. of many of which mention is made, Gen. xxxvi. 15—43: *which with their might are laid by them that are slain with the sword:* who, notwithstanding their powerful armies, and prowess and skill in war, yet are conquered, and destroyed, and laid in graves in like manner as all others slain by the sword of the enemy are: *they shall lie with the uncircumcised:* for though they themselves were circumcised, being the descendants of Esau the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, on whose seed circumcision was enjoined; yet this did not secure them from a violent death, and an ignominious burial; they being uncircumcised in heart, wicked and ungodly men, and so should be joined in their death and burial with such: *and with them that go down to the pit;* the common receptacle of the slain.

Ver. 30. *There be the princes of the north,* &c.] The kings of Babylon, according to Kimchi, which lay north of Judea; or the princes of Syria, Damascus, and Tyre, especially the latter, which commonly goes along with Zidon, being near it, as follows: *and all the Zidonians.* The Vulgate Latin version renders it, *and all the hunters;* but wrongly; as also the Septuagint and Arabic versions, which read the princes or soldiers of Assyria. The Zidonians or inhabitants of Zidon are meant, as the Targum; a famous maritime city, as Tyre also was, in Phœnicia: *which are gone down with the slain;* into the grave, being conquered and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar; see ch. xxviii. 21—23: *with their terror they are ashamed of their might;* the number and strength of their armies, the valour and courage of their soldiers, and the fortifications of their cities, in which they trusted, and of which they boasted; but yet could not preserve them from ruin: *and they lie uncircumcised with them that be slain by the sword;* in common with other profane and wicked persons that have fallen by the sword as they have done: *and bear their shame with them that go down to the pit;* see the note on ver. 24.

Ver. 31. *Pharaoh shall see them, and shall be comforted over his multitude,* &c.] That is, when Pharaoh is brought to the grave, and into the state of the dead, he shall look about him, and see who lie by him; and he shall behold the above-mentioned kings of Assyria, Persia, Idumea, and the princes of Tyre and Zidon, and all their mighty armies, generals and soldiers, in the same condition with himself; and this shall be some solace to him in his own death, and at the loss of so great a kingdom, such numerous subjects, and a vast army, that others as rich, as powerful as himself, lie in the same low and miserable condition; though such comfort as this must be poor comfort indeed! and yet this is all the comfort wicked men have in hell, that they have company with them there: *even Pharaoh and all his army slain by the sword.* Pharaoh-hophra and his numerous army slain by the sword of the king of Babylon. This explains who is meant by Pharaoh and his multitude: and that this would certainly be his case, it is added, *saith the Lord God;* he hath spoken it, and it shall be done; whose words are continued in the next verse.

Ver. 32. *For I have caused my terror in the land of the living,* &c.] Or, *his terror*[f]; there is a double reading. The Keri or marginal reading, which we follow, has it *my terror*[g]; but the Cetib or writing is *his terror*, and so read the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions; both may be taken, and the sense be, I have caused or suffered him, Pharaoh king of Egypt, to be a terror to the nations about him, particularly to the land of Israel, which the Targum expressly mentions as the land of the living; and now I'll terrify him who has terrified others: *and he shall be laid in the midst of the uncircumcised with those that are slain with the sword;* shall have a common burial with other Heathen nations; even with such, who, in a way of judgment, have perished by the sword of their victorious enemies, as he will: even *Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord God;* the king of Egypt, his subjects, and his soldiers, as numerous as they are; and thus ends this doleful ditty, and funeral dirge or lamentation, composed, taken up, and sung for Pharaoh as ordered, thereby to assure him of his certain destruction.

[f] חתיתו terrorem ejus, Grotius; consternationem ejus, Starckius.

[g] חתיתי terrorem meum, Pagninus, Munster, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.

CHAP. XXXIII.

THIS chapter treats of the prophet's duty, and the people's sins; contains a vindication of the justice of God; a threatening of destruction to those who remained in the land after the taking of the city; and a detection of the hypocrisy of the prophet's hearers. The duty of a watchman in general is declared, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, an application of this to the prophet, ver. 7: the sum of whose business is to warn the wicked man of his wickedness; and the consequence of doing, or not doing it, is expressed, ver. 8, 9. an objection of the people, and the prophet's answer to it, ver. 10, 11. who is bid to acquaint them, that a righteous man trusting to his righteousness, and sinning, should not live; and that a sinner repenting of his sins should not die, ver. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. the people's charge of inequality in the ways of God is retorted upon them, and removed from the Lord, and proved against them, ver. 17, 18, 19, 20. then follows a prophecy, delivered out after the news was brought of the taking of the city, threatening with ruin those that remained in the land, confident of safety, and that for their sins, which are particularly enumerated, ver. 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29. and the chapter is closed with a discovery of the hypocrisy of those that attended the prophet's ministry, ver. 30, 31, 32, 33.

Ver. 1. *Again the word of the Lord came unto me, &c.*] After the delivery of various prophecies concerning the ruin of other nations, the Ammonites, Tyrians, and Egyptians, a fresh prophecy comes from the Lord concerning the Jews: *saying:* as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, &c.*] The Jews, of whom the prophet was; and designs those who were with him in the captivity; and who, having behaved so ill, the Lord will not own them for his people, but calls them the prophet's people, and the children of them: *and say unto them, when I bring the sword upon a land;* a foreign enemy with an army to invade it, or any other judgment; for there is no public calamity whatever that comes upon a people, but what is by the order, direction, or permission of the Lord. The Targum is, "those that kill with the "sword;" an army of men that enter into a land sword in hand, with an intent to conquer and destroy: *if the people of the land take a man of their coasts;* that lives upon their borders, and so is acquainted with all the places where it is most likely an enemy should enter; or a man out of the midst of them, as the Targum; so this phrase sometimes signifies, Gen. xlvii. 2. one of their own people, who might be thought to have their good and safety at heart, and might be trusted: *and set him for their watchman;* on some place of eminence; on the walls, or in a tower of a frontier town, from whence he might descry the enemy coming at a distance.

Ver. 3. *If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, &c.*] Or those that kill with the sword, as the Targum; as soon as he observes a body of armed men, more or less, marching towards the borders of the land with a manifest intention to enter and invade it: *he blow the trumpet, and warn the people;* warn the people by blowing the trumpet, the signal agreed on; by which they would understand that an enemy was at hand, or danger near; or warn them by word of mouth, as well as by the trumpet, where he could do it, and when it was necessary.

Ver. 4. *Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh no warning, &c.*] Does not mind the notice given him; is incredulous of the danger he is in, or negligent of providing for his safety; fancies 'tis an alarm, and nothing else; and imagines there's no real danger, or what is a mere trifle; or that the enemy is at a great distance, and it is time enough to provide for his defence: *if the sword come and take him away;* those that kill with the sword, as the Targum, come suddenly on him, and take away his life, or carry him captive: *his blood shall be upon his own head;* the guilt of his slaughter, as the Targum; the sin will be his own; it must be brought in wilful murder; no blame can be laid upon any but himself; the watchman will be clear.

Ver. 5. *He heard the sound of the trumpet, &c.*] The alarm of the enemy being at hand, and so was inexcusable: *and took not warning;* which that gave him: *his blood shall be upon him:* the fault shall be imputed to himself, and not another; and he must bear it himself, and answer for it, and not the watchman: *but he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul;* who, hearing the sound of the trumpet, prepares for his own defence, and provides for his safety, he shall save his life, and not fall into the enemies' hands.

Ver. 6. *But if the watchman see the sword come, &c.*] Or those that kill with the sword, as the Targum is; so far doing the duty of his office as to be in the watch-tower, and not asleep: *and* yet *blow not the trumpet;* to give the people notice of the enemy, and of their danger: *and the people be not warned;* but in the utmost security, not apprehending themselves to be in any danger at all: *if the sword come and take any person from among them;* even though but a single person: *he is taken away in his iniquity;* having had no time to have it set before him, and to be convinced, and to repent of it, and seek for pardoning mercy for it; it is a dreadful thing thus to be taken out of the world, and snatched into hell at once: *but his blood will I require at the watchman's hands;* he shall be punished for not doing his duty, for not giving the due warning of danger, on which account the man was surprised with the enemy, and taken away unawares; and therefore his death shall be laid to the watchman, and he must be answerable for it.

Ver. 7. *So thou, O son of man, &c.*] Here begins the application of the parable to the prophet himself, describing his office and his duty: *I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel;* which is repeated from ch. iii. 17. see the note there. The Targum is, "I have appointed thee a teacher;" a spiritual watchman; so pastors, teachers, ministers of the Gospel, are watchmen, 2 Tim. iv. 5. Heb. xiii. 17: *therefore*

thou shalt hear the word from my mouth, and warn them from me. The Targum is, "thou shalt receive the "word from my Word, and warn them from sinning "before me."

Ver. 8. *When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man,* &c.] Order the prophet to say so to him, and as follows; see the note on ch. iii. 18.

Ver. 9. *Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way,* &c.] See the note on ch. iii. 19.

Ver. 10. *Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel,* &c.] Such of them as were with him in the captivity: *thus ye speak, saying;* reasoning and arguing within and among themselves; which the Lord heard, and made known to the prophet, who is bid to repeat it to them in order to give an answer: *if our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them;* as the prophet said they should, ch. xxiv. 23. with which he had concluded his prophecies to them; and now they take it up, and argue against themselves, and against him; if our sins and transgressions are laid upon us, and we must answer for them; if the guilt of them is charged on us, and they are unexpiated and unatoned for; and the punishment of them is, or will be, inflicted on us, and we do, and must pine away, and be consumed in them, and by them: *how should we then live?* as thou promisest us upon repentance; it is all over with us; there is no hope for us; what signify our repentance, or thy promises of life unto us? these things can never hang together, that we should live, and yet pine away in our sins; so that these are the words of persons both despairing, and making the prophet to say things opposite and contradictory, and which would not admit of a reconciliation; see ch. xxxvii. 11.

Ver. 11. *Say unto them, as I live, saith the Lord,* &c.] The following is the answer returned from the Lord by the prophet to their above complaint and reasoning: to which is premised the oath of God, shewing the certainty, reality, and sincerity of what is said, which might be depended on as true: *I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked,* &c. see the notes on ch. xviii. 23, 31, 32.

Ver. 12. *Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people,* &c.] See the note on ver. 2. The purport of what the prophet is bid to say in this and some following verses is, that the righteousness of a man that trusts in it, he sinning and not repenting, shall not save him; and that the wickedness of a repenting sinner shall not damn him: *the righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression;* this must be understood, not of a truly righteous man, or of the righteousness of Christ, by which such an one is made so; for that righteousness does deliver those to whom it is imputed, from sin, and the condemnation of it, even in the day of his transgression, which is every day of his life; for there is not a just man that does good, and sinneth not; and in the day when his sin is shewn him, and he is convinced of it, this removes the guilt of it; and in the day it will be sought for, or he may be charged with it, and when the sins of others will be brought to an account, the righteousness by which he is justified will deliver him from avenging justice; from the curse of the law; from the wrath of God; from eternal death, and everlasting damnation; but this is to be interpreted of one that is not truly righteous, and of a man's own righteousness; and which he trusts to, as is afterwards expressed; and may and does turn from: this can never deliver a man in the day of his transgression from the guilt and condemnation of it: for a man's own righteousness is but what he ought to do; and, was it ever so perfect, yet, should he commit one single sin, it would not justify him from it, or deliver him from the curse of the law and wrath of God due unto it: *as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness;* when he is truly convinced of his sin, and the evil of it; is heartily sorry for it, after a godly sort; ingenuously confesses it, and departs from it; applies to Christ, to his blood and righteousness, for pardon and acceptance; though his wickedness has been ever so great, or attended with ever such aggravating circumstances, yet it shall not damn him; or he shall not fall by it into hell and everlasting perdition; but shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: *neither shall the righteous be able to live* for his righteousness *in the day that he sinneth;* he can't live by it, nor for it; as it can't justify him, it can't save him, or bring him to heaven, or entitle him to eternal life; he is not able to live comfortably now; when his sin is charged upon him, his righteousness will not relieve him; and much less will he be able to live happily hereafter; he must and will die in his sins, being found in them, for any thing his own righteousness can do for him: this is the same with the former clause, and is repeated in different words for the confirmation of it; self-righteous persons not being easily convinced of the truth of these things.

Ver. 13. *When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live,* &c.] A happy life, here and hereafter; an eternal life, and not die the second death: this must be understood, should he appear a truly righteous person; one that does not trust to his own righteousness, but to the righteousness of Christ, and lives by faith on that; looking for the hope of righteousness through it, and behaving agreeably to his character: but *if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity;* as he will by trusting to it; if he trusts to it for acceptance with God, and justification in his sight, and thinks himself proof against all temptation to sin on account of it; and that he has righteousness enough to make amends for sins committed, or for other sins he may commit; and which he may venture upon through this false notion, and so be led on to an open course of sinning, and series of committing iniquity: *all his righteousness shall not be remembered;* God will take no notice of it; it shall be of no avail to justify him from sin, and secure him from wrath; it will be as if it never had been; *but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it;* an eternal death, which is the just wages of sin; from which a man's own righteousness can never deliver him, though the righteousness of Christ does deliver from it; see Prov. x. 2. and xi. 4.

Ver. 14. *Again, when I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die,* &c.] That is, provided he continues in the same course of life, impenitent and unbelieving; but *if he turn from his sin;* repent of it, and forsake it:

and do that which is lawful and right: or *judgment and justice*; do that which is agreeably to the law of God, and what is right between man and man; lives soberly, righteously, and godly, as well as denies ungodliness and worldly lusts; whereby it appears that his repentance is genuine and true.

Ver. 15. If *the wicked restore the pledge*, &c.] His neighbour's raiment, which he has taken as a pledge for money lent him; and which, according to the law, was to be restored before sun-set, Exod. xxii. 25, 26, 27. which wicked men did not attend unto; but when such a man is brought to a sense of his wickedness, and repentance for it, as an evidence of it he would restore the pledge: *and give again that he had robbed*: to him whom he had robbed; as a thief was obliged to do, four or five fold, according to the law, Exod. xxii. 1. and which, when a man did voluntarily, from the convictions of his own mind, and not by force of the civil magistrate, it was a sign of true repentance; see Luke xix. 8: and *walk in the statutes of life*: the rule of life and conversation, and to the keeping of which the promise of long life is annexed; and which preserve persons from dying a shameful death by the hand of the civil magistrate; statutes, which, if a man do, he shall live in them; see ch. xx. 11: *without committing iniquity*; not living entirely without sin, which the best of men do not; but without committing grosser sins, as before; and without making a trade of sinning, and living in it: *he shall surely live, he shall not die*: he shall live comfortably now, and happily hereafter; he shall live a spiritual life, and not die the second death.

Ver. 16. *None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him*, &c.] Imputed to him; placed to his account; charged upon him, or ever be spoke of to him, either now, or at the day of judgment, by way of accusation and complaint, or to his condemnation: *he hath done that which is lawful and right*: has repented of his sin; looked to Christ by faith for the pardon of it; and laid hold on his righteousness for his justification; and being influenced and assisted by the grace of God, has done that which is right and good in the sight of God and man: *he shall surely live*; he now lives a life of faith and holiness; he shall continue to live, and persevere to the end, and inherit eternal life; see ch. xviii. 21, 22.

Ver. 17. *Yet the children of thy people say*, &c.] Not *my people*; for surely the children of God could never say what follows; and one would think that even no man could say it, after so much had been said by the Lord concerning the righteous and the wicked, and his dealings with them, which must appear to be just and right, good and gracious; and yet such were the atheism, the perverseness and peevishness of these people, they went on to say as they had done before: *the way of the Lord is not equal*: is not according to the rules of justice and equity. The Targum is, "the "ways of the goodness of the Lord are not made plain "(or exposed) unto us." The answer to which is, *but, as for them, their way is not equal*; according to the rule of the divine word; as for God, his way and methods, both of providence and grace, were right and good; see the note on ch. xviii. 25.

Ver. 18. *When the righteous turneth from his righteousness*, &c.] This and what is said in the following verse are clear instances of the equality, justness, and goodness of the ways of God; and are again repeated, if possible, to make it clear and plain to them that their charge and complaint were groundless; see the notes on ch. xviii. 24, 26.

Ver. 19. *But if the wicked turn from his wickedness*, &c.] See the note on ch. xviii. 27.

Ver. 20. *Yet ye say, the way of the Lord is not equal*, &c.] Still obstinately persisting in their false charges, notwithstanding plain proofs to the contrary: *O ye house of Israel, I will judge you every one after his ways*; see the note on ch. xviii. 30.

Ver. 21. *And it came to pass in the twelfth year of our captivity*, &c.] Of Jeconiah's captivity, when Ezekiel with others were carried into Babylon; see ch. i. 2: *in the tenth* month, *in the fifth* day *of the month*; which was a year, four months, and some days, after the city of Jerusalem was taken; for that was destroyed in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, and so of the captivity, and in the fifth month, and tenth day of the month, 2 Kings xxv. 2. Jer. lii. 12. It is much it was not known at Babylon before; though so it might, and yet not one that escaped came to Ezekiel sooner to give him an account of it, which he had seen with his eyes. The Syriac version reads it, in the *eleventh year*; and so makes it but a few months after the destruction; and it may be observed, that it is promised by the Lord, ch. xxiv. 26. that on the day the city was taken, one should escape, and bring the prophet the news; that is, directly, immediately, in a very short time, as soon as it was possible that he could arrive to him; and yet, as taken notice, here were a year and almost five months before he reached him, which seems pretty strange. The difficulty may be solved in this manner: Ezekiel reckons from the captivity of Jeconiah, which began in the month Cisleu; and the computation in 2 Kings xxv. 2. Jer. lii. 12. is from Zedekiah's reign, which is to be reckoned from the month Nisan, and from the first Nisan of his reign; for it is a rule with the Jews[h], that the beginning of the year for kings is the first of Nisan; so that the tenth month from the captivity is the sixth from Nisan: whence it appears there was not a full month from the city being burnt to the news being brought to Ezekiel; which was time short enough, in such a troublesome season, to take a journey from Jerusalem to Babylon: for Zedekiah not being crowned before the Nisan following the captivity, the computation of his reign did not begin till that Nisan, which makes this difference in the chronology. According to Bishop Usher[i], this messenger came to Ezekiel the 25th of January, the fourth day of the week (Wednesday), in the year of the Julian period 4127, and before Christ 587: that *one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me*; as it was foretold and promised he should, ch. xxiv. 26: *saying, the city is smitten*; the city of Jerusalem; the walls were broken down, the houses burnt, and the whole destroyed.

[h] Misn. Roshhashanah, c. 1. sect. 1.

[i] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3417.

Ver. 22. *Now the hand of the Lord was upon me in the evening, afore he that was escaped came,* &c.] The prophet felt a divine impulse on his mind; he was under the influence of a spirit of prophecy, and knew before the messenger came to him what his message was, and was prepared to receive it, and to prophesy upon it; for this is to be understood of prophecy, as the Targum, "prophecy from before the Lord was "with me in the evening[k];" see Isa. viii. 11: *and had opened my mouth, until he came to me in the morning:* the hand of the Lord, or the power of the Lord, had done it, as he promised he would, ch. iii. 27. so that he spoke freely and boldly, and continued to do so from the evening, to the time the messenger came to him in the morning, to all those that were with him: *and my mouth was opened, and I was no more dumb:* as he had been for three years past; for though he had been prophesying against several nations, yet these prophecies were not delivered, 'tis very likely, by word of mouth, but by writing, and sent into those countries by proper messengers; but now the prophet's mouth is opened by the spirit of God, as it was said it should, when this messenger should come to him, ch. xxiv. 27. and from this time he was not silent, but prophesied to his people, the Jews, verbally, as he was bid to do by the Lord.

Ver. 23. *Then the word of the Lord came unto me,* &c.] After the messenger had delivered his message, and he had received it, and conversed with him about it: *saying;* as follows:

Ver. 24. *Son of man, they that inhabit those wastes of the land of Israel,* &c.] The places which were laid waste by Nebuchadnezzar's army, going and returning, in and about Jerusalem, and in several parts of Judea; these were they that were left in the land after the destruction, to people and plant it; or who, having fled to distant parts, were now returned, and took possession of it, though it was in a wretched condition, a mere waste or desert; and yet they were lifted up with it, and proud and haughty, as their language shews; for thus they *speak, saying, Abraham was one, and he inherited the land:* he was but one, and had no child, when the promise of inheriting the land was made unto him; and he was but a single worshipper of God, and yet he had this favour and privilege: *but we are many; the land is given us for inheritance;* so they oppose themselves to Abraham, and argue from the lesser to the greater; that if a single person was vouchsafed to inherit it, then much more many, and those of his seed; and to whom the land was particularly given for an inheritance, and who were now in the possession of it, as Abraham never was; and, being many, were able to defend their right, and secure themselves in the enjoyment of it; all which reasoning shews their pride and vanity, though they were under such humbling circumstances; their land being waste, their numbers lessened, and the enemy had but just quitted it, having made dreadful devastations in it; and which had had no influence upon them to reform them, or bring them to repentance, as the following verses shew.

Ver. 25. *Wherefore say unto them, thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Send them this message in writing, as from the Lord; for the prophet was now in Chaldea, and could not deliver it by word of mouth to those that inhabited the wastes of Israel; but he could tell it to the messenger that came to him, who had escaped from Jerusalem; or send it by him, or some other: *ye eat with the blood;* or rather *upon,* or *by the blood*[l]; contrary to the law in Lev. xix. 26. which is a different law from that in Gen. ix. 4, and from that in Lev. iii. 17, and vii. 26, 27. and refers to an idolatrous practice of the Heathens, which these Jews imitated; who, having slain and offered their sacrifices to devils, sat down round about the blood of them, and ate their foot or part of their sacrifice by it, as Kimchi on the text observes. The account Maimonides[m] gives of the Zabians is this, "you must know "(says he) that the blood is reckoned very unclean "and impure by the Zabians, yet is eaten by them, "because they think it is the food of devils; and that "he that eats it by this means obtains some communications with them; so that they converse familiarly with him, and reveal things future to him, "which the vulgar commonly attribute to devils: "notwithstanding there were some among them, with "whom it seemed very grievous and difficult to eat "blood (for it is a thing which the nature of man "abhors); these used to slay some beast, and take its "blood, and put it in a vessel, or in a hole dug in the "earth, and eat the slain beast, sitting in a circle "about the blood; imagining to themselves, in so "doing, whilst they ate the flesh the devils ate the "blood, and that this is their food; and by this means "friendship, fraternity, and familiarity were contracted "between them, because they all ate at one table, and "sat on one seat; besides, they were of opinion that "the devils appeared to them in dreams, and told "them things to come, and were of much advantage "to them;" and accordingly it follows: *and lift up your eyes towards your idols;* make your devotion, and pray unto them, and worship them, and expect help and assistance from them: *and shed blood;* innocent blood, as the Targum; they were guilty of murder as well as of idolatry, or shedding of blood, in sacrifice to idols: *and shall ye possess the land?* can such wretches as you, such gross idolaters and murderers, ever think that you are the children of Abraham, and have a right to the inheritance of this land, or shall long continue in the possession of it, living in such abominable iniquities as these?

Ver. 26. *Ye stand upon your sword,* &c.] You trust in it, and think to support yourselves by it, and secure your possession and right of it by that means. So the Targum, "you stand in your strength:" *ye work abomination;* that which is abominable to God, and not fit to be named among men; Jarchi interprets it of sodomy: the word is in the feminine gender, and may be rendered, *ye women work abomination;* referring to that unnatural lust the apostle speaks of, Rom. i. 26. so Ben Melech: *and ye defile every one his neighbour's wife;* were guilty of adultery; and which was

[k] So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 14. 2.

[l] על הדם super sanguinem, Munster, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius; juxta sanguinem; so some in Vatablus.

[m] Moreh Nevochim, par. 3. c. 46. p. 484.

so common, that scarce any were free from it, and therefore is charged upon the whole body of them: *and shall ye possess the land?* such vile creatures as these, guilty of the abominations for which the land formerly spewed out its ancient inhabitants, the Canaanites? and the present possessors might expect the same, as being very unworthy inheritors of it, whatever high thoughts they might have of themselves.

Ver. 27. *Say thou thus unto them, thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] Send or write unto them in the name of the Lord, after this manner, as *I live*, which is the form of an oath; the Lord swears by himself, his life, because he could swear by no greater, and for the confirmation of what follows: *surely they that are in the wastes shall fall by the sword;* by their own sword, falling out one with another; or by the sword of Ishmael, Jer. xli. 2, 3. or by the sword of the Chaldeans, who revenged the death of Gedaliah and others; even such who dwelt amidst the ruins of the city of Jerusalem, and other places, that were become desolate through the ravages of the enemy: *and him that is in the open field will I give to the beasts to be devoured*, of which it may be supposed there were the greater numbers, since the land was so depopulated: *and they that be in the forts, and in the caves, shall die of the pestilence;* such as were in fortified cities, or in caverns of the earth, dug in rocks and mountains, where, in neither of them, men and beasts could easily come at them; here the Lord would send his arrow, the plague, that flies by day, and reach them, and destroy them; none can escape his hands; these are three of the Lord's sore judgments, the sword, pestilence, and noisome beasts.

Ver. 28. *For I will lay the land most desolate,* &c.] Or, *desolation* and *desolation**; one desolating judgment shall follow upon another, until it is completely desolate; it was very desolate already, through the ravages of the Chaldean army; but it should become more so, through other judgments here threatened them: *and the pomp of her strength shall cease;* some understand this of the temple, which was the most pompous building in the land, and in which they placed their strength and confidence; but this was destroyed already: it is rather to be interpreted of whatsoever riches, power, and glory, were yet remaining, which should be removed: *and the mountains of Israel shall be desolate;* which used to abound with vines and olives, with flocks and pastures: *that none shall pass through;* not only there should be no inhabitant, but no traveller in it, or very few, because of the sword in one part, the pestilence in another, and wild beasts in other places, and a general barrenness and unfruitfulness; so that a traveller would be both in great danger, and in want of provisions to supply himself and cattle.

Ver. 29. *Then shall they know that I am the Lord,* &c.] An omniscient Being, that could foresee and foretel what would come to pass; and omnipotent, able to do whatever he pleased, and true and faithful to his word; and a sovereign Lord, whose will cannot be resisted; this they should see, own, and acknowledge: *when I have laid the land most desolate, because of all their abominations which they have committed;* for though he is a sovereign Lord, yet he does not execute his judgments in an arbitrary way, merely because it is his will, but because of the abominable sins committed by men, which provoke the eyes of his glory.

Ver. 30. *Also, thou son of man,* &c.] I have something to say to thee, and inform thee of, not only concerning the Jews in Judea, what they say, and what will befall them; but concerning those that are with thee, and what they say of thee, and what will be the issue of it: *the children of thy people still are talking against thee;* not the Lord's people, but his own people, which was the more cutting to him to hear of, and the more ungrateful in them; though indeed they were but children, who acted a weak part, and the less to be regarded; these spake against the prophet: they could not say he was no prophet, he had his credentials and commission from the Lord, which were well known, and many of his prophecies had been fulfilled; they could not speak against his doctrine, which was of God; nor against his conversation, which was agreeable to his character and office; but they said some things in a ludicrous and jocose manner, in a slighting and contemptuous way, as shewed they had little reverence and respect for him, and were careless and indifferent about hearing him; at least had little regard to his matter, or the subject of his ministry, which they had no great value for: and this they did *still;* they had been long at it; it was their common talk and constant business, though the prophet knew nothing of it, and thought they had the greatest respect for him, speaking fair to his face, and behaving with decency towards him; but the Lord knew it, and resented it, and informs him of it: and this they did continually, from time to time, *by the walls, and in the doors of the houses;* privately and secretly; *by the walls*, where they used to get together and sun themselves, and pass away their time, by talking against the prophet; and, when they did, would place themselves against the walls, that nobody might overhear them; and they would sometimes stand in the porches of their houses, and, as their neighbours and acquaintance passed by, would call them in, and hold a chat about the prophet; and jeer and laugh at him, and what he had said: *and speak one to another, every man to his brother, saying, come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord;* let us go and amuse ourselves for an hour or two with what the prophet says; perhaps we shall hear some new thing, which may be pleasing and diverting: for, not their spiritual profit did they seek, but to have their ears tickled, and their fancies pleased.

Ver. 31. *And they come unto thee as the people cometh,* &c.] As the people of God, who came to the prophet's house to hear him preach the word, and explain it for their spiritual profit and edification; these came when they did, and as early and constantly, and with seeming pleasure: *and they sit before thee as my people;* with great decency and reverence, and very gravely and demurely, and with seeming devotion, and stay the time out till the whole service is over; as

* שממה ומשמה desolationem & solitudinem, Montanus; vastitatem & solitudinem, Starckius.

scholars sit at the feet of their masters, to hear and learn their doctrines. So the Targum, "and they "come unto thee as the men the disciples come:" *and they hear thy words, but they will not do them:* they gave him the hearing, and seemed attentive, but did not understand what they heard, at least did not put it in practice; they were only hearers, and not doers of the word, and like to the foolish man in Matt. vii. 26, 27: *for with their mouth they shew much love;* by the motions of their lips whilst hearing, and other gestures, as well as by what they said afterwards, they seemed pleased and delighted with what they heard; made large encomiums upon it, and spoke much in the praise of the preacher. The Targum is the reverse, "they made game with their mouth." But *their heart goeth after their covetousness;* "after "the money they had taken away by force," as the Targum; after the world, and the things of it; after their secular affairs, so that they wished the sermon over, that they might be at them; or, however, did not so diligently attend to what was said, but the cares of the world choked the word, and made it unfruitful to them; these were like the seed that fell among thorns, the thorny-ground hearers, Matt. xiii. 22. see Amos viii. 5.

Ver. 32. *And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice,* &c.] Whose voice, and the music of it, are regarded, and not the matter of the song, but the manner in which it is sung; so these people did not so much attend to what the prophet said as the manner of his delivery; they were delighted with the harmony of his voice, the eloquence of his speech, the propriety of his expressions, the eloquence and aptness of his diction, and the cadency of his words, and not with the excellent doctrines he delivered; they were affected and pleased no otherwise than if they had been at a concert of music; or had been entertained by one that understood not only vocal music, but could *play well on an instrument* at the same time, and make both agree together; which yields much pleasure to lovers of music. The Gospel is a lovely song indeed; *a song of loves* *, as it may be rendered; of the love of God, and of the love of Christ; and the voice of a Gospel minister is a pleasant charming voice to those that understand it, but to others it is a voice, and nothing else; they may be delighted with his accents, but not with his matter; *for they hear thy words, but they do them not;* which is repeated, that it might be observed.

Ver. 33. *And when this cometh to pass,* &c.] The prophecy before delivered out, concerning the desolations in the land of Israel, by the sword, pestilence, and wild beasts: *lo, it will come;* whatever is predicted by the Lord, in the mouth of his prophets, certainly comes to pass: *then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them;* and acknowledge it; and particularly that Ezekiel was one, a true prophet of the Lord, by the exact accomplishment of his predictions.

CHAP. XXXIV.

IN the former chapter the prophet prophesies against the people of the Jews, both those of the captivity, and those who were not; and here against the shepherds of Israel. This he is bid to do, ver. 1, 2. whose cruelty to the flock, negligence and unfaithfulness, are exposed, ver. 3, 4, 5, 6. for which reasons they are threatened to be deprived of their office, ver. 7, 8, 9, 10. and the Lord promises to take the care of the flock upon himself, to seek out his sheep, and feed them, and do every kind office to them, ver. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. and then the strong of the flock, that oppressed the weak, are threatened with punishment, ver. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. and the promise of the Messiah, as the shepherd of the flock, is made, under whom all prosperity and happiness might be expected, ver. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord came unto me,* &c.] The date of this prophecy is not given; however, it seems to have been delivered after the destruction of Jerusalem; the causes of which are mentioned, the sins of the people and their governors, which the prophet is directed to expose: *saying;* as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel,* &c.] Or, concerning † them; the governors of them, as the Targum and Jarchi; their political governors, their kings, princes, and civil magistrates of every order and degree; so Kimchi interprets it of kings; and it was common with the eastern nations, and with the Greeks, to call kings shepherds; and one and the same word, in the Greek language, signifies to feed sheep, and to govern people; see Psal. lxxviii. 72. Isa. xliv. 28. also their ecclesiastical governors are intended, prophets, priests, Levites, scribes, and Pharisees; these were bad shepherds, or they would not have been prophesied against; and though they were shepherds of Israel, this must be done: *prophesy, and say unto them, thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds;* that the message to them might be the more regarded, it is ordered to be delivered in the name of the Lord; otherwise they would have been apt to have despised it, and charged the prophet with impertinence and rudeness: *woe be to the shepherds of Israel, that do feed themselves!* that is, themselves only, and not the flock; had they fed the flock, as well as themselves, they would not have been blamed; but they took no care of the people over whom they were set; only minded their own affairs, to get riches and honour, but neglected the good of the people, yea, cruelly oppressed them: *should not the shepherds feed the flocks?* undoubtedly they should; it is their duty, the business of their office, so to do; kings to rule over their subjects, defend their persons and property, and secure their privileges and liberties to them; and ecclesiastical rulers, ministers of the word, should feed the

* כשיר עגבים sicut canticum amorum, Vatablus.

† על רועי de pastoribus, V. L. Grotius; super pastores, Pagninus, Montanus.

flock or church of God committed to them with knowledge and understanding; see Jer. iii. 15. John xxi. 15, 16. Acts xx. 28.

Ver. 3. *Ye eat the fat*, &c.] The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions, render it, *the milk*: the words for fat and milk differ only in the points: and this was not unlawful, for *who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?* 1 Cor. ix. 7. provided it was done with moderation, that they ate some, but not all; but these rulers milked their subjects too much, oppressed them with heavy taxes, and got their substance into their own hands. The Targum is, "ye "eat the good;" they got possessed of the best of their substance; as did also their ecclesiastical rulers, who were greedy shepherds, that could never have enough; they looked for their gain from their quarter, and even devoured widows' houses, Isa. lvi. 11. Matt. xxiii. 14: *ye clothe you with the wool*: the pure wool, as the Targum, the finest of it; they fleeced the flock, and stripped the people of their riches, and minded nothing but their own backs and bellies: *ye kill them that are fed*; or, that *are fat* [q]; the richest of the people they brought accusations and charges against for capital crimes: and so put them to death under a colour of justice, that they might get their estates into their hands: but *ye feed not the flock*: did not govern the people well, by doing justice and judgment among men, as became civil magistrates; did not deliver out the words of faith and sound doctrine, to feed the souls of men with, which is the duty of those that preside in the church of God.

Ver. 4. *The diseased have ye not strengthened*, &c.] Such, in the civil polity, who were poor, and in necessitous circumstances, were not relieved; such who were injured and oppressed by others were not vindicated; and such as were forced to flee to other countries, or were carried captive, no care was taken, or methods used, to ransom them, and bring them back; all which may be meant by this and the following metaphors, taken from the evil things that befall a flock of sheep: and such who were weak through spiritual diseases, their prophets and teachers took no care to cure them of their diseases, and to strengthen these feeble-minded ones with divine cordials and spiritual food, and confirm them in the faith: *neither have ye healed that which was sick*; by directing them to the great Physician of souls, and to his precious blood for healing and pardon of sin: *neither have ye bound up that which was broken*, whose consciences were wounded, and hearts broken, with a sense of sin: or who had fallen to the breaking of their bones, and should be restored in a spirit of meekness, and dealt gently with, as surgeons do in setting and binding up broken bones: *neither have ye brought again that which was driven away*; or, *was gone astray* [r], being seduced by false teachers; and yet, though it was known they were, no care nor pains were taken to reclaim and restore them: *neither have ye sought that which was lost*, that wandered of their own accord, and perished for want of knowledge, and were lost for lack of a guide to direct them, and no one would do this good office to them: *but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them*; in an arbitrary and tyrannical way, lording it over God's heritage, 1 Pet. v. 3.

Ver. 5. *And they were scattered because there is no shepherd*, &c.] No good one; there were shepherds, but they were idol-shepherds, good for nothing, and it was all one as if there were none: so, in Christ's time, there were the Scribes and Pharisees; yet, since these did not feed the people with wholesome doctrine, they are said to be as sheep without a shepherd, and scattered abroad, as here, from the fold, and from one another; dispersed here and there, seeking food, and finding none, which moved his compassion, Matt. ix. 36. in the political sense it may refer to their captivity, and their dispersion among the nations, having no king. So the Targum, "and they were scattered " without a governor." *And they became meat to all beasts of the field when they were scattered*; the Targum is, "and they were delivered to all the kingdoms " of the people to be consumed;" such as the Assyrians, Babylonians, Ammonites, Moabites, and others; and may be applied to false teachers, those grievous wolves, which spare not the flock, into whose hands members of churches, professors of religion, fall, when neglected by their shepherds.

Ver. 6. *My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill*, &c.] As sheep do, when gone astray, go from mountain to hill; so the people of Israel fled from place to place, through the cruelty of their rulers, or through the force of the enemy, being carried captive into many kingdoms and nations, signified by mountains; and perhaps there is some allusion to their worshipping of idols on hills and mountains, being drawn into it by the false prophets: *yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth*; so great and general was the dispersion by the several captivities: the Lord has sheep, or some of his elect, some that belong to his flock, in all parts of the world: *and none did search or seek* after them; but he will himself, as in ver. 11. for he'll lose none of them; but this does not excuse the shepherds.

Ver. 7. *Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord*.] Or, *ye governors*, as the Targum, both civil and ecclesiastical; ye kings, princes, and magistrates; ye prophets and teachers of the people, who ought to have attended to the word of grace, to the doctrines of the Scriptures, and fed the people with them: but, since you have not, hear the word of threatening from the Lord, and the just punishment that shall be inflicted on you.

Ver. 8. *As I live, saith the Lord*, &c.] It is an oath, and which he swore in his wrath, being provoked with the shepherds for their mal-administration: *surely, because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd*: a prey to all the kingdoms of the people, being without a governor, as the Targum; or to false teachers, there being no spiritual pastors to take care of them: *neither did my shepherds search for my flock*; that was scattered, and carried captive, and became a prey to others; even those that were of God's appoint-

[q] הבריאת quod pingue est, Vatablus, Bochartus; pinguem, Cocceius, Starckius. So Ben Melech.

[r] הנדחת vagam aut errantem, Bochartus, and some in Vatablus.

ing, as the kings of Israel, their priests and prophets; for both their civil polity and ecclesiastical hierarchy were of God, though the ends thereof were not answered, or the persons put into office did not do their duty: *but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock*; see the notes on ver. 2, 3.

Ver. 9. *Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord.*] This is repeated, that it might be observed, and for the confirmation of it; it might be depended upon that what follows would be accomplished, unless they changed their conduct and behaviour; and, to leave them inexcusable, they are again called upon to hear what the Lord should say unto them. The Targum is, "therefore, O ye wicked governors, return "to the law, and I will have mercy on you; hearken "to the doctrine of the law, and receive the word of "the Lord."

Ver. 10. *Thus saith the Lord God, behold*, I am *against the shepherds*, &c.] His heart was against them; his hand was against them; his face was against them, to cut them off. The Targum is, "behold, I will send my fury upon the governors;" and there was good reason for it, they were against him and his glory, against his flock, his people, his cause, and interest; sad it is for any to have God against them, and to be against God; for none ever *hardened* themselves *against him and prospered*, Job ix. 4: *and I will require my flock at their hand*; the full tale of them that have been committed to their care, and will punish them for the neglect of them; their blood, their life, and the loss of them, I'll require at their hands; thus he punished Zedekiah and his princes, and the priests and prophets: *and cause them to cease from feeding the flock*; take the kingdom from them, as he did from Zedekiah; abolish the ecclesiastical hierarchy among the Jews; cut off three shepherds in one month, the priests, prophets, and scribes of the people; and put the flock into other hands, the apostles and ministers of the Gospel: *neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more*; enrich themselves with the substance of the people: *for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them*; who, instead of being shepherds to feed the flock, were no other than wolves in sheep's clothing, and ravenous lions and bears, which devoured the flock; but this they should do no longer.

Ver. 11. *For thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Since the shepherds are so negligent, careless, and cruel: *behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out*; as he did the Jews, in all countries where they were, so his elect in all places where they are: he is the omniscient God, and knows them that are his, and can call his own sheep by name; he knows the places where they are; for he has fixed the bounds of their habitation, and was delighting himself in the habitable parts of the earth, where he knew they would be, even before the world was; he knows the time of finding them, which he himself has fixed, and which is a time of love, and a time of life; and he can distinguish them, notwithstanding the filth they have contracted by their sins and transgressions, and from the crowd they are among: and he is the omnipotent God, that can take them out of what hands soever they may be, or in whatsoever state and condition they are; though in the hands of Satan, in the paws of that devouring lion, and in a pit wherein is no water, in a horrible pit, the mire and clay: he that says this is the owner and proprietor of them; and that is the reason why he searches and seeks them out; and which he repeats for the confirmation of it, and to shew the vehemence of his affection towards them, and how bent he is upon it, and how eager and resolute in his pursuit after them: he searches for his chosen people among the ruins of Adam's fall, in whom they fell as others; among the men of the world, where they are; among the dust of the earth, where his lost piece of silver and those pearls lie; among the mountains of sin or self-righteousness, where these sheep are wandering; and he never leaves off seeking and searching till he has found them: and what moves him to it is not their nature, for they are no better than others; nor their numbers, for they are few; but his love to them, the relation he stands in to them as their shepherd, his interest and property in them, his covenant on their account, and also his own glory.

Ver. 12. *As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered*, &c.] That is, when they have been scattered, and are got together again; then he goes among them, to see if there are any missing, and in what condition they are, and what they want: *so will I seek out my sheep, and deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day*; such as, in a literal sense, the time of the captivity was, when the Jews were dispersed in the several provinces of Babylon, and other countries; and which was a time of darkness and affliction to them. The time of Adam's fall was a dark and cloudy day; when all sinned in him, and were made sinners by his disobedience; when the sentence of condemnation and death passed upon all, and they became liable to utter ruin and destruction; when darkness and ignorance seized all human nature; when all mankind were separated from God, and set at a distance from him; in consequence of which the children of God, his sheep, were scattered abroad. A time of unregeneracy is a cloudy and dark day with God's elect; they are in darkness, and walk in darkness, and are darkness itself, till made light in the Lord; and so is a time of desertion; when the Lord's people are laid in darkness, and the deeps, and both sit and walk therein, and see no light; when they can neither see the Lord, nor hear from him, nor have any communion with him; when the sun of righteousness is withdrawn or eclipsed; and they can't see their interest clear in spiritual and eternal things: as is also a time of persecution with the churches of Christ; when both ministers and people are scattered abroad, and their eyes cannot behold their teachers; and moon and stars are not seen for many days, Gospel ministers and Gospel ordinances: and the same is a time of blasphemy and error; and when it is neither day nor night, as is the present season; but there is no day so cloudy and dark but the shepherd can see his sheep, and will look them out, though they cannot see him.

Ver. 13. *And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them*

to their own land, &c.] Which was in part fulfilled when the Jews were delivered from the Babylonish captivity; and which may well be ascribed to the Lord, since it was he that stirred up Cyrus, king of Persia, to proclaim their liberty; and which raised the spirit of the people to go up upon it, and build the temple in Jerusalem, Ezra i. 1, 5. though it will have a more full accomplishment in the latter day, when these people shall be gathered out of all countries where they are dispersed, and return to their own land, and embrace the true Messiah, and be all saved; of which there was a pledge and presage in the apostles' time, on the day of Pentecost; when some out of all nations were collected together at Jerusalem, and heard the wonderful things of God in their own language, and were converted; and afterwards, wherever the Gospel came in the Gentile world, it was first preached to the Jews, and was the power of God to salvation first to them: by which means the sheep of Christ, the elect of God among them, in the several parts of the world, were gathered in: but this need not be confined to the Jews only; since the Lord had other sheep beside them, even among the Gentiles, in all parts of the world; whom he searches for, and effectually calls by his grace, and separates them from the rest of the world, and brings them into his churches, and among his people: *and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers;* not upon the barren mountains of Sinai and Horeb, or with the works of the law; for there is no righteousness, life, and salvation by them, and so no peace and comfort, or food for faith; but upon the mountains of Israel, the churches of Christ, comparable to mountains for their height, visibility, immovableness, and for their pasturage: here the great Shepherd, the Lamb Christ Jesus, is, even on Mount Zion; here his under-shepherds are, who feed the flock with knowledge and understanding; here the word of God is preached, the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus, by which souls are nourished up to everlasting life; in these mountains the feast of fat things is made; here the green pastures are, the sheep are made to lie down in; and here the lilies grow, among whom Christ feeds; and by these mountains run the *rivers* of everlasting love and covenant-grace, the streams of Gospel doctrines, and the waters of Gospel ordinances, to the great refreshment of the saints; here the Lord feeds his people: *and in all the inhabited places of the country;* in the private dwellings of the saints, as well as in public assemblies.

Ver. 14. *I will feed them in a good pasture*, &c.] Or with good food, as the Targum: such as the fulness of grace in Christ, where believers go in and out, and find pasture; and where they may feed to the full, have bread enough, and to spare; and may draw water with joy out of the full wells of salvation: this is good food; food indeed, in opposition to that which was typical, or is imaginary; this is spiritual food, suitable to the spirits of men, brought by the spirit of God, and relished by a spiritual man; this is savoury food, soul-satisfying and soul-strengthening food; this is nourishing food, and what will endure to everlasting life: and such is the Gospel, the promises and doctrines of it, in which there is a variety of food; milk for babes, and meat for strong men; sweet to the taste, and health to the bones; salutary and nourishing, and which makes glad the heart; and of the same kind are the ordinances of the Gospel, the breasts of consolation, the goodness and fatness of the Lord's house; which he makes his people partakers of, and satisfies them with. *And upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be; there shall they lie in a good fold;* of the same nature and use are the churches of Christ as a fold is to the sheep; as that they are separated, divided, and distinguished from others; as into a fold, the sheep of Christ are gathered into churches; where they lie together, are united and knit together in love, and where they have communion with one another, and keep each other warm, and stir up one another to love and good works; whereby the vitals of religion are preserved; here they are kept in the night-season, and fed in the winter; these like a fold are a sort of fence unto them, and a preservation of them from wolves and bears; and here they lie down, and have spiritual rest, ease, and safety: and as in a fold there are lambs, and sheep, and goats, so in churches there are different sorts folded together, weaker and stronger Christians; and some only nominal ones, who will be separated at the last day. A fold may be taken down, and removed from place to place, and so may visible congregated churches; the candlestick may be removed out of its place, the word and ordinances; and so a Gospel church-state may be carried from place to place; and there is but one fold for Jews and Gentiles, and this is a good one; see John x. 16. *And in a fat pasture shall they feed on the mountains of Israel;* on the feast of fat things there, and so become fat and flourishing; see the note on ver. 13.

Ver. 15. *I will feed my flock*, &c.] This is repeated for the further confirmation of it, that it might be depended upon that the Lord would feed his people in the manner before promised; and it gives a reason why he would do it, because they were his flock; he had a right unto them, a property in them; they were separated and distinguished from others by him, as the church of God is; and which is also purchased by Christ, and gathered out of the world by his spirit and grace; and therefore he will feed them, or take care that they shall be fed, Acts xx. 28: *and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord;* in the good fold provided for them; where they have both rest and safety, and also plenty of suitable food; see the note on ver. 14. The Targum is, "I will govern my "people, and will cause them to dwell safely, saith "the Lord God;" The Septuagint and Arabic versions add, *and they shall know that I am the Lord.*

Ver. 16. *And I will seek that which was lost*, &c.] As all men are in Adam, and through his fall, and by their own actual transgressions; and so the elect of God among the rest; who are lost not with respect to God's knowledge of them, love to them, and care for them; but with respect to their knowledge of him, affection for him, and regard to his will, service, and glory; they are lost to themselves, they know not where they are, what is their state and condition, and how to get out of it; they can't help themselves, nor can any other creature help them; and they see themselves to be in this lost and undone condition, when they are enlightened

by the spirit of God: but they are not irretrievably lost, for they are preserved in Christ Jesus; and he has been sent to seek and to save them; which he has done by redeeming them from sin, Satan, and the law; and, in effectual vocation, he goes after them, he sends his Gospel to them, and his spirit unto them, and returns them to himself, the Shepherd and Bishop of souls; and whereas after this they go astray like lost sheep, he seeks and looks them up, and restores their souls, Psal. cxix. 176. and xxiii. 3. see Luke xix. 10. and xv. 3, 4: *and bring again that which was driven away:* through the power and prevalence of unbelief, from holding fast to the head Christ, departing at least partially from the living God; from dealing by faith with his precious person, blood, and righteousness; and from the precious promises, as not belonging to them, and refusing to be comforted by them; but the Lord brings back such again, and causes them to believe: Thomas is a notorious instance of this, John xx. 24—28. such also who are driven away through the force of Satan's temptations from the throne of grace; from the word and ordinances; and from private conversation with the saints, being hypocrites, as he suggests unto them; these the Lord brings back, by rebuking the tempter, and delivering out of his temptations: likewise such as are driven out of the right way of truth, and carried away with the error of the wicked, through the influence of bad pastors or false teachers, Jer. xxiii. 1, 2, and l. 6. these will he restore again; for it is impossible the elect of God should be finally deceived: moreover, such as are driven away by the force of persecution, and scattered abroad, in God's due time have rest, and return to their folds again; see Jer. l. 17. Acts viii. 1, 2. and ix. 31: *and will bind up that which was broken;* such who have broken hearts, broken with a sense of sin; made truly contrite by the spirit and grace of God, through the word; which is a hammer to them, that breaks the rocky heart in pieces; to these the Lord has respect; their broken hearts are acceptable to him; he dwells with them, to revive them; he speaks and restores comforts to them; pours in oil and wine into their wounds, like the good Samaritan, and binds them up; see Psal. cxlvii. 3. and li. 17. Isa. lxi. 1. and such who have broken bones, who have fallen into sin to the breaking of their bones, to the destroying of their peace, joy, and comfort, as David, Peter, and others have done; he sets their broken bones, and restores the joys of his salvation; and causes the bones which were broken to rejoice at the discoveries of his pardoning grace and mercy, Psal. li. 8, 12: *and will strengthen that which was sick:* sick through sin, as all men are; sick of sin, as sensible sinners be; sickly and weak, and ready to die, as fallen professors, backsliders, are; sick of love, through want of the discoveries of it; long after them; can't be easy without them, as Christ's spouse sometimes is; and sick for want of food, faint and languid for want of spiritual refreshment; as the persons were Christ had compassion on, being as sheep without a shepherd, Matt. ix. 36. see Matt. ix. 12. 1 Cor. xi. 30. Cant. ii. 5. and v. 8. each of these the Lord strengthens with the discoveries and applications of pardoning grace; with the flagons of his love, and apples of his promises; with the food of the Gospel, which strengthens men's hearts; and with grace out of his fulness, whereby they are strengthened against sin, snares, and temptations, and to exercise grace, and do the will of God: *but I will destroy the fat and the strong;* that are full of themselves, lifted up with pride, conceited with their riches or righteousness, and despise others, whom they thrust with side and shoulder, and push with their horns, ver. 21. So the Targum interprets it of wicked men, "and I will "consume the ungodly and sinners;" but the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it, *I will keep the fat and the strong;* in the plight and condition in which they are, and make them still stronger, and more fat and flourishing; so Jerom interprets it of saints and godly persons; and this agrees with the preceding clauses; only the original Hebrew text is against it, which does not admit of a various reading; and this rendering seems to arise in the Septuagint, the others follow, from the mistake of a similar letter: *I will feed them with judgment;* meaning either the whole flock, consisting of fat and lean cattle, making a distinction between them, ver. 17, 20. feeding them with discretion, and judging them according to their deserts; or else the fat and the strong ones, by inflicting righteous vengeance on them, feeding them with wormwood and gall; or his own people and sheep only. So the Targum, *I will govern my people with judgment:* in righteousness, goodness, truth, and faithfulness.

Ver. 17. *And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Having done with the shepherds, and the complaint against them, the Lord proceeds to take notice of the flock, or the people themselves, and the evils that were among them; for in the Lord's own flock, in the nation and church of Israel, as now in the visible congregated churches of Christ, there were two sorts of persons, some good, others bad; some that behaved well, and others ill; some were sheep, and others goats: *behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he-goats:* between the smaller and weaker cattle, the sheep and the lambs; and the larger and stronger cattle, the rams and he-goats; by which latter may be meant persons of superior power and authority, of greater wealth and riches, and of more wisdom and knowledge, at least in their own conceits; and who were oppressive and injurious to the poor and common people, and less knowing, at least as they thought; who may be intended by the former: now, the Lord, as he observed a difference between them, he would make this manifest, and take the part of the one against the other; even the part of the weaker against the stronger. The Targum is, "behold, I judge between man and man, sinners and "the ungodly."

Ver. 18. *Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, &c.*] This is directed to the rams and he-goats, to the people of power and wealth, or who had the key of knowledge and instruction; who, by their conduct, shewed as if it was not enough for them to eat and drink the best of things themselves, to enjoy their wealth and riches, and keep their posts of honour and profit, and the revenues of them, in church and state: *but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your*

feet? but they must oppress the poor, by taking away from them that little they have; or by making their lives uncomfortable to them, by their severities and exactions; so that that small pittance they had, they cannot enjoy with any pleasure. The allusion is to beasts in pasture, which tread down and bedung what they do not eat, which makes what is left unfit for others; and to cattle, at ponds of water, which having drank, foul the rest with their feet; as camels particularly are said to do; so that others can't drink after them, at least not so agreeably: this may be applied to the Scribes and Pharisees, and such as they were, who devoured widows' houses, and made void the word and commandments of God, by their traditions; teaching for doctrines the commandments of men; and so pollutted the pure waters of the sanctuary; defiled the Scriptures of truth, and delivered out such doctrines as were not food and drink to the souls of men, and yet were obliged to receive them; and such are heretical persons, who sometimes arise out of the churches, are a part of the flock, that corrupt the word of God, pervert the Scriptures, and handle them deceitfully; and may be said to tread down and trample upon the wholesome truths of the Gospel, and to bemud the clear doctrines of grace; so that the children of God cannot, as they desire, have the pure, unmixed, sincere milk of the word.

Ver. 19. *And as for my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet,* &c.] They are forced to do it, not being able to come at any thing else; being as sheep without a shepherd, or worse: *and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet;* which, as it can't be agreeable and relishing, so neither wholesome; as the leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees; the traditions of the elders; the false doctrines of false teachers, whose words eat as do a canker. The Targum of the whole verse is, "and my people eat the "residue of the food of your ministers, and drink the "residue of the drink of your ministers."

Ver. 20. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God unto them,* &c.] To the rams and he-goats of the flock, that use the pastures and defile the waters after this manner, and make them unfit for the lesser cattle; or that use the poor people of God after this sort: *behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle.* The Targum is, "between the rich "man and the poor man;" this is repeated, and in very strong terms, for the confirmation of it: this the Lord promised to do, and he has done it by his son, to whom he committed all judgment; and who, in the days of his flesh, made a difference between those who were full of themselves, self-righteous persons; who were self-sufficient, and needed not repentance, nor any other righteousness but their own; who trusted in themselves, and despised others; and may be meant by the *fat cattle*: and between those who were low and mean in their own eyes, humble and meek, weary and heavy laden, hungering and thirsting after the righteousness of another: now for judgment did Christ come, that they which see not might see, and those who saw might be made blind; he called the one, and not the other, to repentance; made known the things of the Gospel to babes, and hid them from the wise and prudent; rejected the one, and had compassion on the other; see John v. 22. and ix. 39. Matt. ix. 13, 36. and xi. 25, 26. and when he comes a second time, he'll judge between these, and separate them; and set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on the left, Matt. xxv. 31, 32, 33.

Ver. 21. *Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder,* &c.] As the stronger cattle do the lesser: *and pushed all the diseased with your horns;* as horned cattle do those they dislike, and bear an antipathy to; which to do to the diseased is great cruelty: sheep, it is said, will take some care of those that are diseased among them, and bring them to places of sunshine and shelter; but here the horned part of the flock, and in health, are represented as acting a barbarous part to the weak and diseased: this may denote such as are in power and authority, using it to the hurt and detriment of those that are under them, and whom they should relieve and protect: it may be applied to the anathemas and excommunications of the Jews, who pronounced those an accursed and ignorant people that believed in Christ, and expelled such out of their synagogues that professed his name; and to their persecutions of the apostles and first Christians: *till he have scattered them abroad;* or *without*[t]; that is, without the land. The Targum is, "through the pro-"vinces;" obliged them to quit their country, and go unto other parts, as the first preachers of the word did; who, upon the persecution at the death of Stephen, were scattered abroad everywhere, Acts viii. 1, 4.

Ver. 22. *Therefore will I save my flock,* &c.] Or redeem my people, as the Targum; that is, by his son, after described, as his shepherd and servant: *and they shall no more be a prey;* to Satan the roaring lion; nor to such horned cattle, their persecutors; nor to false teachers, who lie in wait to deceive; nor shall they ever perish, being the sheep of Christ's hand, and under the care of him the shepherd, spoken of in the next verse: *and I will judge between cattle and cattle;* between man and man, as the Targum; that is, between good and bad men, the persecutors and the persecuted; see the notes on ver. 17, 20.

Ver. 23. *And I will set up one shepherd over them,* &c.] Or governor, as the Targum; an excellent one, one of a thousand, the only one; in comparison of whom others are not to be named; for though there are under-shepherds, as magistrates and ministers of the word, he is the principal one; that is, Christ, called the good Shepherd, the great Shepherd, and the chief Shepherd, and the only one; and who became so by the constitution and appointment of Jehovah the Father; who chose him, called him, and intrusted him with all his sheep; who sent him to seek and save his lost sheep; for whom he died, rose again, and is accountable: he is more particularly called the *one Shepherd,* with respect to Jew and Gentile; see John x. 16: *and he shall feed them;* the flock, even the poor of the flock, thrust at and pushed by others: he shall feed them by his ministers, as under-shepherds in his churches, where his word is preached, and his ordinances are administered; he shall feed them with him-

[t] אל החוצה foras, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, Cocceius, Starckius.

self, the bread of life; with his flesh and blood, which are meat and drink indeed; with covenant grace, blessings, and promises; with the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; he feeds his babes with milk, his strong men with meat, and all with the wholesome words of faith and good doctrine, whereby he nourishes them up to everlasting life; and this he *shall* do, not by force, but willingly: it denotes the certainty of it; it may be depended on: even *my servant David:* not David himself literally; who, though a shepherd, and the servant of the Lord, yet had been dead many years before this prophecy was delivered; nor Zorobabel, who was of his seed; for though a servant of the Lord, and a prince or governor of Judah, yet not a king, and much less a king or prince for ever; as this person is said to be, ch. xxxvii. 24, 25. but the Messiah, as is expressly owned by Kimchi; who says, this is the Messiah that shall arise from his seed in the time of salvation: he is called David because his name agrees with him, which signifies *beloved,* he being beloved of God and man; and because the son of David, of his seed according to the flesh; and because David was an eminent type of him, in his person, offices, afflictions, wars, victories, and exaltation; and because he was David's Lord and representative, and in whom his everlasting kingdom is established. The same is called the servant of the Lord, as he often is in Scripture, being so in his office-capacity as Mediator; and because he took upon him the form of a servant; did the work of one; and was of the Lord's choosing, calling, supporting, and glorifying: *he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd;* which is repeated for the greater confirmation of it.

Ver. 24. *And I the Lord will be their God,* &c.] The God of them Christ is the shepherd of, and whom he feeds; the sheep and poor of the flock: this is the great blessing of the everlasting covenant, and than which there cannot be a greater, to have the Lord, the everlasting and unchangeable Jehovah, to be a covenant God and Father: *and my servant David a Prince among them:* who should reside among them, dwell with them, by granting them his spiritual presence, and so rule over them, protect and defend them; even he who is the Prince of the kings of the earth, and is exalted, a Prince and a Saviour of his people Israel; he is such a Shepherd as that he is a Prince; and such a Prince as that he is a Saviour; and under whose princely government is the greatest safety: *I the Lord have spoken* it; and therefore it shall assuredly be. The Targum is, "I the Lord have decreed it in my word;" he had determined it within himself, and promised it in covenant, and spoke of it in prophecy, and it should be fulfilled.

Ver. 25. *And I will make with them a covenant of peace,* &c.] Such the covenant of grace is, made with Christ from everlasting; in which Jehovah proposed terms of peace, and which Christ undertook to answer, and became the peacemaker; and from this article concerning the peace and reconciliation of men the covenant is so called; see Isa. liv. 10. this the Lord promises to make known to his people his flock, to shew them their interest in it, and to make it good unto them; for otherwise it was made with Christ, and with them in Christ from all eternity. The Septuagint and Arabic versions read, "I will make with David a co- "venant of peace:" *and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land;* which was literally fulfilled when the Jews returned from Babylon; during their captivity, the land being uninhabited, evil beasts increased in it, and possessed it; but upon their return these ceased, being either destroyed, or driven away: but figuratively these design wicked men, who, for the malignity of their nature, manners, and conversation, are called evil beasts, as the Cretians were, Tit. i. 12. particularly false teachers may be designed; those grievous wolves that spare not, but wrong the flock; but now shall be no more, being either forced to quit their place, or truly converted; so that the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid; which will be the peaceable and comfortable state of the church in the latter day; when there will be none to hurt and destroy in the Lord's holy mountain, Isa. xi. 6—9: *and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods;* not only in their houses, but in the fields, and even in the wilderness, and in the woods, where wild beasts used to resort; but now being clear of all, and under the protection of such a Shepherd and Prince as David the servant of the Lord, they shall have no dread upon their mind, no fear of any danger; but dwell in the utmost security, lie down and sleep in peace and safety, the Lord sustaining them; and whom they shall serve without fear of any enemy all their days, in righteousness and holiness, being delivered out of the hands of them all.

Ver. 26. *And I will make them, and the places round about my hill, a blessing,* &c.] Alluding either to the city of Jerusalem, and the places adjacent; or to the temple, and the houses about it. So the Targum, "I "will cause them to dwell round about the house of "my sanctuary;" and so Kimchi interprets it of the temple. Some Christian interpreters, by the *hill* or *mountain,* understand Christ; and not amiss; who may be compared to one for height; he being higher than the kings of the earth, or than the heavens and angels there, as man and Mediator; as well as is God over all, blessed for ever; and for fruitfulness, from whom the saints have all theirs, either in grace or good works; and for shade, he being the shadow of a great rock in a weary land; which yields delight and refreshment, and is a protection from the heat of a fiery law, flaming justice, the wrath of God and man, and the fiery darts of Satan; and for shelter and security, there being salvation in him, when none in other hills and mountains; and for duration and immovableness, being the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever: and now the persons about him are such who are made nigh by his blood; brought to him by his powerful and efficacious grace; are worshippers about the throne where he sits; such as cleave to him, and follow him wherever he goes, and shall be with him to all eternity; these he makes a blessing, or most blessed. So the Targum renders it, "and they shall be blessed;" they are blessed in Christ their head; they are blessed through him as their Redeemer and Saviour, who was made a curse for them; they are blessed through being in him, and by the imputation of blessings to them from him, and through the application of them by his spirit; their persons are blessed, and so are the places

or habitations where they dwell: or rather this may be understood of the church of God, often compared to a hill for its height and eminence; for its fertility and fruitfulness; for its stability and firmness; and in allusion to the hill of Zion for its holiness, and being the place of the divine residence; see Psal. xv. 1. and xxiv. 4. and lxviii. 15, 16. now, the persons about this hill are those who are come to Mount Zion the church of God; being brought there by the Lord himself, and who take up their abode there; who lie about this hill, as flocks of sheep, in their several folds or congregated churches; see Jer. xxiii. 3. and xxxiii. 13. and these the Lord makes a blessing to one another, by their spiritual conversation, prayers, and services of love; and to the world, to kingdoms and states, to cities, towns, and neighbourhoods, and to particular families, where they are placed; and even to the world in general: for they are the light, stay, and stability of it; and without which it would be in darkness, corrupt and putrefy, and not continue long: *and I will cause the shower to come down in his season:* which, in the spiritual sense, may design the Gospel; which, like a shower of rain, comes from God; descends from heaven; is a gift of God; which falls according to divine direction; refreshes, revives, and makes fruitful; brings a plenty of divine blessings with it; and comes in season, at its proper time; and is a word in season to weary souls: *there shall be showers of blessings:* which the Gospel brings with it: spiritual blessings, blessings of grace: such as peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life: these, like showers, come from God; are free-grace gifts of his, of which there is a large abundance; and which descend on Mount Zion the church of God; which is another Gerizzim, on which the blessings are pronounced, Psal. cxxxiii. 3. see Isa. lv. 10, 11. Zech. x. 1.

Ver. 27. *And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, &c.*] Such as are trees of righteousness, rooted in Christ, and planted in his church, and watered with his grace; these bring forth, bear, and are filled with the fruits of righteousness by him: *and the earth shall yield her increase;* the fallow ground of men's hearts being broke up, and the seed of the word and of divine grace being sown in them, they bring forth fruit, some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold; see Psal. lxvii. 1, 2, 6, 7. this, and what goes before, may be literally understood of the land of Canaan, and the fruitfulness of it, when the Jews shall again possess it; to which the next clause seems to have some respect: *and they shall be safe in their land;* no enemy to disturb them, to invade or do any acts of violence to them: this will be when the Jews are converted, and become Christians; and antichrist destroyed; they will have none but Christian powers about them, who will be their protection. This is true, in a spiritual sense, of all the saints, who are under the care and government of Christ their Shepherd and Prince: *and shall know that I am the Lord;* Jehovah their righteousness, Saviour and Redeemer: *when I have broken the bands of their yoke;* of sin, Satan, and the law, and of all enemies: *and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them;* or made them their servants, to whom they were subject; literally, the nations of the world, among whom they are dispersed; and figuratively, sin, whose servants men in a state of nature are; and Satan, by whom they are led captive; and the law, under which they are held as transgressors; and all other spiritual enemies; see Luke i. 74, 75.

Ver. 28. *And they shall no more be a prey to the Heathen, &c.*] To the Papists, who shall now be perished out of the land, Psal. x. 16: *neither shall the beasts of the land devour them;* neither that beast which rose up out of the sea, nor that which came up out of the earth, Rev. xiii. 1, 11. the pope, both in his secular and ecclesiastic power, being destroyed. So the Targum, "and the kingdoms of the earth shall not consume them:" the antichristian kingdoms: *but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make* them *afraid;* see the notes on ver. 25, 27.

Ver. 29. *And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, &c.*] Or, *for a name;* or, *of a name*[f]; a famous one: this is to be understood, not of the Jewish nation itself, as the Targum, "and I will raise up for them a plantation for standing;" or which shall continue; but of the Messiah, and not of his incarnation, when he sprung up as a tender plant out of the dry ground, and as a branch out of the roots of Jesse, being on that account often spoken of as a branch; see Isa. xi. 1. and liii. 2. Zech. iii. 8. and vi. 12. but of him in a more raised and exalted state, as grown up to a stately tree, a goodly cedar, as in ch. xvii. 23. when his interest and kingdom should be great and glorious in the world, as it will be at the time of the conversion of the Jews; and it is spoken of his manifestation to them as a plant of renown, or as a renowned plant, the true vine and tree of life; or as a famous renowned person, one of name; whose glorious names and titles are Shiloh, the Messiah, Immanuel, Jehovah our righteousness, Jesus the Saviour, the Word of God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords: *and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land;* the Targum is, "they shall no more move from place to place through famine in the land;" and which is to be understood, not of hunger through a famine of bread and water, but of hearing the word of the Lord; which they shall now have, and hear, and believe, and so have food for their souls, and hunger no more; as those do not who believe in Christ, John vi. 35. for this plant raised up for them, and pointed out to them, the tree of life, Christ Jesus, bears all manner of precious fruit, sweet to the taste, and nourishing to the souls of his people; under his shadow they sit, and his fruit is sweet to them; and with him is bread enough, and to spare; so that there is no want, nor fear of consumption with hunger, where he is: *neither bear the shame of the Heathen any more;* being called by them Jews, in a way of taunt, a proverb, and a curse; and outcasts, whom none seek after; but now they shall no more be termed forsaken, or called desolate, but instead thereof Hephzi-bah and Beulah; see Jer. xxx. 17. Isa. lxii. 4, 12.

Ver. 30. *Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, &c.*] Granting them his gracious and powerful presence, by all the above instances of

[f] מטע לשם plantate in nomen, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius; plantam celebri nomine, Tigurine version; plantam in nomen, Vatablus.

his goodness and favour to them: *and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord God*; and not utterly cast off, as they seemed to be; the divine Shechinah now being returned to them, which had departed from them; the *lo-ammi* that was written on them being now wiped off from them.

Ver. 31. *And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, &c.*] This is observed, to shew that all that had been said in this chapter concerning sheep, and a flock of sheep, was to be understood, not in a literal sense, but in a figurative one, of such as were rational and spiritual persons; a set of men whom the Lord had chosen, and separated from others, as his peculiar flock; and whom he took a special care of, and led them to, and fed them in, green pastures of his own providing; they are the souls of men that Christ is the Shepherd and Bishop of, 1 Pet. ii. 25. The Talmudists * frequently make use of this text, to prove that Israelites are only called men, and not the Gentiles; see Matt. xv. 26: *and I am your God, saith the Lord God*; which is often repeated for the certainty of it, because a blessing of the greatest importance, and which includes all others in it; see ver. 24, 30.

CHAP. XXXV.

THIS chapter is a prophecy of the destruction of Edom, which is threatened, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. the cause of it, their hatred and slaughter of the Israelites, ver. 5—9. their claim of the lands of Israel and Judah for possession, ver. 10, 11. their blasphemies against the people of God, and the Lord himself, ver. 12, 13. the aggravation of their ruin, which was irretrievable; that when it was well with others, it should go ill with them, by way of just retaliation, ver. 14, 15.

Ver. 1. *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, &c.*] After the prophecy concerning the shepherds of Israel, and the goats of the flock, and of their oppressions of the sheep and lambs, the weak of the flock; and concerning the Messiah, and the blessings of grace promised the church in the latter day; came another concerning the destruction of her enemies, under the name of Seir or Edom: *saying*: as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, set thy face against Mount Seir, &c.*] Which had its name from Seir the Horite, who first possessed it; and was succeeded in it by Esau and his posterity, the Edomites; see Gen. xxxvi. 8, 9, 20. and xiv. 6. Deut. ii. 12. so that the country of Edom or Idumea is here intended, and the inhabitants of it: who are put for the enemies of the church and people of God in general, as these were the enemies of Israel and Judah; and particularly for Rome, which, as it was spiritually called Egypt and Sodom, so it may be called Edom, as it often is by the Jews: now the prophet is bid to turn his face towards this mountain or country, and look sternly at it, and severely threaten it. The Targum is, " take up a prophecy against it;" which is expressed in the next clause: *and prophesy against it*; foretel things contrary to it, which relate to its destruction, as follows:

Ver. 3. *And say unto it, thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] The prophet was not upon the spot, and could not direct his speech immediately to the Edomites; but he might send this prophecy to their ambassadors at Babylon; or in a letter to them in their own land, in the name of the Lord: *behold, O Mount Seir, I am against thee*: not the face of the prophet only, but the face of God himself was against them; and a terrible thing it is for any to have God to be against them, whether a nation, or a particular person. The Targum is, " behold, I send my fury upon thee:" *and I will stretch out mine hand against thee*: which was able to reach them wherever they were; and which, being stretched out, cannot be turned back; and, where it lights, falls heavy indeed; namely, his mighty hand of power and wrath. The Targum is, " and I will lift up the stroke " of my power upon thee;" that is, lift up his hand, and strike powerfully; the consequence of which must be as follows: *and I will make thee most desolate*: their land, cities, towns, and villages, all should be utterly laid waste; see Rev. xvii. 16. and xviii. 8. so it follows:

Ver. 4. *I will lay thy cities waste, &c.*] Such as Dedan, Teman, Bozrah, and other cities of Idumea mentioned in Scripture; and figuratively may design all within the jurisdiction of Rome, the several cities of the antichristian states, called *the cities of the nations*; which will fall at the pouring out of the vials, Rev. xvi. 19: *and thou shalt be desolate*; thoroughly and entirely, and remain so: *and thou shalt know that I am the Lord*; that has done all this; that the hand of God was in it; and that this is a punishment inflicted by him, for their sins after mentioned; but not that they should know the Lord spiritually and savingly, and so as to yield obedience to him, and own and acknowledge him to be their God; though this may be the case of a remnant among them; see Rev. xi. 13. and xviii. 4.

Ver. 5. *Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, &c.*] There was an old grudge and enmity subsisting in the posterity of Esau against the posterity of Jacob, because the latter supplanted the former, and got the birth-right and blessing from him; and which was discovered in all ages, and at all opportunities, and on all occasions which offered; and such has been the hatred of the church of Rome against the true professors and followers of Christ, as their bloody persecution of them in all ages have shewn: *and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity*; when Jerusalem was taken by the Chaldeans, the Edomites not only rejoiced at it, and took part of the spoil, but stood in the cross-ways, and slew those that made their escape; or drove them back upon the sword of the enemy; or delivered them into their hands; which was barbarous and inhuman usage of their neighbours and brethren; see Obad. ver. 10, 11. The Targum is, " and thou " didst deliver the children of Israel into the hands of

* T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 61. 1. Bava Metzia, fol. 114. 2. & Ceritot, fol. 6. 2.

"those that slay with the sword, in the time of their "destruction:" *in the time that* their *iniquity* had *an end*: when either the measure of that was full; or when they received for it full correction and chastisement; at the consummation of that.

Ver. 6. *Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord God,* &c.] The form of an oath; the Lord swears by himself, because he could swear by no greater; and which he never does but in matters of importance, and for the confirmation of them, as the following is: *I will prepare thee unto blood*; prepare them for war, which will issue in slaughter and blood, such as the battle at Armageddon, Rev. xvi. 14, 16. and xix. 18, 19: or, *I will make thee blood*[*]; nothing else but blood; a mere *Aceldama*, a field of blood; turn thee into blood, as the sea, rivers, and fountains will be, at the pouring out the second and third vials, Rev. xvi. 3, 4: *and blood shall pursue thee*: the guilt and vengeance of blood; or the avengers of the blood of the saints; the angels that shall pour out the vials of wrath on Rome; the ten kings that shall hate the whore. So the Targum, "they that slay with the sword shall pursue thee;" or the shedders of blood, as Ben Melech: *sith thou hast not hated blood*: Jarchi reads it, *hast hated blood*: which he interprets of the blood of the sacrifices; as others, mentioned by him, of the blood of circumcision; and others, of his brother, who was his flesh and blood, and hated by him; but it is a figurative phrase, by which less is expressed than is intended. The sense is, thou hast loved blood; thou hast delighted in shedding blood; hast thirsted after it, and drank plentifully of it, and even been drunk with it, as the whore of Rome is said to be, Rev. xvii. 6: *even blood shall pursue thee*: this is repeated for the confirmation of it; and this was measure for measure; a just retaliation; having shed blood, it was but right that blood should pursue, and be given, Rev. xvi. 5, 6.

Ver. 7. *Thus will I make Mount Seir most desolate,* &c.] By shedding the blood of the inhabitants of it; and as Rome will be, when it will be utterly burnt with fire, as that city will, and the flesh of the whore also, and made desolate; and when all the vials shall be poured out on the antichristian states under her jurisdiction, Rev. xvi. 1. and xvii. 16. and xviii. 8: *and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth*: every traveller that passeth to and fro: it shall no more be frequented by merchants; nor will there be any merchandise any more in it, Rev. xviii. 11.

Ver. 8. *And I will fill his mountains with his slain men,* &c.] Not only Mount Seir, but all the rest of the mountains in Idumea; where they shall flee for refuge, and the enemy shall pursue them, and slay them; and where their carcasses will fall in such numbers, as to cover the mountains with them; compare with this Rev. xix. 18, 19: *in thy hills, and in thy valleys, and in all thy rivers, shall they fall that are slain with the sword*: expressive of the greatness and universality of the slaughter, that it should be a general one everywhere; hence rivers and fountains are said to become blood, through the number of the slain, Rev. xvi. 3, 4.

Ver. 9. *I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return,* &c.] To their former dignity and glory; should not be built and inhabited again, but lie waste for ever: this agrees with what is prophesied of Edom, Mal. i. 4. and will be true of Rome or Babylon when destroyed; it will never rise more, but be like a millstone in the midst of the sea, Rev. xviii. 21: *and ye shall know that I am the Lord*; see the note on ver. 4.

Ver. 10. *Because thou hast said, these two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess it,* &c.] Meaning either Idumea he was now possessed of, and Israel he hoped to be, upon the people of it being carried captive; or rather the two nations of Israel and Judah, and their countries; which he pleased himself with would fall into his hands, as next heir to them; the posterity of his brother being dispossessed of them. This may denote the claim that Rome makes upon the several Protestant nations and countries; and which she will think all her own, and that she is in the possession of them, upon the slaying of the witnesses; and when she will say, *I sit a queen, and am no widow*, Rev. xviii. 7. *Whereas the Lord was there*; and heard their words, as Kimchi; and knew their thoughts, as Jarchi; so the Targum, "and before the Lord the "thoughts of the heart were manifest." The land of Judea was Immanuel's land; and as the Lord had been in it, and granted his gracious presence in the tabernacle and temple, so he still continued his powerful presence in it, to protect and keep it for his people; who should return to it after their captivity, and inhabit it until the Messiah came, who was to be born in it. Or it may be rendered, *though the Lord was* or *dwelt there*[s]; denoting the great impiety and daring wickedness of the Edomites, to think and talk of possessing a country that was the Lord's, and where he was: and this holds good of the true reformed churches of Christ; the Lord is there, and therefore, though they may be brought very low, and antichrist may triumph over them, and imagine he has got them under his power again, where they shall continue; yet on a sudden his destruction will come, and their deliverance. Or, *where the Lord was*[t]; but he has now departed, and will never return more, the temple being destroyed; so they said, encouraging themselves.

Ver. 11. *Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord,* &c.] An oath, as before in ver. 6: *I will do according to thine anger, and according to thine envy which thou hast used out of thy hatred against them*; as thou hast been angry with them, and hated them, and done mischief to them, so will I be angry with thee, and hate thee, and inflict punishment on thee; I'll retaliate all the anger, envy, and hatred shewed unto my people, and punish thee according to thy just demerits. So the Romish antichrist shall be dealt with; he who has led into captivity shall go into it, and he that has killed with the sword shall be killed by it. Babylon shall be rewarded double, as she has rewarded others, Rev. xiii. 10. and xviii. 6. *And I will make myself known among them, when I have judged thee*: the Targum is, "and I will

[*] לדם אעשך in sanguinem redigam te, Munster; in sanguinem faciam te, Grotius; sanguinem faciam te, Cocceius, Starckius.

[s] ויהוה שם היה licet Dominus ibi habitaverit, Piscator. So Syr.

[t] Ubi Jehovah fuit, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; et Jehovah ibi fuit, Starckius.

"reveal myself to do good unto them, when I shall "have taken vengeance on thee:" after the destruction of antichrist, the knowledge of God, and of Christ, will be spread among Jews and Gentiles, even all the world over, so universally, so clearly and distinctly, as never was before, Dan. xii. 4. Isa. xi. 9.

Ver. 12. *And thou shalt know that I am the Lord*, &c.] By the judgments executed upon Edom, and so upon antichrist; for God is known by the judgments he executes, both by good and bad men, Psal. ix. 16: and that *I have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken against the mountains of Israel*; the people of Israel and Judah literally, and the churches and people of God figuratively: so antichrist is said to open his mouth in blasphemies, and to blaspheme the tabernacle of God, and them that dwell in heaven; that is, the church of God, and the saints of the most High; which are heard and observed by the Lord, and resented by him, and for which he will punish, Rev. xiii. 6: *saying, they are laid desolate, they are given up to consume*; or, *for food*[z]; to possess and live upon; the inhabitants of them being carried captive or slain, so that there were none to enjoy the fruits of them; and therefore the Edomites concluded that the Israelites were forsaken of God, and that he would no more regard them, and that their land was theirs, which gave them great joy; see Rev. xi. 10.

Ver. 13. *Thus with your mouth ye have boasted against me*, &c.] Or, *magnified against me*[a]; spoke great swelling words of vanity, or had a mouth opened to speak great things and blasphemy against God, as antichrist is said to do, Rev. xiii. 5, 6. what is spoken against the Lord's people is taken by him as spoken against himself: *and have multiplied your words against me*; not in prayer, by deprecations or supplications, as the word[b] used sometimes signifies; but in reproaches and calumnies, vilifying expressions and hard speeches, against his people, in great numbers; which is all one as if they were directed against him: *I have heard them*; these the Lord takes notice of, and will call to an account for, either here or hereafter; see Jude, ver. 15.

Ver. 14. *Thus saith the Lord God, when the whole earth rejoiceth*, &c.] When it shall go well with the world in general, and the inhabitants of it; when they shall enjoy great peace and prosperity. Jarchi has a very good note upon this clause, "when I shall take "my kingdom; for then the earth will rejoice, as it is "said, *the Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice*:" so when Christ takes to himself his great power, and reigns, his church and people will rejoice, Rev. xi. 16, 17. as well as at the destruction of antichrist, as follows: *I will make thee desolate*; for so some render it, *the whole earth rejoiceth when I make thee desolate*; or, *so shall all the earth rejoice in the desolation which I shall make for thee*[c]; see Rev. xviii. 20. and xix. 1, 2. and which agrees with what follows:

Ver. 15. *As thou didst rejoice at the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate*, &c.] So Edom rejoiced at the destruction of Jerusalem, Obad. ver. 12. and so the followers of the man of sin will rejoice at the slaying of the witnesses, Rev. xi. 10. which is resented by the Lord, and therefore adds, *so will I do unto thee*: make thee desolate, as is explained in the next clause: *thou shalt be desolate, O Mount Seir, and all Idumea*, even *all of it*; not that mount only, but all the land of Edom, called Idumea; the destruction shall be general, as it was, and irretrievable; and so not Rome only, but all the antichristian states, will be destroyed, when God comes forth in his wrath against them: *and they shall know that I am the Lord*; the Lord God omniscient and omnipotent; who, having foretold all this, shall accomplish it.

CHAP. XXXVI.

THIS chapter is a prophecy concerning the desolations of the land of Israel, and the causes of them; of the return of the people to it, and the fruitfulness of it; and of spiritual blessings bestowed upon them in the latter day. And first, for the comfort of the people of Israel, it is observed that their enemies that insulted them will suffer the vengeance of God's wrath, particularly the Edomites, ver. 1—7. that the land of Israel should again become fruitful, its cities rebuilt, men and beasts be multiplied upon it, and be no more liable to destruction, nor bear any more the reproach of the Heathen, ver. 8—15. the causes of its desolation and destruction, the sins of its inhabitants, especially bloodshed, idolatry, and profanation of the name of God, ver. 16—20. nevertheless the Lord promises to have mercy on them, and return them to their own land, not for their sakes, but for his own name's sake, ver. 21—24. then follow promises of spiritual blessings to them: as purification from all sin by the blood of Christ; regeneration by his spirit and grace; and evangelical obedience as the fruit of that, ver. 25, 26, 27. and others of a mixed kind, respecting partly temporal and partly spiritual blessings, ver. 28—36. for all which it is expected of the Lord that he should be prayed unto for them; particularly their inhabitation in their own land, and the multiplication of them in it, with which the chapter concludes, ver. 37, 38.

Ver. 1. *Also, thou son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel*, &c.] The land of Judah, which was very mountainous, at least one part of it, called the hill-country, Luke i. 39, 65. and now the country being cleared of men through the captivity, and other desolating judgments, there were none but bare mountains to speak unto: or, *prophesy concerning the mountains of Israel*[d]; the inhabitants of them, or those that should be restored

[z] לאכלה εἰς κατάβρωμα, Sept.; in cibum, Vatablus, Cocceius, Starckius. So Syr.
[a] ותגדילו עלי magnificastis contra me, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, Cocceius, Starckius.
[b] העתרתם ab עתר orare suppliciter.
[c] Sic lætabitur omnis terra in desolatione quam faciam tibi, Vatablus.
[d] אל הרי ישראל de montibus Israelis, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.

to them, concerning their future happiness and comfort: some render it, *against the mountains of Israel**; but the after-prophecies of them are in their favour, and not against them: *and say, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord*; concerning the destruction of their enemies, and concerning the temporal blessings that should be bestowed on them.

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] By the mouth of the prophet, who was bid to prophesy: *because the enemy hath said against you, aha*: rejoicing at the calamity of God's people, particularly the Edomites or Idumeans, as in the preceding chapter, and who are chiefly meant; and also the Ammonites and Tyrians, ch. xxv. 3. and xxvi. 2: *even the ancient high places are ours in possession*; or, *the high places of the world shall be unto us for a possession*†; the land of Israel, according to Kimchi and others, was the highest part of the world, Jerusalem the highest part of that land, and the temple was built on the highest part of the city; and all these the Edomites claimed as their own, the land, city, and temple, and thought themselves sure of the same, as if they had them in actual possession; even the hilly part of the country, which had been so from the creation, and where stood many of the fortified and frontier towns and cities; which as strong as they were, or had been, they fancied would easily fall into their hands, now such desolations were made in the land.

Ver. 3. *Therefore prophesy and say, thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Who heard all the enemy said, and knew all their designs and purposes, their schemes and devices: *because they have made you desolate*: ravaged their country, destroyed their cities, burnt their temple, and carried them captive, and left the land without men or cattle: *and swallowed you up on every side*; all their neighbours, being their enemies, were like ravenous beasts of prey, gaping upon them with their mouths; and, observing the low condition into which they were brought by the king of Babylon, helped forward the destruction; and every one shared in the spoil and plunder nearest to them they could conveniently come at: *that ye might be a possession to the residue of the Heathen*: either to those that were left in the land by the king of Babylon, or to the rest of the Heathen nations round about them: *ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and are an infamy of the people*: reproached, defamed, and made a proverb and by-word, by every foul-mouthed prating fellow.

Ver. 4. *Therefore, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord*, &c.] As in ver. 1. here repeated to raise and quicken their attention to what was about to be said to them: *thus saith the Lord God to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes, and to the cities* that are *forsaken*: before only the mountains are spoken to, though the whole land was included; here the several particulars are given, which describe the whole, and which suffered in the calamity, and the inhabitants that dwelt in them, or near them; who only can be supposed to hear the word of the Lord, though places are only mentioned, because of the great depopulation of them: *which became a prey and derision to the residue of the Heathen that are round about*: to the Tyrians, Philistines, Edomites, Ammonites, and Moabites; who mocked the Jews, rejoicing at their destruction by the king of Babylon, and seized upon as a prey to themselves what he left: or these are the residue of the Heathens round about Judea; who remained after the judgments threatened were executed on the above nations, foretold in chapters xxv. and xxvi. see ver. 36.

Ver. 5. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Because these Heathens have acted such an unkind and cruel part to Israel: *surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken*; in his fierce wrath and hot displeasure, resenting the ill usage of his people; hot with indignation against their enemies, having a fervent zeal for his own glory, and an affectionate concern for the good of his people. It is in the original text in the form of an oath, *if I have not spoken*, &c.‡; let me be reckoned a liar, or not God; believe me that I have spoken, and in this warm manner; and have not only foretold in prophecy, and threatened the destruction of these nations, but have resolved and determined upon it in my own mind. So the Targum, "if I have "not in the fire of my vengeance decreed in my "word:" *against the residue of the Heathen, and against all Idumea*: or Edom; the Edomites, even all of them, who of all the Heathen were the most inveterate and implacable enemies of the Jews, though related to them, and are therefore particularly mentioned as the objects of the divine vengeance: the reason follows, *which have appointed my land into their possession*; the land where his chosen people dwelt, and which he chose for them, and gave unto them; the land where he himself dwelt, and granted his presence; where his temple was, and he was worshipped. So the Targum, "the land of the house of my majesty." Now this the Lord took ill at their hands, and resented, that they should lay out this land for themselves, and determine upon it as a possession and inheritance of theirs. *With the joy of all their heart, with despiteful minds, to cast it out for a prey*; with the utmost joy they joined Nebuchadnezzar's army when he invaded the land of Judea and besieged Jerusalem, out of pure malice and spite to the people of the Jews, in order to eject them from the possession of their land, that it might become a prey to them; see Psal. cxxxvii. 7. Obad. ver. 12, 13, 14.

Ver. 6. *Prophesy therefore concerning the land of Israel*, &c.] And the inhabitants of it, for their comfort, in this their time of distress: *and say unto the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, thus saith the Lord God, I have spoken in my jealousy and in my fury*; with great zeal for his honour, and the interest of his people; and with indignation at his and their enemies: *because ye have borne the shame of the Heathen*; their calumnies and lies, their reproaches and scoffs, their injuries and abuses; all which were resented by the Lord, and therefore he determines to punish for them.

* Contra montes Israel, Vatablus.

† במות עולם למורשה היתה לנו excelsa seculi hæreditario jure futura sunt nobis, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; celsa seculi hæreditas evenit nobis, Cocceius, Starckius.

‡ אם לא si non, Cocceius, Starckius; sub. mentiar, Junius & Tremellius; non ero Deus, Piscator.

Ver. 7. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] This being the case, the people of God being in distress, and under shame and disgrace, and the enemy insulting them, and triumphing over them: *I have lifted up mine hand*: solemnly swore; lifting up of the hand being a rite used by men when they swore, Gen. xiv. 22: *surely the Heathen that are about you, they shall bear their shame*: the punishment of their shame; that which is justly due to them for reproaching and putting to shame the people of God: or they shall be a laughing-stock to others, and be reproached and derided themselves, and so be paid in their own coin; a just retaliation this for their treatment of the Jews.

Ver. 8. *But ye, O mountains of Israel, &c.*] Literally understood, as appears by what follows; for though they could not hear what was said, the proprietors of them could, now in captivity; and the efficacy of the word should be seen on them, producing the following effects: *ye shall shoot forth your branches*; that is, the trees that grew upon them should; the vines, and the olive-trees, planted on hills and mountains, as was usual, as appears from the mount of Olives, and other places: *and yield your fruit to my people of Israel*: not only put forth branches, but bear fruit; and which should be given to the right owners, the people of Israel, and not to the Heathens, who had claimed the ancient mountains for their possession: *for they are at hand to come*: the Israelites; either by repentance, as Kimchi; or by a return from the Babylonish captivity, which was about forty or fifty years after this prophecy; and which was but a shadow and figure of their restoration in the latter day, yet to come; which might be said to be at hand, or near, with respect to God, with whom two or three thousand years are as nothing. The Targum is, "for the day of my redemption is "near to come."

Ver. 9. *For, behold, I am for you, &c.*] For the mountains, that they might be cultivated and become fruitful, and be of advantage to their proprietors, and appear beautiful and lovely to behold, as well as to be useful: *and I will turn unto you*; the Lord had turned from them, and left them a prey to the enemy, whereby they were become desolate; but now he would turn unto them, and bless them, and make them fruitful, and return the right owners of them to them, who should greatly improve them: *and ye shall be tilled and sown*: manured and cultivated, and sown with wheat and barley, as in former times.

Ver. 10. *And I will multiply men upon you, &c.*] Who should inhabit the cities on the mountains, and increase very much: *all the house of Israel, even all of it*; not the Heathens should be multiplied on them, but the Israelites, all of them, and them only; all the tribes of Israel, the ten tribes as well as the other; and which is repeated for the confirmation of it: by this it appears that the prophecy has a further view than to the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; for all did not return, many remained in the provinces of Babylon; and those that returned were chiefly of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; but few of the rest came with them. Kimchi thinks the words have respect to the ten tribes, which he says are hid to this day; so Ben Melech. *And the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded*; in a literal sense; as well as the church of God, and inheritance of Christ, shall then be in a flourishing condition.

Ver. 11. *And I will multiply upon you man and beast, &c.*] Not only men, but beasts also, of which the mountains had been deprived, being killed by the enemy for present use, or drove off for future subsistence; but now there should be an increase of them, which should feed upon the herbage of the mountains, and the rich pastures on them, to the great advantage of the proprietors: *and they shall increase and bring forth*; or, *multiply and increase*[h]; both men and beasts: *and I will settle you after your old estates*; that is, you mountains shall be inhabited by those that formerly dwelt in you, and you shall be enjoyed by your right owners; by those who had you in possession from the beginning, from the times of Joshua; by whom you were settled on them by lot, according to their several tribes: *and will do better unto you than at your beginnings*; not that the land should be better or more fruitful than in the times of Joshua, who led the people into it, and found it a land flowing with milk and honey, and abounding with all kind of fruit; or that the people should be more flourishing in temporal things than in the times of David and Solomon; for no such fruitfulness and prosperity took place upon the return from the Babylonish captivity: but rather this is to be understood of spiritual blessings and privileges in the times of the Messiah; and particularly when the Jews will be converted in the latter day: *and ye shall know that I am the Lord*: that is, the inhabitants of the mountains of Israel, the converted Jews, shall know and own the Messiah, and that he is Jehovah, the eternal God, and not a mere man.

Ver. 12. *Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, &c.*] And not beasts, as during the captivity; and that without fear of wild beasts, or any enemy; and not as travellers upon them, but as inhabitants of them; who shall walk to and fro upon them, as the owners of them, and doing their proper business there: even *my people Israel*; and them only: some read it, *with my people Israel*[i]; as if other men, Gentiles called by grace, should dwell with the Jews at this time, particularly at their restoration in the latter day; which may be true, and which seems to be the sense of the whole 60th chapter of Isaiah's prophecy: *and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance*: that is, thou mountain; a change of number, meaning every one of the mountains, even the whole land of Canaan, which was given to the Israelites for an inheritance; and was typical of the eternal inheritance in heaven: *and thou shalt no more henceforth bereave them*; of men, or of children; or be no more the cause of their being childless, or of bereaving them of men; sins committed on the mountains being the cause of provoking the Lord to bereave them; or men should be no more killed upon them, as they had been.

Ver. 13. *Thus saith the Lord God, because they say unto you, &c.*] The Heathens that dwelt round about the land of Judea said to the mountains, or to the whole land, *thou* land *devourest up men*: eats up the

[h] ורבו ופרו multiplicabuntur & crescent, Pagninus, Montanus; multiplicabuntur & fructificabunt, Cocceius.

[i] את עמי ישראל cum populo meo Israele, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.

inhabitants of it; which is part of the ill report the spies, in the times of Moses, brought on it, Numb. xiii. 32. to which the allusion is here; suggesting, that either the air was unwholesome; or that the land did not produce a sufficiency of food to support the inhabitants of it; or that the curse of God was upon it; and that one judgment or another was ever on it; either famine, or pestilence, or the sword of the enemy, or intestine broils among themselves, or wild beasts, whereby the inhabitants of the land were wasted and consumed: *and hast bereaved thy nations*: the several tribes, of men and children; so that they were diminished and depopulated: the allusion seems to be to miscarrying women, or such who kill their children in the womb, and become abortive.

Ver. 14. *Therefore thou shalt devour men no more*, &c.] Or they shall be no more destroyed in thee by pestilence, famine, sword, or other means: *neither bereave thy nations any more, saith the Lord*; or, *thou shalt not cause* them *to fall any more* [k], for so it is written, as in ver. 15. though the marginal reading is, *thou shalt not bereave*, which we follow; and both are to be received, since miscarriages often come by falls.

Ver. 15. *Neither will I cause men to hear in thee the shame of the Heathen any more*, &c.] Their calumnies and revilings, their scoffs and jeers: *neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the people any more*: or be any more a taunt and a curse, a proverb and a by-word of the people; or be their laughing-stock, and the object of their derision: *neither shalt thou cause thy nations to fall any more, saith the Lord God*: by famine, sword, or pestilence, or any other judgment caused by sin: or, *thou shalt not bereave* [l], as the marginal reading is; and which the Targum and many versions follow: now what is here promised, in this and the preceding verse, had not its full accomplishment upon the Jews' return from the Babylonish captivity; for since that time their men have been devoured, and their tribes have been bereaved of them by famine, sword, and pestilence; and they have heard and bore the shame and reproach of the nations where they have been dispersed, and do to this day; wherefore these prophecies must refer to a future restoration of that people.

Ver. 16. *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me*, &c.] Here begins another prophecy, which was delivered about the same time with the former: *saying*; as follows:

Ver. 17. *Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land*, &c.] The land of Canaan, which the Lord their God gave unto them; a land abounding with all good things, where they dwelt in great ease, plenty, and prosperity; and which also was a holy land, peculiarly chosen of God for his worship and service: *they defiled it by their own way and by their doings*; by their sinful ways and evil works: sin is of a defiling nature; it defiles the bodies and souls of men; it defiles their own, and it defiles others'; it defiles a land, and the inhabitants of it, and makes them loathsome and abominable to a pure and holy God: *their way was before me, as the uncleanness of a removed woman*: of a menstruous woman in the time of her separation; when she was debarred the company of her husband, and might not enter into the sanctuary of the Lord: this shews what an evil thing sin is, what an uncleanness it is in the sight of God, how abhorrent sinful ways are to him; and though he was the husband of these people, yet, because of their sins, he separated from them, and removed them from and out of their land, as not fit to be in his presence, nor to live there.

Ver. 18. *Wherefore I poured my fury on them*, &c.] Like a mighty flood that carries all before it, in just retaliation *for the blood they had shed upon the land*; the innocent blood, as the Targum; the blood of righteous men, that opposed and reproved them for their sinful ways; the blood of the prophets, that were sent to warn them of them; and especially the blood of the son of God; for this prophecy reaches further than to the times of the Babylonish captivity: *and for their idols* wherewith *they had polluted it*: or, *for their dung* [m]; their dunghil-gods; not only for their idols, and their idolatry, before the Babylonish captivity, which they after that were free from; but for the traditions of their elders, they set up against and above the word of God; and their own legal righteousness, their idols, the works of their hands, which were as dung; and through their attachment to which they rejected Christ and his righteousness; and which brought wrath upon them, and them into their present captivity.

Ver. 19. *And I scattered them among the Heathen*, &c.] First by the Chaldeans, in the several provinces of Babylon; and next by the Romans, in the several parts of the world; and in this condition they now are: *and they were dispersed through the countries*: or blown about as chaff, stubble, or any such-like thing, is by the wind: *according to their way and according to their doings I judged them*; condemned and punished them as their evil ways and wicked works deserved, according to the rules of justice and equity; so that no injustice was done them, nor could any fault be justly found in the proceedings of God towards them.

Ver. 20. *And when they entered unto the Heathen, whither they went*, &c.] When the Jews went into the Heathen countries, whither they were carried captive, either by the Chaldeans, or by the Romans: *they profaned my holy name*; by their irreligion and immorality; by their violation of both tables of the law; by their wicked lives and conversations, whereby they gave the enemy an occasion to reproach them, their religion, and their God, Rom. ii. 24: *when they said to them, these are the people of the Lord, and are gone forth out of his land*; these are the men that boast they are the people of the Lord, whom he has chosen above all people, and see what a wicked people they are; for their sins they are driven out of the land, and become our captives: or though they were the Lord's people, as they pretend, and were under his care and protection; yet he was not able to keep them in their own land, and deliver them out of our hands, but they are

[k] לא תכשלי non impingere facies, Montanus, Vatablus; non offendere facies, Starckius.

[l] Non orbabis, Piscator.

[m] בגלוליהם stercoreis diis suis, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; stercoribus suis, Cocceius, Starckius.

carried captive by us; and thus the name of God, his being and perfections, were blasphemed, and his word, worship, and worshippers, were ridiculed by them. The Targum is, "if these are the people of the Lord, "how is it that they are gone out of the land of the "house of his majesty?"

Ver. 21. *But I had pity for my holy name*, &c.] Had pity on the Jews for his name's sake, and not theirs; or he had a tender concern for his own honour and glory: *which the house of Israel had profaned among the Heathen, whither they went*: and therefore was resolved to take a method for the glorifying of it, and that in a way of special grace and mercy to his people; see the note on ver. 20.

Ver. 22. *Therefore say unto the house of Israel*, &c.] This is an order to the prophet, the son of man, ver. 17: *thus saith the Lord God, I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel*: what he hereafter promises to do for them, both with respect to things temporal and spiritual; which he did, not on account of any deserts or worthiness in them; for they had none, having done nothing to merit his favour, but, on the contrary, every thing to provoke the eyes of his glory: *but for my holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the Heathen, whither ye went*; for the honour of his holy name, for the glory of his holy word, holy worship, and holy religion; all which were traduced and reproached among the Heathen, by reason of the ungodly behaviour of the Jews.

Ver. 23. *And I will sanctify my great name*, &c.] The same with his holy name; for his greatness lies in his holiness; which name he sanctifies when he clears it from all charges and imputations; when he makes it appear to be holy, and himself to be glorious in holiness; when he vindicates the honour of his name, not in a way of punishment, as he justly might, but in a way of grace and mercy; he sanctifies his name when he proclaims it, a God gracious and merciful; for it was in this way and manner he determined to make himself illustrious and glorious, and do honour to his name: *which was profaned among the Heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them*: this is repeated again and again, to shew the heinousness of this sin, how ill he took it at their hands, and what a concern it gave him: *and the Heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes*: when the Lord shall fulfil his promises, and deliver his people; when he shall sanctify, justify, and save them; and he shall be sanctified, served, and worshipped by them, and among them: it will be taken notice of by infidels themselves; and they shall hereby know, and be obliged to acknowledge, that the God of Israel is the only Lord God; that he is true and faithful to his word, righteous and holy in his ways, the Lord God omniscient and omnipotent.

Ver. 24. *For I will take you from among the Heathen*, &c.] The Chaldeans and other nations, among whom they were carried captive; and the Papists, among whom many of them now are, often called Heathens and Gentiles in Scripture: this will be fully completed at the time of the Jews' conversion in the latter day: the phrase fitly expresses the act of divine grace, in taking his people from among the world by effectual vocation: *and gather you out of all countries*: to himself, and to his son, and to his church, and to some certain place from whence they will go up in a body to their own land, as follows: see Hos. i. 11: *and will bring you into your own land*; into the land of Canaan literally understood, as well as into the church of God here, and into the heavenly country hereafter, of which Canaan was a type.

Ver. 25. *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you*, &c.] Not baptismal water, as Jerom; an ordinance indeed of the Gospel, and to which the Jews will submit when converted; and which is performed by water, but not by sprinkling, nor does it cleanse from sin; and is administered by men, and is not an operation of God, as this is: rather the regenerating grace of the Spirit; though this does not purify from all sin, and besides is intended in the next verse: it seems best to understand it of the blood of Christ, the blood of sprinkling, and of justification from sin, and pardon of it by it; so Kimchi and Jarchi interpret of purification by atonement; and the Targum is, "I will "forgive your sins, as one is cleansed by the water of "sprinkling, and the ashes of a heifer, which is for "a sin-offering:" *and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you*: the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin; by it men are justified from all things, and are made perfectly pure and spotless in the sight of God; they are cleansed from original sin, the pollution of their nature; from all actual sins and transgressions, which are very defiling; from sins of heart, lip, and life; even from such as are idols, set up in the heart, and served.

Ver. 26. *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you*, &c.] A *new heart* and a *new spirit* are one and the same; that is, a renewed one; renewed by the spirit and grace of God; in which a new principle of life is put; new light is infused; a new will, filled with new purposes and resolutions; where new affections are placed, and new desires are formed; and where there are new delights and joys, as well as new sorrows and troubles; the same which in the New Testament is called the *new man*, and the *new creature*, Ephes. iv. 24. 2 Cor. v. 17. The Targum paraphrases it, "a heart fearing, and a "spirit fearing;" where the true fear of God is, a truly gracious heart; and which is purely the gift of God, and is the fruit of his rich grace, abundant mercy, and great love: *and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh*: the Targum is, "and I will break the "heart of the wicked, which is hard as a stone;" this is a heart hardened by sin, and confirmed in it; destitute of spiritual life and motion; senseless and stupid, stubborn and inflexible; on which no impressions are made; and which remains hard and impenitent: now this is in *the flesh*, in corrupt nature; and this hardness of heart is natural to men; and all who have it are after the flesh, or are carnal; and it requires omnipotence to remove it; it cannot be taken out by men of themselves; nor by ministers of the word; nor by the bare mercies and judgments of God; but by the powerful and efficacious grace of God; giving repentance unto life; working faith in the soul, to look to a crucified Christ; and shedding abroad the love of God in the heart, which softens and melts it; all which is

done by the Spirit, and frequently by means of the word. This is interpreted, in the Talmud[a], of the evil imagination, or corruption of nature; and is one of the names of it, a stone; and it refers, it is said[x], to the time or world to come, the days of the Messiah: *and I will give you an heart of flesh:* a heart sensible of sin and danger; a penitent one, soft and tender, through the love and fear of God; a spiritual and sanctified heart; submissive to the will of God; flexible and obsequious to the commands of Christ; on which impressions are made by the grace of God; where the laws of God are written, the Gospel of Christ is put; where Christ himself is formed; where are the fear of God, faith, hope, and love, and every other grace.

Ver. 27. *And I will put my spirit within you,* &c.] My Holy Spirit, as the Targum; the spirit of holiness; the author of internal sanctification, of the new heart and spirit, and of the fleshy one before mentioned; and through whose grace and strength the saints do what is after said they shall do: *and cause you to walk in my statutes:* men are first made alive by the spirit of God, and have spiritual strength put into them, who of themselves can do nothing; by means of which they are enabled to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, and to continue in the observation of them; which walking in them supposes: *and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them:* being constrained by the love of God; influenced by the grace of Christ; and strengthened by the blessed Spirit: and such persons observe and do them willingly and cheerfully; from a principle of love; in faith, and to the glory of God; without any mercenary and selfish views; without trusting to, and depending upon, what is done for salvation.

Ver. 28. *And ye shall dwell in the land which I gave to your fathers,* &c.] Not only shall be brought into it, but shall inhabit it, and continue there, and that in great safety and plenty; and which will be the more valued and esteemed, and reckoned a great blessing to enjoy; because this land is the gift of God, and what he gave to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by promise so long ago, and to their seed; of which promise it appears he is not unmindful: *and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God:* which is the sum and substance of the covenant of grace; which will now be renewed, and the blessings of it applied. The Jews will appear to be the people of God by their effectual calling and conversion; and God will shew himself to be their God, by his presence with them, his protection of them, and that communion with himself he will admit them to: see Jer. xxxi. 1. and xxxii. 38. the *lo-ammi* will be taken off, and they will be again declared to be the covenant-people of God, Hos. i. 9, 10.

Ver. 29. *And I will also save you from all your uncleannesses,* &c.] From all their filthy lusts of pride, envy, malice, covetousness, whoredom, blasphemy, and infidelity, to which the Jews are now addicted: but at this time shall be saved from the power and dominion of them by the sanctifying grace of the Spirit; and from the guilt and pollution of them by the blood of Christ sprinkled on them; and this, not from one, or some of them only, but from all of them: all Israel will be saved, and they will be saved from all their sins, Rom. xi. 25, 26: *and I will call for the corn, and will increase it;* which shall answer to the call of God, as a servant to his master; and shall spring up out of the earth in great abundance; and which shall grow, and increase, and bring forth much fruit; and yield bread to the eater, and seed to the sower: and which is to be understood, not of corn in a literal sense only, but of corn in a spiritual sense; of all spiritual provisions, the word and ordinances, and especially the corn of wheat, Christ Jesus; who is the sum and substance of the Gospel and his ordinances, and is in them food for the faith of his people: see Zech. ix. 17: *and lay no famine upon you;* neither a famine of bread, or of water; nor of hearing the word of the Lord; but shall have plenty of provisions, both for soul and body; see Amos viii. 11.

Ver. 30. *And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field,* &c.] The fruit of trees that grow in gardens, and orchards, and vineyards, as pomegranates, apples, olives, grapes, &c. and the corn and grass of the field; so that there shall be great plenty of each of these, and no want of any thing for man or beast: and by these are mystically designed spiritual blessings; the fruits of righteousness, with which the saints, who are trees of righteousness, shall be laden; and an increase of gifts and grace in the churches of Christ, and the members of them: *that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the Heathen;* who upbraided them with it, that they were forced to go to other nations for food, as in the times of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and that their land wanted rain, and waited for it; which, if it had not, became barren; whereas the Egyptians particularly needed it not, their land being watered yearly with the overflowings of the Nile: or the sense is, they should not be reproached with their penury and want of the things of life; and spiritually, that they should not be upbraided by the Gentiles with their want of the Gospel, and their contempt of it, their blasphemy and their unbelief: since they should now have it, receive, embrace, and love it, and feed upon it.

Ver. 31. *Then shall ye remember your own evil ways,* &c.] That were of their own choosing; in which they walked, and delighted to walk: and very evil ones they were; opposite to the ways of God; such as open violation of the law of God; neglect of his worship; idolatry, and many other sins, before the captivity; adhering to the traditions of their elders; and setting up their own righteousness as a justifying one afterwards; also their disbelief and rejection of the Messiah; their blasphemy against him, and persecution of his interest and people: now these will all be remembered with shame and confusion when the Lord shall bestow upon them the above blessings, spiritual and temporal; especially when a new heart and spirit shall be given them; the goodness of God will have such an influence upon them as to refresh their memories with former sins, and bring them to repentance for them; as well as to affect their minds, and make them thankful for present mercies: sins, which were before forgotten, or were not thought to be sins, shall now come fresh in their minds, with all their aggravated guilt: *and your*

[a] T. Bab. Succah, fol. 52. 1.

[x] Debarim Rabba, fol. 242. 2. & Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 3. 2.

doings that were not good; far from being so, they were very evil, contrary to the law of God and Gospel of Christ; as they will at this time appear to themselves to be: *and shall loath yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations;* their sins will be abominable to them, as they are in themselves, and to the Lord; and they'll not only loath them, but themselves for them, when they shall come to have a true sight of them in their own colours, and a true sense of the evil nature of them; and this shall not be expressed only in the sight of men, and so as to be observed by them; but in their own sight, secretly and within themselves, under a clear and full conviction of their sins. The Syriac version is, *your faces shall be wrinkled;* as men's are when they are displeased with themselves for what they have done. The Targum is, "and ye shall groan when ye shall "see, because of your sins, and because of your abo- "minations;" which is the case of sensible sinners, 2 Cor. v. 4. see ch. xx. 43.

Ver. 32. *Not for your sakes do I* this, *saith the Lord,* &c.] Not for any worth or worthiness in them; for any merit or desert of theirs; for any goodness in them, or works of righteousness done by them; no, it purely flowed from his own unmerited grace and goodness; for his own sake, and for his own glory, will he do it; see Deut. ix. 4, 5, 6: *be it known unto you;* this the Lord would have this people take notice of, who were very fond of their own righteousness and merits, and to trust therein, and ascribe much thereunto, as most men are too apt to do; and therefore, to take down their pride, and take them off of their boastings and vain opinions of themselves, he would have them know and acknowledge this: and be so far from placing any of the favours bestowed on them to the account of the merit of their good works, that they ought to take shame for their evil ones, as follows: *be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel;* as men are when they are brought to a true sight and sense of them, and reflect upon the evil of them, and are brought to true repentance for them; see ch. xvi. 61, 63.

Ver. 33. *Thus saith the Lord God, in the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities,* &c.] By the free and full pardon of them; by sprinkling clean water on them, the blood of Christ on their consciences; and by applying the righteousness of Christ to them for their justification; as well as by creating clean hearts in them, for their sanctification; and enabling them by grace to escape and abstain from the pollutions of the world: *I will also cause you to dwell in the cities;* that is, of Judea, which, as well as Jerusalem, shall be rebuilt and inhabited, as follows: *and the wastes shall be builded:* such cities and towns as lay in ruins: temporal prosperity shall go along with or follow spiritual blessings to the people of the Jews at their conversion; or they shall dwell in the churches of Christ, which are as cities compact together, well regulated, and where Jews and Gentiles at this time will be fellow-citizens.

Ver. 34. *And the desolate land shall be tilled,* &c.] The land of Judea, which lay desolate during the captivity, and which now is under the dominion of the Turks, and in a ruinous state, shall be manured and cultivated, and become fruitful, as it formerly was: or the people of the Jews, who, in a spiritual sense, are like barren and uncultivated ground; these shall have the fallow ground of their hearts ploughed up, and the seeds of grace, truth, and righteousness, shall be sown in them, and they shall bring forth the fruit of good works: *whereas it lay desolate in the eyes of all that passed by;* as the land of Canaan now does to every traveller in it, that observes it, and compares it with what it once was; and as the present state of the Jews is, in the eyes of every Christian pilgrim and traveller, that takes notice of their blindness and ignorance, their unbelief and hardness of heart.

Ver. 35. *And they shall say,* &c.] Either the neighbouring nations that lived round about the land of Israel, ver. 36. or rather the travellers, as before, who having as they passed by observed what it had been, and now see what it is; these shall say to one another: *this land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden;* for delight and fruitfulness: this may well be applied to the flourishing and fruitful state of the church of God, consisting of converted Jews, in the latter day: *and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced,* and *are inhabited;* which, as it will be true of cities in a literal sense, so of the churches of Christ in Judea in a spiritual sense; which will be rebuilt by the grace of God, fenced and fortified by his almighty power, and inhabited by true believers.

Ver. 36. *Then the Heathen that are left round about you,* &c.] Not cut off by the judgments which came upon them, according to the prophecies in ch. xxv. and xxvi. the residue of the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, and Tyrians; and, in the mystical sense, this may design the residue of the antichristian states not destroyed by the vials of God's wrath; see Rev. xi. 2, 13: *shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places,* and *plant that that was desolate;* this work of rebuilding Jerusalem, and other cities of Judea, and planting desolate places with trees, and all manner of corn and herbage for man and beast, as well as of building up and planting churches, will appear so manifestly the work of God, and not of men; which is brought about by his wonderful providence, or more surprising grace; that even the Heathen round about will take notice of it, and own and acknowledge it to be the Lord's work: *I the Lord have spoken* it, *and I will do* it; he has spoken of it by his prophets; he has promised it in his word, and he will surely do it; for he is true and faithful to his promises, and able to perform.

Ver. 37. *Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel,* &c.] Besought and prayed unto for the accomplishment of the above promises, as well as what follows; for though God has promised and will perform, yet he expects that his people will apply to him for it; it is our duty to put the Lord in mind of his promises, to plead them with him, and pray unto him for the fulfilment of them. The Syriac version is, *even for this I seek Israel;* and so the Arabic version; as if the sense was, that the Lord will seek the people of Israel wherever they are, and find them out, and call them by his grace, and gather them out of all countries, and bring them into their own land: *to do* it *for them;* every thing before promised, and what next follows: *I will increase them with*

men like a flock; as a flock of sheep is increased, which is a very increasing creature: or, *as a flock of men*[r]; it signifies that the people of the Jews will be very numerous at their conversion; see Hos. i. 10.

Ver. 38. *As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts*, &c.] Like flocks of sheep, which were consecrated and set apart for holy uses, for sacrifices; even like the flocks of sheep, which were brought to Jerusalem to be offered in sacrifice at the three solemn festivals in the year; especially at the passover, when the Jews came from all parts of the country to slay and eat their passover; and every family had a lamb, which in all must be a great number: we read of thirty thousand lambs and three thousand bullocks given at one time for this service by King Josiah, besides what was given by the princes, 2 Chron. xxxv. 7, 8, 9. The Targum is, "as the holy people, as a "people that is cleansed, and comes to Jerusalem at "the feasts of the passover:" or, *as the flock of the "holy Ones*[s]; either of the holy God, Father, Son, and Spirit; or of holy men, who are made holy or sanctified by the spirit of God: *so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men*: or with men that are like sheep for meekness, harmlessness, patience, cleanness, society, and usefulness; and not with such as are comparable to unclean beasts, or beasts of prey, so it denotes both the quantity of persons that shall inhabit Judea, and dwell both in the cities and churches there, and the quality of them.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

CHAP. XXXVII.

THIS chapter contains a prophecy of the Jews' return from captivity to their own land; of the union of the several tribes with one another; and of the glorious kingdom of Christ among them. Their restoration is represented by a vision of dry bones made alive; the place in which they were; the condition they were in; and the manner in which they were made to live, are described, ver. 1—10. the explication and application of this vision to the Jews, ver. 11—14. their union is signified by a sign or emblem of two sticks, which became one in the hand of the prophet, ver. 15, 16, 17. the meaning of this is shewn, ver. 18, 19, 20. then follow promises of their return to their own land, in express words; of their being one kingdom, under one King, Christ, the antitype of David, of their sanctification; of their covenant-interest in God, made manifest to them; and of his presence, and dwelling among them, ver. 21—28.

Ver. 1. *The hand of the Lord was upon me*, &c.] The spirit of the Lord, a powerful impulse of his upon the prophet; the Targum interprets it a spirit of prophecy; see the note on ch. i. 3: *and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord*: out of the place where he was to another; not really, but visionally, as things appeared to him, and as they were represented to his mind by the spirit of God: *and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones*: of men, as the Targum adds: this valley, Kimchi thinks, was the same by the river Chebar, where the prophet had his visions at first. R. Jochanan says it was the valley of Dura, and these the bones of them that were slain by Nebuchadnezzar there, Dan. iii. 1. Rab says these were the children of Ephraim, slain by the men of Gath, 1 Chron. vii. 20, 21, 22. Some of the Jewish Rabbins think there was a real resurrection at this time. R. Eliezer says, the dead Ezekiel quickened stood upon their feet, sung a song, and died. R. Eliezer, the son of R. Jose the Galilean, says, they went up into the land of Israel, married wives, and begat sons and daughters. R. Judah ben Bethira stood upon his feet, and said, I am of their children's children, and these are the *tephillim* my father's father left me[t]; but these are all fabulous and romantic: others of them understand the whole in a parabolical way: these bones, and the quickening of them, were an emblem of the restoration of the Jews from their captivity, who were in a helpless and hopeless condition, as appears from ver. 11—14. and of the conversion of that people in the latter day, which will be as life from the dead; and of the revival of the interest and church of Christ, when the slain witnesses shall rise, and ascend to heaven; and of the resurrection of the dead at the last day; and may be applied unto and be used to illustrate the quickening of dead sinners, by the efficacious grace of the spirit of God.

Ver. 2. *And caused me to pass by them round about*, &c.] *Round, round*[u]; several times round, that he might take exact notice of them, of their number, situation, and condition: *and, behold, there were very many in the open valley*; as the Jews were in captivity; and as they will be when they shall be converted; and as the number of Christians will be in the spiritual reign of Christ; and as the dead will be at the time of their resurrection, both of the just and unjust: *and, lo, they were very dry*: through length of time they had lain there, exposed to wind and weather; the flesh being wholly consumed from off of them, and the marrow within quite dried up; so that there was no probability or hope, humanly speaking, of their being quickened: these are a fit emblem of men in a state of nature and unregeneracy, who have no spiritual life, but are dead in trespasses and sins; have no sense of sin or danger; no strength to redeem and regenerate themselves, or do any thing that is spiritually good; have no spiritual motion; no inward desires after God, or affection to him; no lifting up of the heart to him, or going out of the soul in faith and love to Christ; but in themselves entirely lifeless, helpless, and hopeless.

Ver. 3. *And he said unto me, son of man, can these*

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[r] כצאן אדם sicut gregem hominum, Vulg. Lat. Syr.; sicut pecus hominis, Montanus; pecudes hominum, Pagninus.

[s] כצאן קדשים sicut oves sanctorum, Vatablus, Gussetius, Starckius.

[t] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 92. 2. Vid. Kimchi & Abendana in loc.

[u] סביב סביב circum circa, Pagninus; undique undique, Montanus.

bones live? &c.] Is there any probability of it? is there any reason to believe they shall live? can any ways and means be devised, or any methods taken, to cause them to live? *and I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest;* the prophet does not pronounce at once that it was improbable and impossible; he knew indeed it was not probable, or possible, that these bones should revive of themselves; and he knew that neither he nor any creature could quicken them; but he wisely refers it to an omniscient and omnipotent God, who knew what he could and what he would do: the conversion of sinners is not of themselves, nor of ministers, but of God; it is wholly owing to his will and power, John i. 13. nothing else can make it probable, or possible.

Ver. 4. *Again he said unto me, prophesy upon these bones,* &c.] Or, *over these bones*[y]; or, *concerning these bones*[z]; foretel that they shall live; tell others of it, and them also: *and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord:* the word of prophecy concerning you, as the Jews did in Babylon: so unconverted sinners may be preached unto, and their lost and miserable estate in which they are, like dry bones, may be set before them: they may be called upon to attend the external ministry of the word; and they are capable of hearing it with their bodily ears; though it is not profitable to them, for want of faith, yet faith comes hereby; and therefore it is right to attend upon the means, and hear the word.

Ver. 5. *Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones,* &c.] By the prophet, who was sent to prophesy over them: *behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live;* and none could do this but the living God, who breathed the breath of life into Adam at first, and he became a living soul; to which there seems to be an allusion here; and when the Lord puts his spirit into men, or bestows his grace on them, then they shall live, and not till then.

Ver. 6. *And I will lay sinews upon you, and I will bring up flesh upon you,* &c.] That is, before he should cause breath to enter into them; for though it is first mentioned, it is the last done: this is the orderly process; first sinews are laid to join the bones together; then flesh is laid to cover them, and fill up all vacancies, and form muscles to make the bones capable of motion: *and cover you with skin;* both bones, sinews, and flesh; for this is uppermost of all, and which makes the whole smooth and beautiful. Job expresses his formation in much such language, *thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews,* Job x. 11: *and put breath in you, and ye shall live;* which is repeated for the confirmation of it: *and ye shall know that I am the Lord;* the Lord God omnipotent, the Lord gracious and merciful, and your Lord and God; so men, when they are called by grace, know the Lord, they did not before; having an experience of his powerful and efficacious grace upon their hearts, they know him to be theirs, and own and acknowledge him, and profess him before men.

Ver. 7. *So I prophesied as I was commanded,* &c.] The prophet was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; he was right to observe the orders and instructions given, whatever were the issue and success of them; that he was to leave with the Lord, and did. So Gospel ministers prophesy or preach according to the commission given them, and leave their work with the Lord: this was the first prophesying; for there is another after mentioned: these two are carefully to be observed and distinguished, different effects following the one and the other: this was a prophesying to the dry bones, upon them, over them, and concerning them: and what is next related was the consequence of it; *and as I prophesied, there was a noise;* or, *a voice*[a]; this, in the literal sense, was the proclamation by Cyrus, giving the Jews leave to return to their own land, Ezra i. 1, 2, 3. at the revival of the interest of Christ, a great voice will be heard from heaven, saying to the witnesses, come up hither, Rev. xi. 12. and at the descent of Christ to raise his dead first, there will be the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, 1 Thess. iv. 16. and, as while the prophet was prophesying, there was not only his voice heard, but the voice of God, perhaps a thunder-clap; so in the ministry of the Gospel there is a voice heard, which, at first, is only externally heard; men hear a noise, a voice, but it is a confused one; they don't know what to make of it, and yet it has some effect upon them; it causes a noise in them, an outcry about sin, and hell, and damnation; and yet, at present, no spiritual life or breath is in them: *and behold a shaking;* of the bones; a rattling among them, as may be conceived must be where there is, as here, a tumbling of dry bones one over another, to get to their proper bone: so in the first effect of the word upon the conscience of a sinner, which works wrath there, there's a shaking and trembling through fear of damnation; which in some issues in real conversion, as in Saul and the jailer, Acts ix. 6. and xvi. 29. but in others it goes off again, and comes to nothing, as in Felix, Acts xxiv. 25: *and the bones came together, bone to his bone:* so the Jews scattered up and down in the provinces of Babylon gathered together upon the proclamation of Cyrus, and went up in a body to their own land; as they will do also at the time of their conversion, Hos. i. 11. thus, when persons are only under slight convictions, they may gather together, and have their religious meetings and societies, and yet be only a parcel of dry bones, without any spiritual life and breath in them.

Ver. 8. *And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them,* &c.] And they began to look like men, in the shape of men, and were a body of them, as the Jews did when gathered together: *and the skin covered them above;* and so looked comely and beautiful, as in the proper form of men; as did the Jews enriched and protected by Cyrus: and this may be an image of such persons so far wrought upon under the word as to look like Christians; to have the form of godliness, and appear outwardly righteous before men, submitting to ordinances, and performing the duties of religion; and yet no principle of spiritual life in them; but, like Adam's body, of the earth, earthly, and breathless, before the breath of life was breathed

[y] על העצמות האלה super ossa hæc, Starckius.
[z] De ossibus istis, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator.

[a] ויהי קול & extitit vox, Cocceius, Starckius; & fuit vox, Montanus.

into it; so here, *but there was no breath in them*: no spirit in the Jews to return to their land, though they had liberty, till the Lord stirred up their spirits, Ezra i. 5. all this, in a spiritual sense, shews how far persons may go under temporary convictions by the word, and yet not be living Christians.

Ver. 9. *Then said he unto me, prophesy unto the wind*, &c.] Before he had been prophesying to the bones, and over them; and something was done, but not to purpose, breath being wanting; wherefore he is bid to prophesy a second time, and that not to bones, but to the *wind*, afterwards rendered *breath*; and may allude to the soul or breath of man re-entering the body, as at a resurrection, which causes it to live: it signifies *the spirit*[x], for the same word is used for the wind, for breath, and for the spirit; and in the mystical sense may be applied to the spirit of God: and if ever ministers prophesy or preach to purpose, it must be with a view to the spirit of God, both to assist them in their work, and to make their ministrations effectual; without which, how many formal professors soever may be made, not one dead sinner will be quickened. The Syriac and Arabic versions render it, *concerning the spirit*; and to discourse concerning the person, operations, and grace of the spirit, is one part of the Gospel ministry, and a means of the conversion of sinners. *Prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind*; ministers must not only preach, but they must pray for the spirit to accompany the word with his power, and make it the savour of life unto life: *thus saith the Lord, come from the four winds, O breath*: or *spirit*; because the Jews were to be brought from several parts where they were, as they will be at their conversion in the latter day; and so the Lord has a people in the several parts of the world, that lie dead in sin, and must be quickened by the spirit: *and breathe upon these slain, that they may live*: though not slain with the sword, yet being as dead men, who are slain by death, are so called: so in a spiritual sense men are slain by sin, and are slain by the words of the Lord's mouth; killed with the law, the killing letter; and it is only the spirit of God that can give them life; and the breath or spirit here is applied to the spirit of the Messiah by the ancient Jews[y].

Ver. 10. *So I prophesied as he commanded me*, &c.] The second time he prophesied to the wind, as he had done to the bones, as he was ordered: and the issue of it was, *and breath came into them*; or, *the spirit*: a spirit of courage in the Jews, to go up to their own land; the spirit of life from Christ, which will enter into the witnesses slain, and revive them; and into the Jews in the latter day, and convert them: and which enters into dead sinners, and quickens them; and this he does whilst ministers are preaching the Gospel to them; see Rev. xi. 11. Acts x. 44: *and they lived*: as men do spiritually, when the spirit of God has produced a principle of spiritual life in them; they live by faith on Christ, in union and fellowship with him; they live in newness of life, and a holy life and conversation; and shall live and reign with Christ upon the first resurrection, and for evermore: *and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army*: as the Jews did when they returned from the Babylonish captivity; they were many, and in a posture of defence; and as they will be in the latter day, when converted, Hos. i. 10. and as the number of the saints will be upon the first resurrection, Rev. vii. 9. so when men are quickened by the spirit of God, they *stand upon their feet*; they stand in the grace of God, and on the foundation Christ; they stand by faith in him, and in the doctrine of faith, and in the house of God; and they stand firm against all their enemies: they are an *army*; they are in a military state; fighting against sin, Satan, and the world; and though few in comparison of others, yet considered by themselves are very numerous; and as they will appear when the Jews will be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in; and especially when they will be all gathered together at the coming of Christ.

Ver. 11. *Then he said unto me, son of man*, &c.] Here follow the explication and application of the above vision: *these bones are the whole house of Israel*; an emblem of them, of their state and condition in the Babylonish captivity, and of them in their present state; and of the whole Israel of God, whilst in a state of unregeneracy: this phrase takes in the ten tribes, as well as the two tribes of Benjamin and Judah, which returned from Babylon; and shews that respect is had to something more than that restoration barely: *behold, they say, our bones are dried*; the house of Israel say we are like dry bones indeed; we have no spirit, nor strength, nor courage, nor life in us: *and our hope is lost*: of being delivered from the present captivity; or of the Messiah's coming; or of ever enjoying their own land, and of the promises of those things made unto them: *we are cut off for our parts*: from the land of Israel, and have no hope of possessing it again, whatever others have; indeed they are cut off from the olive-tree, and are cut down like a tree, both as to their civil and church state. The Targum is, "and "we are perished;" it is all over with us; we are lost and undone: all the expressions shew the desperate and despairing condition they were in.

Ver. 12. *Therefore prophesy, and say unto them*, &c.] For their comfort, in order to revive their hope, and encourage their faith, in these distressed circumstances: *thus saith the Lord, behold, O my people*: they were his people still, and he had a covenant-interest in them, and they in him, though in such a low estate; and which was the ground of his care of them, and concern for them, and of doing all the good things to them after mentioned; all proceeded from his covenant, and the grace of it, and their relation to him: *I will open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves*: the cities and prisons in Chaldea and other places; where they were confined and held captives, and out of which they could no more deliver themselves than a dead man of himself can rise up out of his grave: this is both an emblem of the resurrection of the dead at the last day[z], when they shall come forth out of their

[x] [illegible] ad spiritum, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius; aliquem spiritum, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus.

[y] Zohar in Numb. fol. 92. 1.

[z] To which it is applied in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 152. 2. & Taanith, fol. 2. 2.

graves at the voice of Christ, some to the resurrection of life, and others to the resurrection of damnation; and of dead sinners, raised out of the graves of sin by the power and efficacy of the grace of God; see John v. 25, 28, 29: *and bring you into the land of Israel*: to dwell in it, and abide there, and be no more dispossessed of it; as they will not, any more, when once settled in it, upon their conversion in the latter day.

Ver. 13. *And ye shall know that I am the Lord, &c.*] See the note on ver. 6: *when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves*; which is doing that for them which none but the omnipotent God could do; and they seeing his hand and power, his grace and mercy in it, will know, own, and acknowledge him.

Ver. 14. *And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, &c.*] Not only a spirit of courage to go up into their own land, and live a civil and comfortable life there; but the spirit of God, as a spirit of grace and supplication, of truth and holiness, of faith and adoption; and as a spirit of life, having produced a principle of life in them, and so should live spiritually and soberly, righteously and godly; see ch. xxxvi. 27: *and I shall place you in your own land*; settle them there in peace and quietness, in safety and security, and in enjoyment of all mercies and privileges, temporal and spiritual: *then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord*; that all this was a promise of his, foretold by him, notified to them by his prophets, and now fully accomplished exactly; which they would observe with wonder and thankfulness, and give him the glory of it.

Ver. 15. *The word of the Lord came unto me again, &c.*] Immediately or quickly after he had the above vision of the dry bones, and the explanation of it: *saying*: as follows:

Ver. 16. *Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, &c.*] Or *wood* [‡]; a stick of wood; or *table*, as the Targum; a board or plank. The Septuagint version renders it a *rod*; and so the Arabic; an emblem of a kingdom or government, as this was: *and write upon it*: the following words: *for Judah, and the children of Israel his companions*: for the tribe of Judah, and the tribe of Benjamin, which adhered together, and as many of the other tribes which joined them; the godly and religious of the rest of the tribes, who could not give into the idolatry of Jeroboam: *then take another stick*; like the former: *and write upon it*: these words: *for Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions*; for the tribe of Ephraim, and the other nine tribes, which together made up one kingdom. It should be observed, that in the times of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, there was a division in the kingdom of Israel; ten tribes revolted from him, and only the two whole tribes of Judah and Benjamin continued with him; and from that time to the captivity, and even during that, as it seems, there were continual animosities and bickerings between the two kingdoms, on account both of their political and religious affairs, especially the latter; and an union between them this emblem is designed to signify, as will hereafter appear. Jeroboam, the first king of the ten tribes, was of the tribe of Ephraim; and Samaria, the metropolis of the kingdom, was in that tribe; hence Ephraim often stands for all the ten tribes, for the kingdom of Israel, as distinct from that of Judah. Writing words on sticks or rods seems to be in allusion to what was done Numb. xvii. 2.

Ver. 17. *And join them one to another into one stick, &c.*] Clap the sticks, planks, boards, or tables, to one another; glue them together, or set them so close to one another, that they may seem as one stick, plank, board, or table: *and they shall become one in thine hand*; they shall look as if they were one. R. Joseph Kimchi, the father of David, thinks they really became one, by means of a miracle wrought; but there is no need to suppose this; it is enough that they appeared to be so.

Ver. 18. *And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, &c.*] The children of Israel and Judah in captivity, of which people Ezekiel was, and to whom he was sent as a prophet; who seeing him take two sticks, and write on them, and then join them together, would naturally put such a question to him: *wilt thou not shew us what thou meanest by these?* for they concluded he had some meaning in it, and that it was not a mere childish diversion and amusement; and therefore would desire that he would let them know what it was: whether they would ask this seriously or in banter, out of curiosity or in contempt, as they sometimes did; it matters not, he was to give them an answer, as follows; though, by the manner of their putting the question, it looks as if they were doubtful whether he would or no; since they had treated him in a sneering way on such-like occasions before.

Ver. 19. *Say unto them, thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Here follows the explanation of the sign or emblem: *behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows*; that is, the kingdom of Israel, consisting of the ten tribes, of which Ephraim was the chief: *and will put them with him*, even *with the stick of Judah*; with the kingdom of Judah: *and make them one stick*: these two kingdoms one kingdom: *and they shall be one in my hand*; in Christ, the hand and arm of the Lord; one under his care, government, and protection, as after explained: this had in part, and as a shadow of what was to come, its fulfilment upon the Jews' return from Babylon; when many of the ten tribes, as well as the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, came from thence, and became one nation and kingdom under one prince, until the coming of Christ; and it had a further accomplishment in the union of converted Jews and Gentiles in one body: but this is chiefly designed as an emblem of the union of the Jews one to another, when they shall be converted in the latter day; when they shall join together in seeking the Lord, and David, their King, the Messiah; who shall be the one King over them, as is afterwards said; and when all animosities shall cease, both among them, and among all the spiritual Israel of God in general; see Isa. xi. 13. Jer. l. 4. Hos. i. 11. and iii. 5. Zeph. iii. 9.

Ver. 20. *And the sticks whereon thou writest, &c.*] Or art about to write the above things, according to order and direction: *shall be in thine hand before their*

‡ עץ אחד lignum unum, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

one; shall be held up to them to look at for some time, and observe the cement of the two sticks; and learn and lay up in their minds what is meant by this emblem; and be assured that what is hereafter said as a further explication of it shall certainly be fulfilled.

Ver. 21. *And say unto them, thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Or, as the Targum, "thou shalt prophesy to "them:" for what follows is a prophecy of what shall be in the latter day: *behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the Heathen, whither they be gone*: or, *from among the Gentiles*[a]; not only the Chaldeans, where they were carried captives; but from among the nations where they are now dispersed, and among whom they go freely of their own accord from place to place, for the sake of traffic: and this phrase, *whither they be gone*, or *are going*[b], travelling about from one country to another, better describes the present Jews, and their state, than those in the Babylonish captivity: *and will gather them on every side*; or, *round about*[c]; from the several parts of the world where they are: *and bring them into their own land*: the land of Canaan, given by the Lord to their fathers, and to them their posterity, for an inheritance; though now in the possession of others, who, it seems, are not the right owners.

Ver. 22. *And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel*, &c.] As they were in the times of David and Solomon, who were both types of the Messiah; and to whose times is referred this prophecy by the ancient Jews[d], as then to have its accomplishment: *and one king shall be king to them all*: not Zorobabel, nor Nehemiah, nor Judas Maccabæus; for these were neither of them kings; and much less such as rei ned for ever, as 'tis said this king shall, ver. 25. besides, he is expressly said to be David, that is, the Messiah the son of David; and this clause is by a modern Jewish[e] writer applied to him: *and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all*: which is the very thing the two sticks made one were an emblem of.

Ver. 23. *Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols*, &c.] *With their dung*, or *dunghill-gods*[f]; either with the idols of the Gentiles, or their own: after their return from the Babylonish captivity, the Jews were no more addicted to idolatry: and the image-worship of the Papists is an abhorrence to them at this day, and a stumbling-block to them in their embracing Christianity: and when they are effectually called and converted to Christ, they'll no more have respect to the idols, the works of their own hands; or to the idol of their own righteousness, which they have set up, and have gone about to establish, and to make to stand; they'll then see it to be as filthy rags, defiling to them, instead of justifying of them; and therefore shall reject it, and no more defile themselves with it; but seek the righteousness of Christ, which justifies from all sin, and renders pure and spotless in the sight of God: *nor with their detestable things*; or *abominations*[g]; the traditions of the elders, which they have preferred to the word of God, and made the rule of their faith, worship, and conversation; which has made them detestable unto God: *nor with any of their transgressions*; particularly their disbelief of Christ, and their blasphemy against him: nor shall they indulge themselves in those sins which now prevail among them, as pride, covetousness, uncleanness, fraud, and tricking in their trade and commerce: *but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places, wherein they have sinned*; as wherever they dwell they do; they are notorious for their wickedness; but God will bring them out of all these places, where they have lived in sin, and been the occasion of it to some, as well as followed the example of others: *and will cleanse them*; by sprinkling clean water upon them; by applying the blood of Christ to them, which cleanses from all sin; see ch. xxxvi. 25: *so they shall be my people, and I will be their God*: the *lo-ammi* will be taken off, and the covenant of grace shall be renewed with them, and made manifest to them; and the blessings and promises shall be applied to them, and particularly this; see Jer. xxxi. 1. Rom. xi. 25, 26.

Ver. 24. *And David my servant shall be king over them*, &c.] The King Messiah, as Kimchi interprets it; and so Abarbinel[h] and others; being of the seed of David, and of whom David was an eminent type; and who, as Mediator, is the Lord's servant, and as man appeared in the form of one: this shews that this prophecy looks further than the times of deliverance from the Babylonish captivity: *and they all shall have one shepherd*; or king, the same as before: kings are called shepherds; see ch. xxxiv. 23. John x. 16: *and they shall also walk in my judgments, and keep my statutes, and do them*: not the statutes and ordinances of the ceremonial law, which are abolished; and which the Jews, when converted, shall have no regard unto; but rather the precepts of the moral law, and chiefly the evangelic ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper; which ordinances they shall walk in, and attend unto with constancy and pleasure; and which statutes they shall keep, as they have been delivered, impartially, without delay, in faith and love, and with a view to the glory of God; see ch. xxxvi. 27.

Ver. 25. *And they shall dwell in the land which I have given to Jacob my servant*, &c.] Abraham and Isaac are not mentioned, as Kimchi observes, because they had other children, who did not inherit the land; only Jacob, because the land was given to him, and his seed after him: *wherein your fathers have dwelt*; and so the more desirable to them; and whose inhabitation and possession of it were a pledge of theirs: *and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children, and their children's children for ever*; unto the end of the world, or personal coming of Christ; and so every thing after promised them is said to be for ever: this shews that this prophecy had not its accomplishment in the return of the Jews from Babylon to their own land; since they

[a] מתוך הגוים e medio ipsarum gentium, Junius & Tremellius; ex gentibus, Starckius; e vel ex medio gentium, Piscator, Cocceius.
[b] הלכו ambulant, vel ambulantes sunt.
[c] מסביב circumquaque, Junius & Tremellius, Pagninus, Starckius.
[d] Zohar in Gen. fol. 43. 4.
[e] R. Abendana, Not. in Miclol Yophi in 1 Kings xi. 39.

[f] בגלוליהם diis stercoreis suis, Junius & Tremellius, Pagninus; stercoribus suis, Cocceius, Starckius.
[g] בשקוציהם abominandis suis, Starckius; abominationibus, Pagninus, Cocceius.
[h] Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 47. 4. Vid. Sepher Ikkarim, l. 4. c. 29.

have been dispossessed of that again, in which state they now are; but that it refers to time to come, when, being converted to Christ, they shall possess their land again, and dwell in it, as long as the sun and moon endure: *and my servant David shall be their prince for ever*; or their king, as the Targum; and which cannot be understood of any temporal prince, but of the King Messiah, whose throne is for ever and ever; whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; and who shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and ever, Psal. xlv. 6. Dan. ii. 44. Luke ii. 32, 33. and to whom it is applied by several Jewish writers[k].

Ver. 26. *Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them*, &c.] So the covenant of grace is called, Isa. liv. 10. one principal article of which is peace and reconciliation made between God and his people by the blood of Christ, agreed on in that covenant, from whence it has its name: now here it signifies that this covenant should be made known to the converted Jews, and their interest in it; in virtue of which they shall see that peace is made for them by the blood of Christ; and shall have a true conscience-peace in themselves, through that blood of the covenant being sprinkled on them; and be at peace with converted Gentiles, and even with their worst enemies, enjoying all kind of prosperity, temporal and spiritual: *it shall be an everlasting covenant with them*; it shall not wax old, and vanish away, as the former covenant did; under which they were before the coming of Christ, which was exhibited in types and shadows, legal sacrifices and carnal ordinances; and besides, God will always have a covenant-people among them from this time to the end of the world; so that a *lo-ammi* shall no more be written upon them: *and I will place them, and multiply them*; that is, place them in their own land, and increase their number there: or, *I will give them*[l]; a place in their land, and every blessing temporal and spiritual: so the Targum, "I will bless them, and "multiply them:" *and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore*: not any material temple, but his word and ordinances; in which he will grant his spiritual presence with them, and which shall continue to the end of the world.

Ver. 27. *My tabernacle also shall be with them*, &c.] The symbol of his presence: the meaning is, that he shall dwell in them by his spirit and grace; and every one of them shall be the temple of the living God, in whom he will walk and dwell: *yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people*: which is repeated for the confirmation of it; see ver. 23.

Ver. 28. *And the Heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel*, &c.] Or the Gentiles, the converted Gentiles, shall observe and take notice of the gracious dealings of God with his people the Jews; that he calls them with an holy calling; implants principles of grace and holiness in them; separates and consecrates them for his service, and enables them to walk holily, soberly, and righteously: *when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore*: when his worship shall be set up among them; his Gospel shall be preached unto them, and received by them; and his ordinances administered unto them; and which shall continue till the second coming of Christ.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

THIS chapter gives an account of an enemy of the Jews, under the name of Gog, that shall invade their land, and disturb their peace, after they are settled in it; who is described by the countries over which he rules; and against whom the prophet is bid to set his face, and prophesy of him, the Lord being against him; and who would cause him to return from Judea unsuccessful, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. the number of his confederates, their warlike accoutrements and preparations for the invasion of the land of Israel, are foretold, ver. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. his wicked designs and intentions to spoil and plunder the inhabitants of it, ver. 10, 11, 12. the notice taken of his projects by the merchants of Tarshish and others, ver. 13, 14. his coming up to invade the land is again observed for the certainty of it; and the place from whence, and the time when he should come, are mentioned, as well as God's design in it, and which had been before predicted by his prophets, ver. 14, 15, 16, 17. and the chapter is concluded with a denunciation of divine wrath, which shall be terrible to all the inhabitants of the earth, and to all creatures in heaven, earth, and sea; when he and his forces shall be destroyed by the sword, by pestilence, and by dreadful storms and tempests, ver. 18—23. of which destruction a fuller account is given in the next chapter.

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto me*, &c.] At the same time as the preceding prophecy did, as the copulative *and* shews; which predicts the restoration and conversion of the Jews; the union of their tribes under the King Messiah; and their settlement in their own land: and this respects some disturbance they should meet with upon it, for a short time, by a powerful enemy hereafter described: *saying*: as follows:

Ver. 2. *Son of man, set thy face against Gog*, &c.] Of the phrase, *setting the face towards*, or *against*, see the notes on ch. vi. 2. and xxi. 2. and xxv. 2. but who this Gog is the prophet is bid boldly to face, and intrepidly declare the wrath of God against, interpreters are divided about. Calmet[m] thinks that Cambyses and his army are meant by Gog and Magog, which to mention is enough; and it is the opinion of St. Ambrose[n] that the Goths who ravaged the Roman empire in the fifth and sixth ages are meant: others, who suppose this prophecy was fulfilled after the Jews'

[k] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2. Ben Melech in Psal. cxliv. 14. Abendana Not. in Miclol Yophi in Hagg. ii. 22. Abarbinel, Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 3. 4. & 20. 1.

[l] ונתתים dabo eos, Montanus, Piscator; dabo ipsos, Cocceius, Starckius.

[m] Dictionary in the words *Gog* and *Magog*.

[n] De fide ad Gratianum, l. 2. sect. 4. col. 144. tom. 4.

return from the Babylonish captivity, and before the coming of Christ, take Gog to be a common name of the kings of the lesser Asia and Syria, or the Seleucidæ, who distressed the Jews in the times of the Maccabees; the chief of whom was Antiochus Epiphanes, who is supposed to be more especially designed, and was a type of antichrist; and they are the more strengthened in this opinion, because they find, in Pliny [n], that the city of Hierapolis in Syria was called by the Syrians Magog; and they fancy the name of Gog is the same with Gyges a king of Lydia, whose country was called from him Gygea, or Gog's land, who was grandfather to Crœsus; and which country came into the hands of Cyrus, and from the Persians into the hands of the Greeks, and so to the Seleucidæ; for which reason they may bear this name in this prophecy; but it is certain that the prophecy refers to what should be in *latter years*, and in the *latter days*, ver. 8, 16. phrases which respect the times of the Messiah, the Gospel dispensation, and oftentimes the latter part of that; and even those times when the Jews shall return to their own land, and continue in it for ever, as the preceding prophecy, with which this is connected, shews; and so the Jews always understand it of an enemy of theirs yet to come. Cocceius is of opinion, that the Romish antichrist is meant; and that Gog signifying the covering or roof of a house, fitly points him out; who puts himself between God and man, as the roof is between heaven and earth; and who keeps out the light of divine things, the heat of love, and rain of spiritual blessings, from the church; and compares with this the veil over all nations, Isa. xxv. 7. and the covering cherub, Ezek. xxviii. 14, 16. but I rather think the Turk is here meant, the eastern antichrist, in whose possession the land of Judea now is; and which, when recovered by the Jews, will greatly exasperate him, and he will gather all his forces together to regain it, but in vain. The learned Vitringa [o], though he is of opinion that this prophecy, according to its first and proper sense, respects the kings of Syria, the persecutors of the church, that should bring large and well-disciplined armies into the land of the people of God, gathered out of the northern nations, and Scythians, and would be defeated in the land of Canaan; yet mystically intends the Turks, the Scythian nation and northern people, who, by a like attempt, will infest the church of the people of God, and invade their country; and this he makes no doubt of is the proper aspect of Gog and Magog: and Samuel Dauderstat, a Lutheran divine, has wrote a dissertation, *De Antichristo Orientali*, concerning the eastern antichrist, which he explains of Gog and Magog: and Michael Buckenroder, another Lutheran, has written upon the irruption to be made by Gog and Magog into the mountains of Israel [p]. Osiander thus explains the several names mentioned; by Gog I think the Turk is meant, by Magog the Tartarian, by Meshec the Muscovites, and by Tubal the Wallachians; and Starckius on the place observes, that if this prophecy is yet to be fulfilled, we shall easily find our Gog, and point out his metropolis Constantinople; so that I am not singular in my opinion. Gog signifies *high* [q] and eminent, one in a very exalted station: it comes from the same root, and has the same signification, as Agag, to whose height and exaltation there is an allusion in Numb. xxiv. 7. where the Samaritan and Septuagint versions read Gog: it is the same with ياجوج, *Jagog*, by which name the Arabians called the Scythians that lived far east, particularly those that were situated to the north of China beyond Imaus, as Golius [r] observes; and Josephus [s] says that the posterity of Magog are called Scythians, and these inhabited Tartary; and there, as Paulus Venetus [t] affirms, are the countries of Gog and Magog, which they call Gug and Mungug now; from hence came the Turks, even from Tartary, which is called by the eastern writers Turchestan, whence they had their name; and so may with great propriety be called by the name of Gog; their emperor also being a high and mighty one, whose empire must be destroyed; and which is signified by the passing away of the second woe, and the drying up of the river Euphrates, Rev. xi. 14. and xvi. 12. upon which passages this and the following chapter may be thought a good commentary; and so the Jews [u] make Gog to be the general of the Ishmaelites or Turks, as Armillus of the Christians, and who shall reign in the kingdom of Magog or Scythia. Gog is the name of a man, 1 Chron. v. 4. as it is here, and not of a country. The country of Gog is called, as follows, *the land of Magog*, of which Gog is king, as Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it: it may be supplied in connexion with the former clause, *set thy face against Gog, in the land of Magog*; or, *against* Gog, against *the land of Magog*, so Kimchi. The countries of Jagog and Magog, according to the Arabic geographer [x], are surrounded by Mount Caucasus, which Bochart [y] conjectures has its name from thence; it being in the Semi-Chaldee language, the language of the Colchi and Armenians, גוגחזן, *Gog-husan*, or Gog's fortress. This land of Magog is the same with Cathaia or Scythia, that part of Tartary from whence the Turks came; and which perhaps may come into their hands again before this prophecy is fulfilled; and even now the Turk calls himself king of Tartary; and the Magog of Pliny in Syria, the same with Aleppo, is in his dominions; which Maimonides [z] also takes notice of as in Syria, though he seems to distinguish it from Haleb or Aleppo; however, according to him, they were near to one another; though some [a] think the place in Pliny is corrupted, and that it ought to be read Mabog, as it is, by Maimonides, Magbab. Gog is further described as *the chief prince of Meshec and Tubal*: some render it, *prince of Rosh, Meshec*, and *Tubal*; taking Rosh,

[n] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 23.
[o] Comment. in Jesaiam, vol. 1. p. 654.
[p] Vid. Calmet. Bibliotheca Sacra, art. 67. p. 623.
[q] Hiller. Onomastic. Sacr. p. 67, 406, 477.
[r] Lexic. Arabic. in Rad. اج, col. 26.
[s] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 1.
[t] Apud Schindler. Lex. Polyglott. col. 232. And Harris's Voyages and Travels, vol. 1. p. 604.
[u] Vid. Huls. Theolog. Jud. par. 2. p. 511.
[x] Geograph. Arab. par. 9. clim. 5. lin. 22, 23.
[y] Phaleg. l. 3. c. 13. col. 187.
[z] Hilchot Terumot, c. 1. sect. 9.
[a] See Hyde Not. in Peritsol. Itinera Mundi, p. 48.

as the text, for the name of a place, a part of Scythia, from whence the Russians came, and had their name; so it is rendered by the Septuagint, Symmachus, and Theodotion; and some later Greek writers[a] make mention of a country called Ros, which, they say, is a Scythian nation, situated between the Euxine Pontus and the whole maritime coast to the north of Taurus, a people fierce and wild. Meshech and Tubal were the brethren of Magog, and sons of Japhet, Gen. x. 2. whose posterity inhabited those countries called after their name; who, according to Josephus[b], are the Cappadocians and Iberians; and among the former is a place called Mazaca, which has some affinity with Meshech; and there was a country called Gogarene[c], a part of Iberia. According to Bochart[d], these are the Moschi and Tybareni, people that dwell near the Euxine sea, and under the dominion of the Turk; wherefore the Grand Turk may be called the chief prince of them: *and prophesy against him*; foretel his ruin and destruction, which is hinted before. Mention is made of his invasion of the land of Judea, and that for the comfort of the Jews, that they might have nothing to fear from this formidable army.

Ver. 3. And say, thus saith the Lord God, behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.] Which is repeated for the confirmation of it, that so it would certainly be; that the Lord, the mighty God, and King of kings, would in his providence frown upon him, and appear against him; and his titles are repeated also, to shew that all his greatness, grandeur, and power, would not protect him from the vengeance of God.

Ver. 4. And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, &c.] Or, I will put hooks in thy jaws, and with them turn thee back; or rather, *turn thee about*[e]; and lead thee where and as I please; for this is not to be understood of God's putting hooks into his jaws, and leading him back from his enterprise of invading the land of Judea; as he put a hook in the nose and a bridle in the lips of the king of Assyria, and brought him back from Jerusalem, Isa. xxxvii. 29. but of his using him thus in his providence to draw him to the land of Israel, out of his own land, as fishes are drawn with the hook out of the water. The sense is, that he would so work upon and influence the heart of Gog, that he should be inclined to come out of his own land and invade Judea; just as the Lord is said to draw Sisera and his army, Judg. iv. 7. as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe. So the Targum, "I will "persuade thee, and put hooks in thy jaws;" that is, incline his heart to take such a step, which should be to his destruction: *and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army*; all his janizaries, and large army out of Turkey, and other parts of his dominions: *horses and horsemen*; the Turkish armies, chiefly consisting of cavalry: see the note on Rev. ix. 16: *all of them clothed with all sorts of armour*; or completely clothed, as the Targum: for the word *armour* is not in the text; and besides, their armour is particularly mentioned afterwards; and so Kimchi has it, with all kind of garments, richly clothed and decorated, especially the principal officers, and so made a fine show: *even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords*; or huge armies, as the Targum; the Turks have always been used to bring prodigious large armies into the field: see the note on Rev. ix. 16.

Ver. 5. Persia, Ethiopia, and Lybia with them, &c.] These are the confederates or auxiliaries of the Turk, which shall join with them in this expedition. Persia is a neighbouring kingdom to the Turks, and may fall into their hands before this comes to pass, and is in a fair way for it at this time, through the intestine divisions in it; however, it will be confederate with them. Ethiopia or Cush does not design the country of the Abyssines in the dominions of the Great Mogul, but Arabia Chusea, which lay between Judea and Egypt, and is now in the hands of the Turks: and Lybia or Phut is the name of one of the sons of Ham, Gen. x. 6. who, according to Josephus[f], founded Lybia; and from him the inhabitants of it were called Phuteans (as they are here by the Targum); and he observes that there is a river of his name in Mauritania. Lybia is a country in Africa, to the west of Egypt, and subject to the Turks: *all of them with shield and helmet*; the Lybians are described by Jeremiah, ch. xlvi. 9. as those *that handle the shield*; and the Egyptians, to whom the Lybians were near neighbours, and whom they might imitate in their warlike arms, as in other things, wore shields down to the feet, as Xenophon[g] relates.

Ver. 6. Gomer, and all his bands, &c.] Or all his army, as the Targum. Gomer was the eldest son of Japhet, Gen. x. 2. from whom descended the people called by the Greeks Galatians, or Gallo-Grecians, as Josephus[h] says, who before were from him called Gomerians; others think that Phrygia, and the inhabitants of it, are meant; but, whether one or the other, they were both people of the lesser Asia, which is now in the hands of the Turks: *the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands*: Togarmah was one of the sons of Gomer, Gen. x. 3. whose posterity, according to the Greeks, as Josephus[i] says, were the Phrygians; but others rather think the Cappadocians descended from him; and that Togarmah designs their country, which also is a part of the Turkish dominions; see the note on ch. xxvii. 14. Several moderns, as Calmet[k] observes, believe that the children of Togarmah peopled Turcomania in Tartary, and Scythia; and which he approves of; and the Turks are mentioned by Ben Gorion[l] as one of the ten families of Togarmah. The Targum renders it here the province of Germany; as it is also interpreted in the Talmud[m], but wrongly: *and many people with thee*; from other places and nations, besides those

[a] Euseb. [illegible], & Joan. [illegible] apud Selden. de Synedriis, l. 2. c. 2. sect. 4.
[b] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 1.
[c] Strabo. Geograph. l. 11. p. 364.
[d] Phaleg. l. 3. c. 12. col. 188.
[e] [illegible]
[f] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 2.
[g] Cyropaedia, l. 6. c. 14. & l. 7. c. 41.
[h] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 1.
[i] Ibid.
[k] Dictionary in the word Togarmah.
[l] Heb. Hist. l. 1. c. 1. p. 2.
[m] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 10. 1.

named; especially out of the lesser Asia, as Pamphilia, Cilicia, and other places; and perhaps from Tartary, and elsewhere.

Ver. 7. *Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself*, &c.] All warlike stores and provisions: this is ironically said; and suggests that he would do so, and yet all would be in vain, and to no purpose: *thou and all thy company, that are assembled unto thee:* or all thine armies, as the Targum, gathered out of his dominions, and made up of his auxiliaries and allies; let them all be furnished with arms, and every thing proper for the expedition designed: *and be thou a guard unto them:* the general of them; let them observe and obey thy word of command; guide and direct, guard and protect them in their march; and take care of them when entered the land of Judea, that they are not exposed to any unnecessary danger, or cut off by any stratagem or ambuscade: this is also sarcastically said; signifying that let him use all the care and caution that a wise and prudent general can do, yet he and his army should perish.

Ver. 8. *After many days thou shalt be visited*, &c.] After the Ottoman empire has stood a long time, as it has already; when the *many days* will be ended that Israel should be without a king and a prince, &c. Hos. iii. 4. then shall Gog or the Turk be visited of God, not in a way of grace, but vengeance: he shall be punished for all his iniquities, and his punishment or destruction will be brought about in the following manner: *in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword;* that is, into the land of Judea, the right owners of which shall now be returned unto it; who have been for many years drove and kept out of it by the sword of their enemies; see Jer. xxxi. 2. and these *latter years* are the same with the *latter days*, in which these people shall seek the Lord and the Messiah, and fear him and his goodness, and return to their own land, Hos. iii. 5, and i. 11. when the Turks, enraged at it, will raise a numerous army, and enter it, in order to repossess it. The description of the Jews, who are most manifestly pointed at, is continued: and *is gathered out of many people against the mountains of Israel;* or rather, *to the mountains of Israel**; for it seems to design the land of Judea, that is, the people of it; who shall be gathered out of the several nations where they are now dispersed, and brought into their own land; described by the mountains of Israel, because a mountainous country, and a very fruitful one; see ch. xxxiv. 13, 14. and not the army of Gog gathered out of many nations, as before observed, to march against the people of the Jews; though this seems to be the sense of the Targum, "in the end of years thou shalt come "into the land, against which are turned those that "slay with the sword, who are gathered out of many "people against the mountains of the land of Israel:" *which have been always waste:* of a longer time than the seventy-years' captivity, even ever since the destruction of it by the Romans; and if the time of the carrying captive of the ten tribes by Salmanezer is respected, it is longer still: *but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them;* that is, the people of the Jews, the proprietors of the land of Israel, shall now be brought forth out of the several nations where they are scattered, and shall inhabit their own land, and dwell in the utmost security, having nothing to fear from their most potent enemies, even Gog himself; and though he shall come against them in the following manner.

Ver. 9. *Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm*, &c.] That comes suddenly, looks black and terrible, and causes darkness and horror; makes a great noise, and is very threatening of danger; signifying, that the Turks will come into the land of Judea suddenly to surprise it, and with great wrath and fury, and threaten them with utter destruction; so the king of the north is said to come like a whirlwind, which many interpret of the Turk also, Dan. xi. 40: *thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land;* with darkness and distress; suggesting the vast number of his army, which should overspread the land of Judea, as it follows: *thou and all thy bands, and many people with thee;* his own army should be very numerous, and this increased by his confederates, or such who will voluntarily join him in this expedition.

Ver. 10. *Thus saith the Lord, it shall also come to pass*, &c.] Who is the Lord God omniscient, and knows the thoughts of men's hearts afar off; which, though they are contingent and voluntary, yet certain to the foreknowledge of God; who knows them before they are conceived, and can foretel what they will be, and which come to pass accordingly: it is now above two thousand years ago since this was said, and as yet is not fulfilled, but certainly will be: that *at the same time shall things come into thy mind;* when the Jews shall be in their own land, dwelling in great security; and when Gog or the Turk shall make preparation to disturb them, and shall enter into their land suddenly and furiously: many thoughts shall come into his mind, many schemes and devices, but not good ones: *and thou shalt think an evil thought;* to do mischief to the Jews; to disturb their peace, to dispossess them of their land, and plunder their substance.

Ver. 11. *And thou shalt say*, &c.] What came into his mind, and what he thought of; this he shall say to his privy counsellors and ministers of state; or to the generals and officers of his army; or to his confederates and allies, and even to them all, to have their opinion and approbation of it; and to encourage them to join him, and go with him: *I will go up to the land of unwalled villages;* a land which has nothing but villages in it, and those no walls about them to protect them: this he said by way of contempt; and the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it *the abject land;* and to observe how easily he could conquer it, there being nothing in his way to hinder him, or give him trouble: *I will go to them that are at rest, and dwell safely;* as the Jews will do in the latter day, when they shall own and acknowledge the Messiah, Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. and dwell in their own land, where they will be quiet and peaceable, and think and do no harm to any, nor mistrust their neighbours doing any harm to them; but shall live in the utmost tranquillity and security; and which Gog or the Turks will take the

* על הרי ישראל ad montes Israel, Pagninus, Cocceius, Starckius.

advantage of, and from hence promise themselves an easy conquest of them: *all of them dwelling without walls, and* having *neither bars nor gates;* no walls to their cities; no gates to walls; nor bars to gates; but without either; being under the protection of God, and putting their trust in him, who is a wall of fire round about his people; and is better to them than gates with bars.

Ver. 12. *To take a spoil, and to take a prey, &c.*] These are the words of Gog continued; suggesting that he should have no occasion to fight; should have nothing else to do but to seize upon the goods and plunder the substance of these people: *to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are* now *inhabited:* such as were before desolate, and had lain long so, but now peopled and cultivated; these he would attack and demolish, and make a spoil and prey of: *and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations;* a description of the Jews, as before, ver. 8: *which have gotten cattle and goods;* so that it should seem that Gog or the Turks will not immediately attack the Jews upon their possession of the land of Judea; but some time after, when they have settled in it, and have acquired much wealth and riches in cattle and goods, and then think to have a fine booty of them: *that dwell in the midst of the land:* or, *the navel of the land*[1]: which may design Jerusalem, situated in the midst of the land of Israel, and so called the navel of it, as that is in the midst of the body; as Enna is said by Cicero to be the navel of Sicily: or, as Kimchi thinks, the land of Israel itself is meant; which is in the midst of the world, and so the navel of it; though the former seems best.

Ver. 13. *Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, &c.*] These are not any of the people that shall come along with Gog on his expedition; but some neighbouring nations bordering on Judea, who will address him in the following manner, as he passes through them, or by them. Sheba and Dedan design the Arabians inhabiting that part of Arabia which lay near to Judea, even Arabia Petræa and Felix: and the merchants of Tarshish are the Tyrians and Zidonians that traded by sea, as Tarshish sometimes signifies; or to Tartessus in Spain, where they had much traffic; and may design the people of those places that will at this time be living in Palestine, that trade by sea to foreign parts. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it the *Carthaginian merchants*, or *the merchants of Carthage: with all the young lions thereof:* which some interpret of sea-pirates, for their cruelty and voraciousness. The Targum paraphrases it, all the kings thereof; and so Kimchi thinks kings and princes are meant; but the Septuagint version renders it, all their villages; and so the Syriac version, all the cities: *shall say unto thee, art thou come to take a spoil?* either out of compassion to the people of the Jews; or rather by way of congratulation, and as expressive of joy at it; or else out of envy that they have no share in it; suggesting that they would gladly join with him, and partake of the booty: *hast thou gathered thy company together to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?* all which 'tis supposed might easily be done; only they might wonder that so rich a potentate as the Turk should give himself the trouble to raise such an army, and come so far, for cattle and goods, and silver and gold, of which he had such plenty. Gog gives no answer, but God does.

Ver. 14. *Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say unto Gog, &c.*] Since these are his thoughts and designs, and those his big words, and which he'll endeavour to put in practice, and be applauded for it by others; deliver this prophecy to him, or concerning him: *thus saith the Lord God, in that day, when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shall thou not know it?* that Israel are returned to their own land? that they dwell in it safely? that they have abundance of cattle, gold, and silver? that they have no walls, gates, and bars to protect them? that they live without fear or suspicion of any enemy to annoy them, and therefore may be easily surprised and taken? this, when it comes to pass, will soon be known by the Turks, through their spies and informers: or, *shalt thou not know*[2]? or experience the divine vengeance for thy wicked thoughts, intentions, and attempts against Israel? he should. So the Targum, "shalt thou not know the vengeance of "my power?" or shalt thou not know that all attempts to make them uneasy and uncomfortable will be in vain?

Ver. 15. *And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, &c.*] Whose original was from Scythia, or Cathaia in Tartary, that lies to the north of China; and who will bring with him many people from the Euxine and Caspian seas, and from the northern parts of lesser Asia; and the Turk is, by many interpreters, thought to be the king of the north, in Dan. xi. 44, as before observed: *thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses;* the Turkish armies consisting chiefly of horse, as has been observed on ver. 4: *a great company, and a mighty army:* for quantity many, for quality strong and mighty. The Targum is, "many armies, and much people;" the Turks usually have large armies; see the note on ver. 4.

Ver. 16. *And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, &c.*] Which is repeated for the certainty of it; and not for his comfort, but his ruin; not to the terror of Israel, but for the glory of God: *as a cloud to cover the land;* the land of Israel, so great should be his army; see the note on ver. 9: *it shall be in the latter days;* of the Gospel state, or kingdom of the Messiah, when the Jews shall be converted, and are returned to their own land, Hos. iii. 5: *and I will bring thee against my land;* not to possess it, nor to hurt it, or do any injury to the people of it: but *that the Heathen may know me;* the Pagan kingdoms of China, and others; who by God's judgments on the Turks will come to the knowledge of the true God, and acknowledge him, and will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, Rev. xi. 15. and xvi. 12: *when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes;* that is, when God shall appear to be a holy and just God, in inflicting deserved punishment on the enemies of his people;

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[1] על טבור הארץ ἐπὶ τὸν ὀμφαλὸν τῆς γῆς, Sept.; in, vel super umbilico terræ, Paguinus, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius.

[2] תדע experturus eses, Junius & Tremellius; experieris, scil. pœnam meam, Piscator.

when his omniscience and omnipotence, his power and faithfulness, and other perfections of his will be displayed, in fulfilling those prophecies concerning Gog or the Turks; infidels will be convinced of the truth of divine revelation; of the God of Israel being the true God; of Jesus being the Messiah; and of the Christian religion being of God, and shall profess the same. The Targum is, "that the people may know "the vengeance of my power, when I shall be sancti-"fied in thee, who shall see thy vengeance, O Gog."

Ver. 17. *Thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Putting the question that follows: art *thou he of whom I have spoken of old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I will bring thee against them?* certainly thou art he: but who were the prophets that prophesied of Gog before Ezekiel, since he is the first that makes mention of him? to this it may be replied, that though he is not mentioned by name, yet he might be prophesied of under other names, as by Isaiah under the name of Leviathan, ch. xxvii. 1. and by Micah under the name of the Assyrian, ch. v. 5. The Jews[r] say that Eldad and Medad prophesied of him, which Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abendana remark; who all observe, agreeably to the Talmudists in the place referred to, that these two are the prophets meant; and therefore 'tis directed to be read not *shanim*, years, but *shenaim*, two; namely, those two prophets prophesied one prophecy at one time, or together; but this is not to be depended upon: it should be observed, that this must be considered as spoken at the time of the accomplishment of this prophecy, and so may have respect to the Prophet Ezekiel himself, or to Joel, ch. iii. 1, 2. and to Zechariah, ch. xiv. 1, 2, and even to the book of the Revelation, ch. xvi. 14, 16. and xix. 19.

Ver. 18. *And it shall come to pass at the same time, when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God*, &c.] As before prophesied of and described: *that my fury shall come up in my face:* as a man's blood rises up in his face, and his colour appears, when he is wroth and angry: or, *in my nose*[s]; as men when they are angry puff and blow, expand their nose, breathe through it; but against whom is all this wrath and fury? Starckius, a modern interpreter, thinks it is against the land of Israel, against the church; but it rather seems to be against Gog himself; the Lord being provoked at his attempt against the land of Israel, and the wicked designs he had to spoil and plunder it.

Ver. 19. *For in my jealousy*, and *in the fire of my wrath, have I spoken*, &c.] Not against his people Israel, but against Gog, who had thought evil against them, and now was about to put it in practice; and therefore in zeal for his own glory, and for the good of his people, and in indignation against his and their enemies, he declares, resolves, and determines: *surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel:* not a consternation among the people of Israel, affrighted at the armies of Gog, and the terrible appearance they shall make, and the devastations they threaten; but in Gog himself, and his army, through the wrath of God upon them, and the vengeance he will take of them in the land of Israel, they will enter upon to destroy; not but that there may be some dread in the minds of the Jews upon the appearance of so formidable an army in their land: this shaking, according to Jarchi, will be by thunder and lightning. Kimchi understands it of an earthquake, in a literal sense, and compares with it Zech. xiv. 4, 5. see also Rev. xvi. 18, which speaks of an earthquake that will be about this time.

Ver. 20. *So that the fishes of the sea shall shake at my presence*, &c.] From whence it appears that this great shaking shall not be on account of the army of Gog, and the devastations that shall make; but on account of the powerful presence of God, which will be manifest in the destruction of his army: and what is here said of the shaking of the fishes of the sea, *and the fowls of the heaven, and the beast of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the earth*. must be understood figuratively and hyperbolically, as Kimchi observes, and in allusion to earthquakes, which both shake and terrify all kind of creatures; the blow given to Gog will be so terrible, that all nature will seem to be thrown into a convulsion and agitation by it; see Jer. iv. 24, 25: *and the mountains shall be thrown down;* as they are sometimes by earthquakes; and as the mount of Olives will at this time cleave asunder; and perhaps other mountains will, as Kimchi observes, see Zech. xiv. 2, 3, 4. Isa. ii. 12—15, and xxx. 25: *and the steep places shall fall:* the Targum renders the word *towers;* and so the Syriac version, and Piscator: the word signifies stairs or steps[t], such as in a ladder; and is translated *stairs*, Cant. ii. 14. it seems to me to design such mounts as are raised by besiegers of a city, by means of which they may be able to scale the walls of it, which Jarchi suggests; though he says he had heard it said that these are rocks bending over and hanging, and appear as if they were falling; which agrees with our version; and it may be observed, in some of those precipices, there are like stairs or steps to go up them: *and every wall shall fall to the ground:* this shews that the words are not to be taken literally, but figuratively; only to express how sensibly the power of God should be felt and perceived by all creatures, and in all parts of the land; since now the Jews will dwell in a land of unwalled villages, and in cities without walls, bars, and gates; see ver. 11.

Ver. 21. *And I will call for a sword against him*, &c.] That is, against Gog: or, as I would choose to render the words, *for I will call for a sword;* so the particle is rendered, ver. 19. and which Noldius[u] agrees to; and this gives a reason why there should be such a commotion in the land of Israel; because the Lord, who has the swords of princes at his command, will call for the Christian kings to come to the assistance of the Jews, and fight against the Turk: who will pursue him *throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God:* throughout the land of Israel, which is mountainous; and is called the Lord's, because he hath chosen it for his people, given it to them, and now dwelt among them; and in all parts of it where

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[r] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 17. 1. & Gloss. in ib.
[s] באפי in nasum meum, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.
[t] המדרגות gradus, Munster, Pagninus, Montanus.
[u] Concordant. Ebr. Partic. p. 285, 286.

the enemy is, the sword of the Jews, and of those princes that should come in to their assistance at the call of God, shall be sent against them, and cut them off: and not only so, but *every man's sword shall be against his brother*: as the swords of the Midianites were, Judg. vii. 22. and of the enemies of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xx. 22, 23. The Turkish army will consist of a mixed people of many nations, who will quarrel among themselves, and destroy one another.

Ver. 22. *And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood*, &c.] Not only the sword of the Jews and the sword of Christian princes shall be drawn against him, and the sword of Gog's soldiers against one another; but the Lord himself would plead with him by his judgments, or take vengeance on him, as the Targum; and send a pestilence in his army, which should destroy vast numbers of it: as the army of Sennacherib was destroyed by one when before Jerusalem; and make a great slaughter among them by that and other judgments: *and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain*; a horrible tempest of divine wrath, Psal. xi. 6. as he came into the land of Israel like a storm, so he shall be destroyed by one much more terrible: *and great hailstones*; such as were cast upon the Canaanites, Josh. x. 11. and as there will be on men, the enemies of the church of God, at the pouring out of the seventh vial, Rev. xvi. 21: *fire and brimstone*; as God rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah, Gen. xix. 24. signifying that in like manner will God deal with those enemies of his people; so at the battle of Armageddon, which seems to be the same with this here, the beast and the false prophet will be taken alive, and cast into a lake of fire burning with brimstone, Rev. xix. 20. and to this rain or tempest of fire and brimstone upon Gog there is an allusion in Rev. xx. 9.

Ver. 23. *Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself*, &c.] Shew the greatness of his power, and the strictness of his justice and holiness, and glorify these, and all other his perfections, in the destruction of the enemies of his people: *and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord*; Heathen nations shall now come to the knowledge of the true God, and his son Jesus Christ, and of the Christian religion, and shall embrace and profess it; see the note on ver. 16. the kingdoms of the world will now become the Lord's, Rev. xi. 15.

C H A P. XXXIX.

THIS chapter is a continuation of the prophecy of the destruction of Gog, which is both repeated, and more largely described, ver. 1—8. then follows an account of the burning of his weapons of war, which will last seven years in burning, during which time there will be no need of the use of wood, ver. 9, 10. and of the burial of him, and many of his army; the place where, and the time that will be taken up in doing this, even seven months, are observed, ver. 11—16. and every feathered fowl and beast of the field are called upon to feed on the flesh of those that are left unburied, ver. 17—20. and by all this the glory of the Lord will be seen, known, and acknowledged, both by the Heathens, and by the house of Israel, ver. 21, 22. and the former will also be informed that the present captivity of the Jews has been for their sins and transgressions, ver. 23, 24. and the chapter is concluded with a promise of their return from captivity, when they shall know the Lord, and their interest in him; who will after this no more hide his face from them, but pour out his spirit upon them, under whose influence they shall ever continue, ver. 25—29.

Ver. 1. *Therefore, thou son of man, prophesy against Gog*, &c.] As he had been ordered to do before, and must still continue to do it: *behold, I am against thee, O Gog*; which is repeated for the confirmation of it, and to inject terror into him; for terrible it is to have God against any: *the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal*: see the note on ch. xxxviii. 2. the Septuagint version adds Ros here as there.

Ver. 2. *And I will turn thee back*, &c.] Not from the land of Israel; for thither it is said in the latter part of the text he would bring him; but the meaning is, that he would *turn* him *about*, as the word [w] signifies, in his own land, and lead him about at his pleasure, and bring him out of it, unto the land of Israel; signifying hereby that the providence of God would be greatly concerned in this affair; and in which much glory would be brought unto him by the destruction of such a potent enemy of his people; which is the design of bringing him out; see the note on ch. xxxviii. 4: *and leave but a sixth part of thee*; meaning, not that a sixth part only should escape the vengeance of God, and all but a sixth part be destroyed in the land of Israel; for it looks as if the whole army would be utterly destroyed, and none left; but that, when he should come out of his own country upon this expedition, a sixth part of his subjects only should be left behind; five out of six should accompany him; so numerous should his army be, and so drained his country by this enterprise of his. Some render the words, *will draw thee out with an hook of six teeth* [x]; that is, out of his own land; and this clause stands in the same place and order as the phrase *and put hooks into thy jaws* does in ch. xxxviii. 4. and so may be thought to explain one another, and agrees with what follows: for, as for the sense of it given by Joseph Kimchi and others, "I will judge thee with six judgments [y], ver. "22, pestilence, blood, an overflowing rain, hailstones, "fire, and brimstone," it must be rejected; seeing as yet the account of his punishment is not come to; only an account is giving how and by what means he shall be drawn out of his own land; wherefore much better is the Targum, "I will persuade thee, and I

[w] שבבתיך circumducam te, Piscator; circumagam, Grotius.
[x] וששאתיך harpagone sextuplici extraham te, Vinarienses apud Starckium. So Buxtorf.
[y] Sex pœnis, sive plagis afficiam te, Munster, Tigurine version.

"will seduce thee:" so Jarchi seems to understand it: and the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, *I will lead thee*, agreeably to what follows: *and will cause thee to come up from the north parts*: see the note on ch. xxxviii. 15: *and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel*; not to inherit them, but to fall upon them, as in ver. 4.

Ver. 3. *And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand*, &c.] In which it is usually held, to have the arrow fitted to it: *and I will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand*: where they are commonly held when put into the bow, and then the bow is drawn with it; signifying hereby, that though he should come into the land of Israel, he should not succeed; he would be stripped of his armour, and it would be useless to him: bows and arrows are put for all kind of warlike instruments; and are particularly mentioned because they were chiefly used in war when this prophecy was delivered.

Ver. 4. *Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel*, &c.] Be slain, and his carcass lie there; so the Targum, "upon the mountains of the land of Israel thy "carcass shall be cast:" *thou and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee*; Gog and his army, auxiliaries and allies: *I will give thee to the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured*; great part of his army being slain, should not be buried, but be devoured by birds of prey, and savage beasts; such as eagles and vultures of the former sort, and lions, bears, wolves, &c. of the latter. This was always reckoned a very sore judgment and dreadful calamity, not to have a burial, but to be exposed to birds and beasts of prey; this was threatened to the Israelites, in case of disobedience to the law of God, Deut. xxviii. 26. and to the wicked Jews in the times of Jeremiah; and to that evil king of Judah, Jehoiakim, Jer. xvi. 4. and xxii. 18, 19. and is lamented as one of the greatest evils that could befall good men, Psal. lxxix. 2. and nothing was more dreadful among the Heathens themselves; hence Homer[z], among the many calamities Achilles was the cause of to the Grecians, mentions this as one, that he was the means of giving the bodies of a great number of their heroes to the dogs, and to the fowls of the air; so Virgil[a] represents the want of a burial, and being left to be fed upon by birds of prey, as severe a punishment of a wicked man as can be wished for.

Ver. 5. *Thou shalt fall upon the open field*, &c.] Some part of his army should fall upon the mountains, and others upon the plain; wherever they will be found, they'll be destroyed, either by the sword of the Jews and Christian princes, or by God's judgments from heaven: *for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God*: and therefore it should surely come to pass, since no word of his ever fails; this is added to assure of the truth of it, since it might be thought incredible that so large an army should be destroyed.

Ver. 6. *And I will send a fire on Magog*, &c.] On the land of Magog, see ch. xxxviii. 2. whilst Gog is in the land of Israel, and he and his army perish there, his country shall be destroyed by fire, or by some judgment or judgments of God, which shall consume like fire. The Septuagint version renders it, *I will send a fire on Gog*; but he before is said to fall upon the mountains of Israel; his country is meant; it designs the destruction of the Ottoman empire: *and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles*: that belong to the Turkish dominions; not only the inhabitants of the Continent shall be consumed, but those that dwell in islands, and think themselves safe and secure, and so live carelessly; or such who live on the sea-coasts, it being usual in Scripture to call such places isles; and may intend those who dwell near the Euxine and Caspian seas: *and they shall know that I am the Lord*: by his judgments executed upon them.

Ver. 7. *So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel*, &c.] That is, his perfections; his holiness and justice in punishing their enemies; his truth and faithfulness in fulfilling his promises to them; his power in inflicting judgments on Gog and his army; and his goodness in their preservation and protection: *and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more*: either the Heathens round about, who before blasphemed it, saying that God was not able to deliver his people from such a potent enemy; but now their mouth will be stopped, and they'll not dare to speak any more after this manner: or else the Israelites, who shall be so influenced by the grace and goodness of God unto them, as to fear the Lord and his goodness, and not dare to commit the sins they formerly did, whereby his name was polluted and blasphemed among the Heathens: and *the Heathen shall know that I am the Lord, the holy One in Israel*: they shall know, by these judgments and providences, that he is the true God, and they shall acknowledge and confess it; and that he is a holy and just God, and dwells in Israel, and grants his gracious as well as powerful presence to his people; nor shall they dare to molest them any more.

Ver. 8. *Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord God*, &c.] That is, the salvation of his people, and the destruction of their enemies; the prophecy concerning all this is come to pass, and the whole is accomplished; thus, because of the certainty thereof, it is represented as if the time was actually come, and the thing was really done; for the event is as sure as if it was now fulfilled: *this is the day whereof I have spoken*; by the Prophet Ezekiel and others; see the note on ch. xxxviii. 17.

Ver. 9. *And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth*, &c.] Out of their houses into the streets, where Gog's soldiers will lie dead, and their armour by them: or rather out of their cities, where they dwelt safely, and where they kept themselves, and were secure from the enemy: these seem to be distinct from the militia of Israel, engaged in battle with Gog; these were the inhabitants that will stay at home, and yet share in the spoil and plunder; see Psal. lxviii. 12. these, after the battle is over, and the victory obtained, of which they will have information, will then march out without fear into the open fields and mountains, where the army of Gog will fall, ver. 4, 5: *and shall set on fire and burn the weapons*; the armour of Gog's

[z] Iliad. 1. l. 4, 5.

[a] —— non te optima mater
Condet humi, patriove onerabit membra sepulchro
Alitibus linquere feris. Æneid. l. 10.

army, which they shall find lie by the dead, or upon them; or which they that flee will cast away; these they shall gather together, and lay on a heap, and burn, as sometimes has been the practice of conquerors; or rather they shall take them to their own houses, and make fuel of them, and burn them, instead of wood out of the fields and forests, as the following verse shews: *both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows*: which were the weapons that Gog and his associates used; see ch. xxxviii. 4. and xxxix. 3: *and the handstaves, and the spears*; the *handstaves* were either half-pikes or truncheons, as some think; or javelins, as others: *and they shall burn them with fire seven years*; which some take to be a certain number for an uncertain, and others an hyperbolical expression; but when it is considered what a vast army this of Gog's will be, and what prodigious numbers of weapons of all sorts must be carried by them, and the little use of fire in those hot countries; it may be very well taken in a literal sense, and the meaning be, that so great will be the quantity of warlike weapons that will be found and gathered, that they will serve for fuel for the space of seven years.

Ver. 10. *So that they shall take no wood out of the field*, &c.] During that seven years; or they shall have no need to do so, as the Syriac version; having a sufficiency of armour: *neither cut down any out of the forest*; out of the forest of Lebanon, or any other, where they used to fetch wood for their necessary uses; but so great a quantity of armour shall now be brought home by them to their houses, that they should have no need to be at the trouble and expense of fetching wood from the forests: *for they shall burn the weapons with fire*; the reason of which will be, because they will have no occasion for them hereafter; for when this battle is over, which seems to be the same with that at Armageddon, there will be an entire destruction of all the enemies of Christ and his church; the world will be cleared of them, and there will be war no more, and so no more use of weapons; this will be the last battle that will be fought; see Isa. ii. 4. Mic. iv. 3: and *they shall spoil those that spoil them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord God*: not only take their weapons and burn them, but strip them of their garments, and take away their gold, and silver, and jewels, and every thing of value they shall find about them.

Ver. 11. *And it shall come to pass in that day*, &c.] When this destruction of the army of Gog shall be made; *that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel*; or, *a place there, a grave in Israel*[b]; he that thought to have subdued the whole land, and taken possession of it, shall have no more of it than just a place for a grave, to be buried in; a place fit for a grave, as the Targum; and where that will be is next observed: *the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea*; a valley through which travellers used to pass from Syria, Babylon, and other places, to Egypt and Arabia Felix, which lay east of the sea; not the Mediterranean sea, which lies west of Judea; but either the Dead sea, the sea of Sodom, a sulphureous lake, to which there may be an allusion, Rev. xix. 20. or the sea of Cinnereth, or Genesareth, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi; the same with the sea or lake of Tiberias and Galilee, mentioned in the New Testament; which sense is approved of by Gussetius[c]; where was a passage from the land of Canaan to the east of the same sea. Calmet[d] thinks it stands for the great road at the foot of Mount Carmel, to go from Judea, Egypt, and the country of the Philistines, into Phœnicia; which road was to the east of the Mediterranean sea. *And it shall stop* the noses *of the passengers*; or the passengers shall stop their noses, because of the ill smell of the carcasses[e]; or their mouths, the mouths of blasphemers, who shall no more blaspheme the God of Israel, when they shall observe this monument of his power, in the destruction of his and his people's enemies. It may be rendered, *it shall stop the passengers*[f]; from passing that way, because of the multitude of the carcasses that shall fall there, and which is the reason of their being buried out of the way; this sense Jarchi takes notice of. The Targum is, "and it is near to two mountains;" as if this clause described the situation of the valley. *And there shall they bury Gog, and all his multitude*: all his army, such of it as the fowls and beasts had not devoured, and the bones they had left; not his army only, but himself also, the Sultan or Grand Seignior of the Turks, the general of his mighty army: this was not true of Antiochus; he died not, nor was he buried in the land of Israel. *And they shall call it the valley of Hamon-gog*. Hamon signifies a multitude; and this name will be imposed upon the place of Gog's sepulchre, because of the multitude slain and buried here, and to perpetuate the memory of it: there never was yet a place of this name in the land of Israel, which shews that this event is yet future. Calmet takes it to be the valley of Jezreel, in which he thinks the army of Cambyses was defeated, after the death of that prince; wrongly taking Cambyses and his army for Gog and Magog.

Ver. 12. *And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them*, &c.] So long time will the burial of Gog's army take up, because of the multitude of it, and by reason their bones will be scattered here and there; which will require time to gather them together, and bring them to one place: the reason of the burial of them will be, partly out of humanity, which the Christian religion, which will then be embraced by the Jews, teaches and encourages; and partly because of the disagreeable sight and ill smell of the carcasses of the slain, and to prevent the air being infected therewith, which might cause noxious diseases. Jarchi gives the reason of it, because Gog is of the seed of Japhet, who covered his father's nakedness, and therefore worthy of a funeral: but a better reason follows, *that they may cleanse the land*: not from ceremonial uncleanness, a place being unclean, by the ceremonial law, where dead carcasses, or the bones of dead men, lay; for the ceremonial law, as it is abrogated, will now be disused by the Jews them-

[b] מקום שם קבר locum ibi sepulchrum, Starckius; locum ubi sit sepulchrum, Cocceius.
[c] Ebr. Comment. p. 583.
[d] Dictionary in the word *Vale*.

[e] So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 66. 2.
[f] וחסמת היא את העברים et erit illa obturans transeuntes, Starckius; et erit illa frenans transeuntes, Cocceius.

selves, when converted; but from natural pollution, before mentioned.

Ver. 13. *Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them*, &c.] That is, a great number of the common people of the land of Israel, especially of those that dwell near the field of battle, shall be employed in burying the slain; and which they will be very ready to do, for the reasons above mentioned: *and it shall be to them a renown*; or, *for a name**; they shall be commended for their humanity to their enemies, and shall be spoken of with honour, as being the peculiar people of God, whom he has so remarkably appeared for, protected, and defended: *the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord God*: the day that will be renown to them will be to the glory of God; whose greatness, goodness, power, and wisdom, will be seen in saving his people, and destroying their enemies.

Ver. 14. *And they shall sever out men of continual employment*, &c.] That is, the principal of the house of Israel, their magistrates and governors, shall select certain persons, to be daily employed in the following work, till ended: *passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it*; these men will be appointed to go through the land of Israel, to gather up such carcasses and bones of dead men as remain anywhere after the seven-months' burial before observed; and all passengers or travellers shall be assisting to them in it, both in directing where any such carcasses and bones may lie, and in bringing them to the common place of burial; that so the land may be thoroughly cleansed from such disagreeable objects: *after the end of seven months shall they search* or begin to search, as the Targum; when seven months are ended, in which the people in general will be employed in burying the dead; these men before mentioned will be sent out into the several parts of the land, to search in caves, and dens, and ditches; among thickets, thorns, and briers, where the slain may fall; or where soldiers, being wounded, might betake themselves and die; or their carcasses or bones be dragged and left by beasts and fowls; to find them out, and bring them to the place of interment.

Ver. 15. *And the passengers that pass through the land*, &c.] Not along with the searchers, but that travel through it upon business in it, or in other lands: *when any seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it*; as he passes along, if he happens to see a human bone in the way, or hard by, he shall stop and lay a stone, or a heap of stones, by it, or some such mark or token, signifying that a man's bone lies there: *till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog*: that is, which sign shall continue till the searchers come that way and take up the bone, and carry it to be buried in the valley of Hamon-gog: for carcasses and bones were not to be buried in the place where they were found, but to be brought and interred in this common place of sepulture.

Ver. 16. *And also the name of the city shall be Hamonah*, &c.] The name of the city nearest to this place, where Gog and his multitude shall be buried, shall be called Hamonah from thence, which signifies a multitude; or Polyandrion, as the Septuagint version, a place where many graves are; or perhaps a new city will be built near this place, and so called, to perpetuate the memory of it; or else, as Kimchi observes, Jerusalem will be so called, from the multitude of those that will be slain near it; but, however, neither that nor any other city in the land of Israel have ever bore any such name; from whence it may be concluded that this prophecy does not refer to the times of Antiochus, or any yet past, but to time to come: *thus shall they cleanse the land*; thoroughly and completely, so that not a bone shall be left unburied.

Ver. 17. *And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] What the prophet is ordered by the Lord to say is to creatures not then in being, nor yet; and, were they, they could not understand his words; but however, when the time comes, partly by an instinct in nature, and partly by a particular direction of Providence, they will be gathered together upon so great a slaughter of men; for what follows, though mentioned in this place, will be between the slaughter of Gog's army, and the burial of it, as Kimchi well observes; for after the burial such an invitation would be impertinent; and which is made not for the sake of creatures, but of men, to denote the certainty of this great carnage that shall be made: *speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field*; this must be understood of such fowls, and such beasts, as devour dead carcasses, for all will not feed on them; a like invitation is given after the battle at Armageddon, the same with this here, Rev. xix. 17. only with this difference, there an angel is said to cry, here the prophet; there to the fowls only, here to the beasts of the field also; no doubt respect there is had to this passage: *assemble yourselves, and come: gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifices that I do sacrifice for you*; such a slaughter of men is called a sacrifice, because there is a likeness between that and the killing of beasts for sacrifice; besides, these enemies of God and his people will fall a victim to his justice, as well as be a repast for fowls and beasts, who are invited, as to a feast, to feed upon them; and there being so much of the power and providence of God in all this, it is ascribed to him, and so is called *the supper of the great God*, Rev. xix. 17: *even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel*; where Gog's army will fall, ver. 4. and in such vast numbers, that it may well be called a great sacrifice; the sacrifice of a great army by the great God, and for such a great number of creatures: *that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood*; the flesh and blood of the sacrifices, even of slain men, which carnivorous creatures delight in. The Targum is, "draw near everywhere round about "to the slain, which I slay for you with a great "slaughter upon the mountains of Israel, and ye shall "eat the flesh, and drink the blood."

Ver. 18. *Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty*, &c.] Of the soldiers, men of strength and courage, and fit for war, with which the army of Gog will abound: *and drink the blood of the princes of the earth*; both the princes of his own family and court, and those of his allies and auxiliaries that will come along with him: *of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks*; which the Tar-

* לשם in nomen, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.

gum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, interpret of kings, princes, dukes, rulers, and governors; and so does John, in the Revelation, of kings, captains, and mighty men, ch. xix. 18: *all of them fatlings of Bashan;* which was a country in Israel, very fruitful, and full of pastures, where much fat cattle were bred; and to which these great personages in Gog's army are compared, for their bulk, strength, and wealth. So the Targum, "all of "them rich in substance." It may be rendered, *all of them the* meric *of Bashan:* for *meri* is the name of an ox or buffle; and Jarchi says that a fat ox is called in the Arabic language الماري *almari*[a].

Ver. 19. *And ye shall eat fat till ye be full,* &c.] The fat of men; and such as before described generally are fat, and of which they shall have enough; and, though voracious creatures, shall eat to satiety: *and drink blood till ye be drunken:* as men are with wine, who become mad with it; and so birds and beasts of prey grow fiercer by drinking blood: the meaning is, they should have their fill of the flesh, fat, and blood, of slain men: *of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you;* the Targum is, "of the flesh of the "slain, which I have slain for you;" see the note on ver. 17.

Ver. 20. *Thus shall ye be filled at my table with horses and chariots,* &c.] With the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, as John interprets it, Rev. xix. 18. and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions: and with the flesh of men that ride in chariots used in war; for chariots themselves cannot be eaten; and with these the birds and beasts of prey will be filled at the Lord's table, which he will furnish for them on the mountains of Israel, on the field of battle, where Gog and his army will fall: and thus as the Lord's supper is called the table of the Lord, 1 Cor. x. 21. so this table of the Lord is called the supper of the great God, Rev. xix. 17. this is further explained, *with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God;* that is, with the flesh of valiant men, generals, captains, officers of all sorts, and common soldiers, even of all men, great and small, bond and free, Rev. xix. 18.

Ver. 21. *And I will set my glory among the Heathen,* &c.] The glory of his divine perfections, particularly his power and his goodness, in destroying the enemies of his people, and saving them; which will be set in a clear point of view to the Heathen, that they cannot but observe it; and this is the ultimate end of this strange event, as it is of all that the Lord does, even his own glory, subordinate to which is his people's good: *and all the Heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them;* his vengeance and power, as the Targum; the punishment inflicted by his mighty hand on Gog and his army: these Heathens are the Pagan kingdoms of China, &c. and of Tartary, Persia, and the whole Turkish dominions, being Mahometan, which are no better than Heathen: these will be converted to the Christian religion, in consequence of this event; for this will be the passing away of the Turkish woe, which will make way for the sounding of the seventh trumpet; and when these kingdoms will become Christ's, and way be made for the kings of the east to come over to him, Rev. xi. 14, 15. and xvi. 12.

Ver. 22. *So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God,* &c.] That has chosen them, redeemed them, called them, manifested his covenant love and grace to them, and protected and defended them: this destruction of their enemies will be a proof of it; and they'll hereby be led into a clearer knowledge of him, and of his goodness to them; and make a more firm and constant profession of him, even *from that day and forward,* to the end of time: for after this the Jews will no more apostatize, but will for ever remain the people of God and Christ.

Ver. 23. *And the Heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity,* &c.] Before this they thought the captivity of the Jews, and all their distresses, were owing to their own weakness, and the weakness of the God they served, and to the superior strength of their enemies, and the power of their gods; but now, by this strange and amazing destruction of Gog and his army, they'll see that it was not owing to those things, but to the sins and transgressions of the people of the Jews: *because they transgressed against me;* prevaricated with him, acted a perfidious and treacherous part to him, as the word[b] signifies; which they did, when they delivered Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah, into the hands of the Gentiles, to be crucified; it is their disbelief of Christ, and rejection of him, and mal-treatment of him, that is here more especially pointed at; and which is the cause of their present long captivity and exile, and of all the afflictions and troubles they have since met with: so the Targum renders it, "they dealt falsely "with my Word;" the Word made flesh, the incarnate Saviour: *therefore hid I my face from them;* took no notice of them, shewed them no favour, took no care of them; disregarded their prayers and cries, and removed his presence from them, and all the tokens of it. So the Targum, "I caused my Shechinah (or "majesty) to remove from them;" and thus it has been ever since, and now is: *and gave them into the hand of their enemies;* the Romans, who took away their place and nation; which they feared would be the case, should many believe in Christ; but the true reason of it was because they did not believe in him, John xi. 48: *so fell they all by the sword;* that is, through the sword of the conquering Romans; they fell into their hands; some perished by the sword, and others were carried into captivity; and all were punished for their iniquity, trespass, and perfidy.

Ver. 24. *According to their uncleanness,* &c.] Not ceremonial, but moral; they were an impure and adulterous generation, as our Lord calls them, Matt. xii. 39. and xvi. 4: *and according to their transgressions have I done unto them:* or *rebellions,* as the Targum renders it; or defections, as the word[c] signifies; their rebellions against the King Messiah; their defections from

[a] Vid. Bochart. de Script. Animal. par. 1. lib. 2. c. 28. col. 284.

[b] מעלו בי prævaricati essent contra me, Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, Cocceius, Starckius.

[c] כפשעיהם secundum defectiones eorum, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Starckius; pro defectionibus ipsorum, Cocceius.

him; their contempt of him, and rejection of his yoke, and non-submission to his ordinances; according to the desert of such crimes, the Lord dealt with them; "took vengeance on them," as the Targum is: in the destruction of their nation, city, and temple: *and hid my face from them*: or caused his Shechinah to remove from them, as the same paraphrase; see the note on ver. 23.

Ver. 25. *Therefore thus saith the Lord*, &c.] The Jews having been long punished for their sins; and being brought to repentance for them, and to faith in Christ, as they will be in the latter day: hence it follows, *now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob*: or the captives of Jacob, the people of Israel, that have been carried captive into all lands; these shall be gathered from thence, and brought into their own land: *and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel*: all the twelve tribes; which shews that this has not respect to the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; for then the Lord had mercy on the house of Judah only; or the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; but their return from their present captivity, and future conversion, when *all Israel shall be saved*: as the fruit and effect of the rich sovereign grace and mercy of God unto them, Rom. xi. 25, 26: *and will be jealous for my holy name*; or, *zealous*[1] for the glory of it, that it be no more blasphemed among the Heathen; and that it be glorified among his own people.

Ver. 26. *After that they have borne their shame*, &c.] And disgrace, among the nations where they are scattered; being captives, exiles, in distress and affliction, and under the manifest tokens of the divine wrath and vengeance: it may be rendered, *and they shall bear their shame*[m]; that is, as Jarchi glosses it, "when I "shall do good to them, and not render to them according to their wickedness, then they shall bear "their shame, and be confounded, and not able to "lift up their face;" as penitent persons, under a sense of divine wrath, blush, and are ashamed to look up to God; see Ezra ix. 6—10. Menachem interprets the word in the sense of atonement and forgiveness, as it is used in Psal. xxxii. 1. as if the meaning was, then they shall have their sins, which caused shame, forgiven them. Kimchi's gloss is, "they shall carry in "their mouths, and make mention of their shame they "had in captivity." *And all their transgressions whereby they have transgressed against me*: that is, the punishment of all their trespasses in their captivity, or the shame of them, being now brought to repentance; and which will be aggravated to them, when they remember that these were committed by their forefathers, and since approved of by them. *When they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid*: as they did in the times of Christ; they were in entire peace, and no enemy disturbed them; and were in the possession of their own land, and enjoyed the blessings of it, and had their religious as well as civil liberties; and yet rejected the Messiah, his doctrine, ordinances, and salvation by him.

Ver. 27. *When I have brought them again from the people*, &c.] That is, then shall they be ashamed, and repent of all their trespasses and sins: *and gathered them out of their enemies' lands*; from the provinces of their enemies, as the Targum; when they are collected together in a body out of the several nations where they are now dispersed, and brought to their own land: *and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations*; when they shall publicly repent of their sins, and forsake them, and seek the Lord their God, and the King Messiah, and embrace and profess him, and acknowledge that God has been righteous and holy in all his dispensations towards them.

Ver. 28. *Then shall they know that I am the Lord their God*, &c.] See the note on ver. 22: *which caused them to be led into captivity among the Heathen*: for their sins and transgressions: and so the Targum adds, "because they sinned before me:" *but I have gathered them into their own land*; being now penitent for their sins, and believing in the Messiah; and so the Targum, "and now, because they are converted, I have "gathered them," &c.: *and have left none of them any more there*: among the Heathen, or in the land of their enemies; every one shall be returned to the land of Canaan, be they where they will, as when they came out of Egypt: and this is typical of the salvation of God's elect, or mystical Israel; not one of them shall be lost or perish, but all shall be brought to repentance: this again shews, that this prophecy did not respect the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; since then many were left behind.

Ver. 29. *Neither will I hide my face any more from them*, &c.] The Jews, upon their future conversion, will always have the worship of God among them, and his presence with them; he will always take notice of them; they will ever be under his protection and care; he will never remove his Shechinah from them any more, as the Targum: a further proof that this refers to future times; for, after their return from Babylon, God did hide his face, and remove his presence from them, and left them to ruin and destruction by the Romans: *for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God*: this refers not to the effusion of the spirit on the day of Pentecost, but to one that is yet to come, when the Jews will be converted in the latter day; after which God will no more depart from them, nor shall they depart from him; see Zech. xii. 10. Isa. lix. 19, 20, 21.

CHAP. XL.

THIS and the eight following chapters contain a vision of a city and temple herein described, and are thought to be the most difficult part of the whole Bible. The Jews forbid the reading of it till a man is arrived to thirty years of age; and then he must expect to meet with things in it he does not understand, and

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[1] קנאתי assumam zelum, V. L. zelabo, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.

[m] ונשו את כלמתם et portabunt, Pagninus, Montanus, V. L. Grotius; et ferent ignominiam suam, Starckius.

which must be left until Elias comes to explain them. Many Christian commentators have omitted the exposition of these chapters; and all acknowledge the difficulties in them. Something however may be got out of them, relating to the Gospel, and Gospel church-state, which I am fully persuaded is intended by the city and temple; for that no material building can be designed is clear from this one observation; that not only the whole land of Israel would not be capable of having such a city as is here described built upon it, but even all Europe would not be sufficient; nor the whole world, according to the account of the dimensions which some give of it. The circumference of the city is said to be about eighteen thousand measures, ch. xlviii. 35. but what they are is not certain. Luther makes them to be thirty-six thousand German miles; and a German mile being three of ours, the circuit of this city must be above a hundred thousand English miles; and this is sufficient to set aside all hypotheses of a material building, either of city or temple, the one being in proportion to the other. The Jews dream of a third temple to be built, by their vainly-expected Messiah; but nothing is more clear than that the true Messiah was to come into the second temple, and by that give it a greater glory than the former ever had; as is evident from Hagg. ii. 6—9. and, according to Malachi, he was to come suddenly into his temple, which could be no other than the then present one, Mal. iii. 1. and into which Jesus came, and where he often appeared and taught, as well as entered into it with power and authority, as the Lord and proprietor of it; by which he appeared to be the true Messiah, as by many other characters; see Luke ii. 22, 46. and xxi. 37. Matt. xxi. 12, 13. There are some who think that Solomon's temple, as it was before it was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and as it was rebuilt by Zorobabel, is here described; and that partly to let the Jews know what a glory to their nation they lost by their sins; and partly that they might have a complete pattern for the rebuilding of it, as well as to comfort them under its present ruins; but there is no agreement between them. This temple was to be built at a distance from the city, several miles; according to some ten, others twenty, and by the best account twenty-seven miles; see ch. xlv. 1—5. whereas Solomon's temple, and that built by Zorobabel, were in the city of Jerusalem: nor from either of these flowed waters, which rose up to a river, on the bank of which were many trees for food and medicine, and whose waters were healing, and quickened wherever they came, as from this, ch. xlvii. 1—12. nor do we ever read of the east gate of these temples always shut, as this, ch. xliv. 2. and besides, both these temples were profaned and destroyed; whereas this shall never be, but God will dwell in it for ever, ch. xliii. 7. neither place, structure, nor worship, agree. Nor is this city here the same with the New Jerusalem John had a vision of; for though he borrows some of his expressions to describe it from hence; and in some things there is an appearance of agreement, as of the river of water of life, and the tree of life on both sides of the river, Rev. xxii. 1, 2. yet the description agrees not, either with respect to its gates, or its compass; and though there was no temple in that John saw, as there was none in this, it being without the city; yet here is a temple in this vision, and the greatest part of it is taken up in the description of it. It remains that this must be understood mystically and figuratively of the Gospel church, which is often spoken of as a city and temple, Heb. xii. 22. Rev. iii. 12. and which began to have its accomplishment in the first times of the Gospel, immediately after the death and resurrection of Christ; when his disciples had a commission to preach the Gospel to all nations; and who accordingly did, even before the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the material temple, so that Gospel churches were planted in all parts of the world; and especially this was the case, when the Roman empire, called the whole world, became Christian: though the further and greater accomplishment of this vision will be in the latter day; when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; when Jews and Gentiles will be converted, and Gospel churches be set up everywhere; so that the Gospel church-state, or kingdom of Christ, signified by the great mountain in Dan. ii. 35, and by this large city here, will fill the whole earth: and the rather this may be thought to be the design of this vision to represent it, as it follows the prophecies of the Jews' settlement in their own land; and of the destruction of Gog, or the Turk, attempting to dispossess them; of which in ch. xxxvii. xxxviii. xxxix. In this chapter are first an account of the vision in general, the time, manner, and place of it, ver. 1, 2. a description of the person, the builder and owner of the house; and by whom the prophet is shewn the several parts and dimensions of it, whom he calls to him for that purpose, ver. 3, 4. and then a particular account is given, which begins with the outward wall around the house, ver. 5. then the east gate, with its posts, porch, and chambers, and the outward court with its chambers, ver. 6—19. then the gate of the outward court to the north, with its chambers, and the gate of the inner court over-against that, ver. 20—23. then the gate to the south, with its posts, arches, and chambers, ver. 24—31. then the inner court to the east, its gate, chambers, and arches, ver. 32—34. then the north gate, with its posts, chambers, and arches, ver. 35—38. in the porch of which are the tables, on which the sacrifices are slain, ver. 39—43. after which are described the chambers for the singers and the priests, ver. 44, 45, 46. then the inner court and altar in it; and the chapter is concluded with the dimensions of the porch of the house, ver. 48, 49.

Ver. 1. *In the five-and-twentieth year of our captivity, &c.*] That is, from Jeconiah's captivity, from whence this prophet begins his dates: he calls it *our* captivity, because he himself was then carried captive; and this was twenty years after his first vision; see ch. i. 1, 2: *in the beginning of the year, in the tenth* day *of the month;* the Jews had two beginnings of their year, the one on civil accounts, which was in the autumnal equinox, in the month Tisri, which answers to part of our September; and if this is meant here, the tenth day of it was the day of atonement, in which the Jews were to afflict their souls; but on this day the prophet has a view of the Gospel church, which receives the atonement by the sacrifice of Christ: the other beginning of the year, which was on ecclesiastic accounts, was in

the vernal equinox, the month Nisan, which answers to part of our March; and the tenth day of it was the day that the passover-lamb was separated from the flock, and kept up till the fourteenth; the time between Christ's public entry into Jerusalem, and his being sacrificed as the passover for us. Some interpreters go one way, some the other: it is not easy to determine which is meant; though I think more probably the latter, since church-affairs are chiefly here represented. This, according to the Talmudists[x], was the year of the jubilee: Bishop Usher[a] places it in the year of the Julian period 4140, and before Christ 574: and makes the day to be the 30th of April, and the third day of the week (Tuesday); and, as to the year, Mr. Whiston[b] agrees with him: *in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten;* taken, broken up, and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar; its walls demolished; its houses burnt, and inhabitants put to the sword, or carried captive. This was in the eleventh year of Zedekiah's reign, to which add the fourteen years from hence, and they make twenty-five, as reckoned from Jeconiah's captivity: *in the self-same day the hand of the Lord was upon me, and brought me hither;* that is, on the tenth day of the month, of the new year, begin when it will. The spirit of the Lord, which is sometimes called the finger of God, and the power of God, this fell upon him, or was laid on him, and impressed his mind and soul; and he in a visionary way, as appears by what follows, was brought into the land of Israel, and to Jerusalem, according as things were represented to his mind; though, as to his body, he was still in the land of Chaldea. The Targum interprets *the hand of the Lord* the spirit of prophecy; see ch. i. 2.

Ver. 2. *In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel,* &c.] Or by the spirit of prophecy, as the Targum again; that is, being under the impressions of the spirit of God, it appeared to him, in a visionary way, as if he was really brought out of Chaldea, and set in the land of Israel; see ch. viii. 3. as John was carried away in the spirit to see the New Jerusalem, Rev. xxi. 10: *and set me upon a very high mountain;* as John also was, that he might have a view of this large city and temple, which were to fill the whole world: thus Christ was taken up to an exceeding high mountain, to be shewn the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, Matt. iv. 8. it is needless to inquire what this mountain was, whether Moriah, on which the temple was formerly built, or any other mountain near Jerusalem, since no material temple is exhibited to be built upon it; nor would such a mountain, especially Zion or Moriah, have been a proper place, if a material temple at Jerusalem was here designed, which must have stood upon it; but this is visionary, as well as the city and temple; if it respects any thing, it may the strength, the visibility, and exalted state of the church of Christ in the latter day; see Isa. ii. 2: *by which was as the frame of a city on the south;* the prophet in the vision, and as to his view of things coming from Babylon, which lay north of Judea, has a prospect of the south of the city and temple; and, first, there appeared to him, to the south of the mountain on which he stood, the plan of a city; or which was as one, for the city itself is not described till last; the description is of the temple first; and which for its wall, gates, courts, and towers, looked more like a city than a temple; nothing is more common than for the church of Christ to be compared to a city, especially as in the latter day; see Psal. lxxxvii. 3.

Ver. 3. *And he brought me thither,* &c.] Being brought into the land of Israel in vision, and to a high mountain in it, by which were as the frame of a city; he was from thence brought to the city or temple itself, which looked like one: *and, behold,* a note of attention and admiration: *there was a man;* one in human form; not a created angel, but the Messiah, the builder and owner of the city and temple, whom it was proper the prophet should first have a view of; and by whom he was to be made acquainted with the several parts and dimensions of those buildings: he is called a *man,* not that he was a mere man, but the eternal God; or otherwise he would not have been fit to be the architect or builder of such a fabric; nor as yet was he really man, but is so called, because it was determined he should, and it was agreed by him that he would become man, and it was foretold as a certain thing; and besides, he often appeared in a human form before his incarnation, as he now did, being most suitable to the prophet, and making himself more familiar to him; as well as it was a preludium of his future incarnation, and of what he should be when this vision would be fulfilled: *whose appearance was like the appearance of brass;* denoting the glory and splendour of his divine Person, being the brightness of his father's glory; also the glory of his human nature, in his state of exaltation, and the glory of his office, as Mediator; and especially the glory and brightness he'll appear in when this vision will take place, with which he shall enlighten the whole earth, and slay antichrist; see Rev. xviii. 1. 2 Thess. ii. 8. also it may denote his purity and holiness in both his natures, divine and human; not only in the former, but in the latter, in which he is free from sin, original and actual; and even now from sin imputed, having made full satisfaction for it, without which he'll appear when he comes a second time, Heb. ix. 28. this may likewise point at his great strength, as God, and man, and Mediator; who has made the world, and holds all creatures in being; who is the mighty Redeemer of his people; has bore their sins, and conquered their enemies; supports their persons; bears their burdens, and supplies them with strength: once more, it may intend his duration; who, though he was once dead, is alive, and lives for ever; his priesthood is unchangeable; his kingdom an everlasting one; and he the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and his years fail not: *with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring-reed;* one in one hand, and the other in the other hand; the one to measure greater, the other lesser matters; and both signify the sacred Scriptures, the rule and measure of faith and practice; and to which, in the latter day, all will be reduced; the doctrines then preached will be quite agreeable to them; the ordinances will be administered as they were first deli-

[x] T. Bab. Eracin, fol. 12. 1.
[a] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3430.
[b] Chronological Tables, cent. 10.

vered; the form, order, and discipline of the churches, will be according to the primitive pattern; there will be no deviation from it; see Zech. ii. 1, 2. Rev. xi. 1. and xxi. 15: *and he stood in the gate:* of the house or temple, as being Lord and proprietor of it; having the keys of it, to open and shut, let in and keep out, at his pleasure; see Heb. iii. 6. Rev. iii. 7. and as the guide of the prophet, to lead him into the several courts and apartments, and give him the dimensions of them, that he might shew them to the house of Israel, to be observed by them; and here, as Cocceius observes, he stands, invites and and calls persons to come into his house, and partake of all the privileges and entertainments of it; see Prov. i. 20. and viii. 1, 2, 9. and ix. 1—5. yea, here he stands, as being not so much the doorkeeper, as the door and gate itself; as he is the way to his father, the gate that leads to eternal life, so the door into a Gospel church; see John xiv. 6. and x. 1, 9.

Ver. 4. *And the man said unto me, son of man, &c.*] The glorious and illustrious Person before described, who appeared in a human form, spoke to the prophet, calling him *the son of man*, a title often bestowed upon him in this prophecy; and here used to put him in mind of his original and descent, and of his meanness and unworthiness; thereby teaching him humility, which is necessary in order to receive instruction, and learn the knowledge of divine things: and also he might use this free and familiar way of speaking, both to express his philanthropy or good will to men, and to take off all terror from the mind of the prophet at his appearance; that he might more diligently attend to what he should see and hear, which be next advises him to: *behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears:* look with both eyes, and hear with both ears; that is, look wistly, and hear attentively; for if persons only have a glance or superficial view of any thing, or hear in a careless and indifferent manner, what they see and hear will make little impression upon them; nor will they retain, but soon forget it, and be incapable of relating it unto others: *and set thy heart upon all that I shall shew thee:* let thy mind be intent upon it; thoroughly consider it, and ponder it within thy heart; let it engross all thy thoughts and affections; so it will be imprinted upon thy mind, and be remembered by thee; for, unless a man's heart is taken with what he sees and hears, it will soon be gone from him; and besides, these were things of great moment and importance, which were about to be shewn the prophet: as Moses had the pattern of the tabernacle shewn him in the mount; and as David had the pattern of the temple given him by the spirit and in writing, which were both typical of the church; and as John had a view of the New Jerusalem; so the prophet here is shewn the form and order of the Gospel church in the latter day: *for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither;* this was the design of his being brought in a visionary way out of Chaldea into the land of Israel, that he might have a view of the fabric after described; and therefore it was highly proper that he should diligently view it, and listen attentively to every thing that was said to him about it; and the rather, as he was to relate the whole to others, as follows: *declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel;* to the people of Israel then in captivity; and to the church of God in every age, to whom this prophecy should come, and by whom it should be read; that the people of God in all succeeding times might know what will be the state and condition of the church of Christ in the latter day; and how far they now come short of Gospel order and discipline; see ch. xliii. 10, 11. It becomes the ministers of the word faithfully to declare what has been shewn them, whether respecting doctrine or practice, even all things, and keep back nothing that may be profitable and useful.

Ver. 5. *And behold, a wall on the outside of the house round about, &c.*] The first thing that presents itself to the view of the prophet, after the sight of the architect or chief builder, is a wall encompassing this strange and wondrous building; which was like the frame of a city, as before observed: this wall was five hundred reeds long, and five hundred broad; see ch. xlii. 20. now this wall was both for separation and protection; that it was for separation is certain from ch. xlii. 20. it was to separate between the sanctuary and the profane place; that is, between the church and the world: the people of God were always a distinct and separate people; they were so from eternity, are so in time, and will be so to all eternity; they were distinguished from others by the everlasting love of God; by his eternal choice of them, and taking them into the covenant of his grace, in consequence of it; and by the redeeming grace of Christ, who has redeemed them out of every kindred, people, and nation; and by the efficacious grace of God, in effectual vocation, by which they are separated from the world, and become a distinct people from them; and so they will be in the resurrection-morn, and in the day of judgment, and in heaven for evermore: and what separates and distinguishes them is not any native goodness in them, nor any good thing done by them; but the purpose and grace of God, which is like a wall built firm and sure; not upon the works of men, but the will of God; and is unalterable and eternal; a wall that can never be battered down: it is this by which the church is enclosed as a vineyard and garden, to which it is sometimes compared, because separate and distinct from the waste, common, and field of the world; as here to a building encompassed by a wall, and divided from it: the church of Christ in all ages does or should consist of persons gathered out of the world, separated from it by the grace of God; but in the latter day it will more visibly appear to consist of such: it will be openly distinguished from the world, by the purity of its doctrines; by the faithful administration of ordinances; by the strictness of its discipline, and by the holy lives of the members of it; these, by the grace of God, will be a wall of separation round about it, to keep out profane persons and things; moreover, a wall is for protection, preservation, and safety; and such a wall the Lord himself will be to his people; he will be round about them, on their side, and on every side of them: yea, a wall of fire to enlighten, warm, and comfort them, and to consume their enemies, Zech. ii. 5. he'll be a wall about his church in his love to them, with which he encompasses them; and which is built, not on their loveliness, love, or obedience, but upon his sovereign will and pleasure; and the dimensions of which, its length, breadth, height, and depth, are unmeasurable:

it is a wall impregnable; it can never be broken down, and secures from all enemies whatever; and so he'll be in his power, by which his saints are kept as persons in a garrison, or any fortified place well walled about, and which is invincible; to which may be added salvation by Jesus Christ, which will be for the walls and bulwarks of the city and church of God in the latter day, to which belong the prophecies in Isa. xxvi. 1. and lx. 18. which salvation flows from the love of God; is secured by his purpose; established in his covenant; wrought out by Christ, and is an everlasting one; and is the firm security and safety of his church and people now, hereafter, and to all eternity: *and in the man's hand a measuring-reed of six cubits long by the cubit, and an hand breadth*; as in ver. 3. and this being the measure used in taking the dimensions of the whole building, it was proper it should be explained what it was, before they are taken, and the account given: it consisted of six cubits; but then as these differ, there being a common cubit, and a sacred or royal one, it was necessary it should be clearly pointed at, as it is, by observing that these cubits were to be understood of a cubit and a hand's breadth; the common cubit were eighteen inches, a foot and a half, or half a yard; and a hand's breadth were three inches; so that this measure consisted of three yards and a half. Some indeed are of opinion that the hand's breadth is to be added only to the six cubits, and not to each of them; but the text is clear and express that these cubits were by or according to a cubit and a hand's breadth. So the Targum paraphrases it, "and in the man's hand "measuring reeds, one of which was six cubits by a "cubit, which is a cubit and a hand's breadth;" and this is confirmed by what is said in ch. xliii. 13. *the cubit is a cubit and a hand's breadth*; to which may be added, that such was the royal cubit at Babylon, where Ezekiel now was, according to Herodotus[s]; who says, "the royal cubit is larger by three fingers "than that which was usually measured with, or the "common cubit;" in this way Jarchi and Kimchi understand it; though they make the common cubit to be but five hands' breadth, or fifteen inches, and this six hands' breadth, or eighteen inches: what this mystically signifies, see the note on ver. 3: *so he measured the breadth of the building one reed, and the height one reed*; not of the whole building of the house or temple, but of the wall before mentioned; the breadth or thickness of which was one reed, or three yards and a half; and the height of it was the same; denoting the great security, safe protection, and strong defence of the church of God.

Ver. 6. *Then came he unto the gate which looketh toward the east, &c.*] Or, *whose face is the way to the east*[t]; to the east of the house or temple; not to the eastern gate of the wall about the house; but to the eastern gate of the outward court; see ver. 20. for the man came from the wall he had measured unto this gate; which, with the other gates after mentioned, spiritually design Christ himself, who is the way, door, and gate, John xiv. 6. and x. 7, 9. Matt. vii. 13, 14. and this eastern gate more especially, where the prince sat, ch. xliv. 3. and which led into the outward court; and over-against which was another that led into the inner court, and so straight on to the holy of holies, at the west end of the house. Christ and faith in him, and a profession of him, are the way into the outward visible church, and to the external ordinances of it, baptism and the Lord's supper; he is also the way or gate that leads into the inner court, or into spiritual communion and fellowship with God; he is the way of access to the Father, and through whom saints have communion with him; for there is no coming to him, nor enjoyment of him, but through a mediator; and Christ is he, and he only, by whom we can draw nigh to God, have audience of him, and acceptance with him: he is the gate also that leads to eternal life; the way to heaven and happiness lies through his person, blood, and righteousness; he is the only way, the new and the living way; the plain way, and open gate, yet strait and narrow: *and went up the stairs thereof*; or the steps unto it, which were seven; see ver. 22, 26. and so the Septuagint and Arabic versions express it here, and read, *seven steps*; according to Jarchi, there were twelve steps, which he takes from the Misnah[u]; that there was a *chel* of ten cubits, and there were there twelve steps. It is certain that to the north and south gates there were but seven steps; though Lipman[w] observes, that it is possible there might be a greater declivity on the east side, which required so many steps. Some of the Jewish writers think this is to be understood of the height of the court of Israel above this court; as if it was said, from this court they went up seven steps to the court of Israel; but the plain meaning, as Lipman[x] observes, is, that these steps were without the gate, and are the height of the court from the mountain of the house to it: these Cocceius very ingeniously illustrates by the seven trumpets in the Revelation; which indeed are so many steps or gradual advances towards the kingdom of Christ, and the glorious and spiritual state of his church in the latter day; which will be introduced by the blowing of the seventh trumpet, when the mystery of God will be finished, and the kingdoms of this world become Christ's, Rev. x. 7. and xi. 14, 15. perhaps the man leading the prophet up these steps or stairs to the gate may signify the gradual increase of spiritual light and knowledge of the saints, in the person, offices, and grace of Christ, the way, the truth, and the life; indeed the whole work of grace on the heart is gradual; it is carried on by degrees; it is but begun, not yet finished, particularly the work of faith; believers proceed from one step to another; first see Christ by faith, then go to him, then lay hold on him, and retain him; their faith increases, and they go from strength to strength; and sometimes it grows exceedingly; the advances in it are many and manifest: *and measured the threshold of the gate, which was one reed broad*; of the same measure. The Hebrew word[y] signifies both a threshold and the upper lintel; and the one may intend the one; and the other the other, and both these: some think they point at

[s] Clio, sive l. 1. c. 178.
[t] אשר פניו דרך הקדימה facies ejus via ad orientem, Montanus; cujus facies ejus, Vatablus.
[u] Middot, c. 2. sect. 3.

[w] Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 9. fol. 2. 2.
[x] Ibid.
[y] סף sumitur pro inferiore limine, & pro superliminari, sive superiore limine, Capellus, Sanctius.

the two Testaments; or, as others, the two natures in Christ; and the strength of them, who is the gate, the way to God, the Mediator between him and man, and the mighty Redeemer. Cocceius, because mention is made of a third threshold, ver. 7, fancies that these three thresholds design the three witnesses, Father, Word, and Spirit; which three are one, and found in one gate, which is Christ; so that he that believes in him believes in all three; and he that has the one has the other: but it is a mistake of this learned man that these three thresholds belong to one gate; for that after mentioned is the threshold of the inner, and not the outer gate. Jarchi and Kimchi understand not the thresholds of the gate, but the posts of it.

Ver. 7. *And every little chamber was one reed long, and one reed broad*, &c.] The length and breadth were equal, three yards and a half long and broad; a perfect square. There were several of these little chambers or apartments in this building, at the several gates, and in other places after mentioned; of these chambers which were in the gates of the courts; as there were also others, according to Kimchi, on the wall of the mountain of the house; Lipman[z] says there is no mention made of them in the building of the second temple: these design not the hearts of particular believers, where Christ has a place, takes up his residence, and takes his rest; nor the many mansions in Christ's father's house in heaven, where the saints shall dwell with him to all eternity; but the several congregated churches of Christ. The fabric described in this and the following chapters intends the Gospel church-state in general; and these little chambers the several particular churches which will be set up in all parts of the world, east, west, north, and south. These may be called *chambers*, partly for their secrecy, 2 Kings vi. 12. Eccl. x. 20. here the Lord's hidden ones are, who, though well known to him, are unknown to the world; here the secrets of God's heart, of his love, grace, and covenant, are made known to his people; here Christ, whose name is secret, and the mysteries of his grace, are revealed to babes, whilst they are hid from the wise and prudent; and besides, the affairs of Christ's churches should be kept secret, and not published to the world: and partly for safety; see 1 Kings xx. 30. and xxii. 25. 2 Kings xi. 2. Isa. xxvi. 20. church-fellowship, the word and ordinances, being the means of strengthening faith, and preserving from apostacy; salvation is as walls and bulwarks to them; and the roof of them, which is Christ, see ver. 13, secures from all inclemencies, from the wind, storms, and tempests of divine wrath; he having bore it, and delivered from it; and from the scorching heat of persecution, and from all afflictions, as well as from the temptations of Satan, so as to be hurt and destroyed by either of them: likewise they may be called chambers, because quiet resting-places, as well as secret, safe, and sure ones, Isa. xxxii. 18. these are the resting-places of God, who has desired them, and dwells in them; and of Jesus Christ, where his rest is glorious, and where he gives spiritual rest to his people; and especially these will be such to the saints in the latter day, and great shall be the abundance of it: as also because of that communion and fellowship herein enjoyed, both among themselves, and with Father, Son, and Spirit; see Cant. i. 4. to which may be added, that here souls are begotten and born again to Christ; these are the chambers in which they are conceived and brought forth, Cant. iii. 4. and these may be said to be *little* chambers, in comparison of the general assembly and church of the first-born, which includes all the elect of God, and redeemed of the Lamb, a number which no man can number; as that is called little in comparison of the whole world, that lies in wickedness; and besides, those that dwell in these chambers are little and contemptible in the eyes of the world, as they are low and mean in their own eyes; even each less than the least of all saints: now these little chambers or churches are represented of an equal measure, denoting that they will be exactly according to the pattern of God's word; will have the same officers, the same doctrines and ordinances, and the same laws and rules; and will be of equal authority, not having one more power than another, or one over another; but entirely independent of each other: and being four-square, as the New Jerusalem is said to be, Rev. xxi. 16, may denote the perfection of them; that they will now be brought entirely to answer the rule of the word; and also the firmness and stability of them: *and between the little chambers were five cubits*; not a wall five cubits thick, as the Targum; and so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it[y]; but a space of five cubits, or of two yards and a half, one foot and three inches; so that these chambers were not contiguous; but a space was left between, which made them more airy; and by which means they had more of the benefit of the light, and heat of the sun, and afforded commodious places to walk in: all which shews the churches of Christ to be separate, distinct, and independent communities; and yet may have a communication with each other; as well as they all share the advantage of the light and heat of Christ the sun of righteousness rising on them: *and the threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate within was one reed*: or three yards and a half: this gate within was that which lay westward, and was nearer the temple; between which and the outer gate before mentioned was a porch, on both sides of which were little chambers; and the threshold or thresholds (one being put for both) were of the same dimensions with those of the thresholds of the other; and so point to the same things.

Ver. 8. *He measured also the porch of the gate within, one reed.*] This was either the measure of the breadth of the porch between the opposite chambers on both sides; or rather of the length of that space, which was between the third little chamber and the last gate; and such a space must be supposed to be between the first gate and the first little chamber, which space were three yards and a half; which shews how spacious the churches of Christ will be, and how exactly measured.

Ver. 9. *Then measured he the porch of the gate, eight cubits*, &c.] This could not be the length of the porch from gate to gate, or from east to west, as Lipman[z];

[z] Tzurath Beth Hamikdash. sect. 4. fol. 2. 1.

[y] So Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 4. fol. 2. 1.
[z] Ibid. sect. 6.

since there were five cubits between every little chamber; but the breadth of it from north to south, and was four yards and two feet over: *and the posts thereof two cubits;* these were columns or pillars placed on each side of the porch, or at the portal of the gate, of two cubits, or a yard and half a foot thick; which, added to the other eight cubits, made the entrance ten cubits, as in ver. 11. what these posts, pillars, or columns signify, see on ver. 14, 16: *and the porch of the gate was inward;* this was the porch of the inward gate; or this was the measure of the porch within the gate.

Ver. 10. *And the little chambers of the gate eastward,* &c.] Where the man now was, and was measuring; and the like chambers there were in the other gates, and of the same measure; of which chambers see the note on ver. 7: *were three on this side, and three on that side;* three on the right side of the porch to the north, and three on the left side of it to the south: *they three were of one measure;* one reed, or three yards and a half square, as in ver. 7. see the note there: *and the posts had one measure on this side and on that side;* on the right and left, north and south of the inward gate of the porch, which measure was two cubits, ver. 9.

Ver. 11. *And he measured the breadth of the entry of the gate, ten cubits,* &c.] Five yards, two feet and a half: this was the measure of the eastern gate, whether outward or inward; for they were both of a measure, as appears from the thresholds being alike: *and the length of the gate, thirteen cubits;* that is, the height of it; it was seven yards and three inches high; a prodigious gate this! a fit emblem of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the open door, the gate of life, through which whoever enters shall be saved; and there's room for multitudes to enter.

Ver. 12. *The space also before the little chambers was one cubit on this side,* &c.] Or, *a border*[a] of half a yard and three inches to the front of the chambers; where those that belonged to them might walk, or have seats to sit on; such a space there was before the three little chambers on the north side of the porch: *and the space was one cubit on that side;* a space or border of the same measure was to the front of the three little chambers on the south side of the porch: this may denote the Christian liberty of the members of Gospel churches; which they may use without any breach of piety towards God, or of charity one to another: *and the little chambers were six cubits on this side, and six cubits on that side;* they were of the same measure, those on one side, as those of the other, even six cubits square; or one reed, which is the same; see ver. 7, and the note there.

Ver. 13. *He measured then the gate from the roof of one little chamber to the roof of another,* &c.] That is, the whole porch, from the extreme part of the roof of one of the little chambers on the north side, to the extreme part of the roof of another of the little chambers on the south; of the roof of these chambers, and the spiritual meaning of it, see the note on ver. 7: *the breadth was five-and-twenty cubits;* reckoning six cubits to one chamber on one side, and six to one chamber on the other side, which make twelve; and a cubit and a half to each back wall of the chambers on the north and south; or two cubits to the spaces before the chambers, and a cubit and a half to each of the eaves of the chambers, which either way make fifteen cubits; and ten cubits the breadth of the gate; in all five-and-twenty cubits; or fourteen yards and three inches: *door against door;* not the door of the outward gate against the door of the inward gate; nor the door of one of the little chambers at the east, to the door of another at the west, running lengthways, and so affording a sight quite through the temple; but the door of one of them on the north side over-against the door of another on the south, they answering exactly to each other; which still more confirms the similarity and equality of Gospel churches; see the note on ver. 7.

Ver. 14. *He made also posts of threescore cubits,* &c.] Jerom thinks, that between the outward wall which surrounded this building, and the building itself, these posts or pillars were placed for ornament, which took up the space of sixty cubits; but rather these design the posts or columns of the gate, which supported the arch over it, on which were rooms or stories, and these were sixty cubits high: for of their height is this measure to be understood. So the Targum, "and he made posts, "sixty cubits was their height;" in the Targum, in the Polyglot Bible by Montanus, it is, "and he made "sixty posts, their height a cubit:" and to this agree Jarchi and Kimchi; these were thirty-five yards high, the height of the temple ordered to be built by Cyrus, Ezra vi. 3. The man that measured is said to *make* these posts, he being the builder as well as the measurer of this edifice; and might be said to make these, as, by measuring, he pointed out the size and proportion of them: these posts may design the true members of Gospel churches, such who are pillars in the house of God; of which see more on ver. 16. compare the phrase of *making* these posts or pillars with Rev. iii. 12: *even unto the post of the court round about the gate;* that is, there was the same measure to every post or pillar in every court, at every gate round about; at the southern and northern gates, as at this eastern one; they were all exactly of the same measure as the posts in this; so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it.

Ver. 15. *And from the face of the gate of the entrance,* &c.] That is, from the outward gate as you went into the porch, and was to the east, so called from people's passing and repassing[b] in it; so Jarchi takes it to be the eastern gate; the Targum calls it the middle gate: *unto the face of the porch of the inner gate;* which opened at the other end of the porch, into the outward court, and was to the west: from gate to gate *were fifty cubits;* as he measured the breadth of the porch before, ver. 13, here the length; there were three chambers six cubits long, which made eighteen; and between each chamber were five cubits, which were ten cubits; and the space between the chambers and the gates at each end were six cubits each; see ver. 8, which make twelve more; and then allow ten cubits

[a] גבול terminus, Munster, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[b] Vid. R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 9. 1.

for the thickness of both walls of each gate, and there will be fifty cubits, or twenty-nine yards and half a foot.

Ver. 16. *And there were narrow windows to the little chambers*, &c.] The walls being sloped both within and without, that the light let in might be spread the more: as those *little chambers* signify the several congregated churches of Christ in the Gospel dispensation; see the note on ver. 7. so these *windows* design the word and ordinances therein administered, which are the means of letting light into them; see Cant. ii. 9. Isa. liv. 12. and lx. 8. in attending on these, the light of God's countenance is enjoyed, which lies in the discoveries of his love; in the manifestations of himself; in his gracious presence, and in communion with him; than which nothing is more desirable or delightful: through these ordinances Christ the sun of righteousness shines in upon his people; he looks in at these windows, and shews himself through these lattices; he is seen through the glass of the Gospel; he is held forth in the ordinance of the supper; and by means thereof the souls of God's people are enlightened, comforted, and warmed: also in this way are communicated the illuminations of the spirit, both at first conversion, and in after-discoveries of the things freely given of God; of the doctrines of the Gospel; of the blessings of grace, and of the glories of heaven. The Gospel itself is a great and glorious light; and the ministers of it are the light of the world, and of the churches; and by the light being diffused through these little chambers, the churches, those who are in them see to walk on in Christ, as they have received him, and becoming his Gospel, and their profession of it; and also see to work, not for life, justification, and salvation, but to evidence their faith, and adorn their profession; to glorify God by their shining lights, and to cause others to glorify him; and by the whole, the light of joy, peace, and comfort, is transmitted to all the inhabitants of Zion. These windows are said to be *narrow*, or *shut*, or *closed* [r]; that is, comparatively, not absolutely, for then they would be of no use. The ordinances of the Gospel dispensation are no doubt clearer, and the light of it larger, than of the legal dispensation, but this light has been darkened by the Papacy; and though it increased at the Reformation, yet before the latter-day glory will break forth it will be as a twilight, neither clear nor dark, day nor night, Zech. xiv. 6, 7. and though the light that then will break out will be exceeding great, as the light of the sun, and that as the light of seven days, Isa. xxx. 26. yet in comparison of the light of the New-Jerusalem state, when there will be no need of the sun or moon, but the Lord will be the everlasting light of his people; and in comparison of the ultimate glory, when the saints shall see face to face: the light even of this dispensation will be like what is let in at narrow windows; see Rev. xxi. 23, 24, 25. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. *And to their posts within the gate round about*; that is, to the posts of the doors that led into these chambers, over the lintel of them, were windows to let in light to those that were entering them, as well as were in them; and so there were to all the chambers round about the porch on one side and the other, between the two gates: *and likewise to the arches*; or *porches* [s]; to these doors, to which there were windows giving light to those that passed through: *and the windows were round about inward*; in all the chambers within the grand porch, on the north and south: *and upon each post were palm-trees*; that is, on every post, column, or pillar, belonging to the chambers; and very probably on all the other before mentioned, ver. 9, 10, 14. these posts or pillars signify either the ministers of the Gospel; so called for their strength, being mighty in the Scriptures, able ministers of the New Testament, capable of retaining and defending the truths of the Gospel, and of bearing reproach and persecution for them, and also the infirmities of weak believers; and for their stability, being steadfast and immovable in the work and cause of Christ, and not to be taken off from it either by the frowns or flatteries of men; and for their usefulness, in supporting the cause and interest of the Redeemer, and the minds of weak Christians, as well as the glorious truths of the Gospel; and may with great propriety be called the pillar and ground of truth; see Prov. ix. 1. 1 Tim. iii. 15. yea, all true believers, and proper members of the churches of Christ, are pillars there, and such as shall never go out, Rev. iii. 12. the word [t] used has the signification of strength, as pillars should be strong; and such believers are, not in themselves, but in Christ, in his power and grace, and through his spirit; whereby they can do all things, perform all duties, exercise all grace, and engage with all enemies. They are like pillars that stand firm and stable; grounded in the love of God; secured in election-grace; settled in the everlasting covenant; laid on the sure foundation Christ, and established in the truths of the Gospel; so that they never go out of the heart of God, the hands of Christ, the family of the saints, or church of God. They are as pillars; some more useful to support in an external way the interest of religion, giving liberally to the maintenance of ministers, the relief of the poor, and the defraying of all necessary charges; and others to strive and contend for, and so maintain and preserve, the truths and ordinances of the Gospel; and others to comfort and confirm weak believers. Now on these posts or pillars were *palm-trees* painted, two on each, one on one side, and one on the other, as appears from ver. 26. which are also an emblem of true believers in Christ; see Psal. xcii. 12. Cant. vii. 7, 8. comparable to them for their uprightness, Jer. x. 5. these looking upwards to Christ by faith, and moving heavenwards in their affections and desires, and being upright in heart and life; and for their bearing pressures, and growing the more under them, as the palm-tree does. Saints have many weights on them, a body of sin and death, reproaches, afflictions, and persecution; but they bear up under all, and are not left to desert the cause they are engaged in; yea, grow the more hereby, in numbers and grace, like the children of Israel, Exod. i. 12. the force of the palm-tree is in its top or head; if that is taken away it dies: Christ is the believers' head, from him they have

[r] אטמות clausæ, Montanus, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[s] לאלמות in vestibulis, Vatablus, Montanus, Piscator; porticibus, Coccerius, Starckius.

[t] איל fortitudo, hinc איל fortis.

their life, grace, strength, nourishment, and fruitfulness; could they be separated from him, all would be gone. The palm-tree grows best in sunny places, is fruitful, an ever-green, and lasts long: and such are the people of God; they grow most under the warm beams of divine love, and rays of the sun of righteousness; in the churches of Christ, where the Gospel is preached, and ordinances administered, which make their hearts burn within them; they are fruitful in grace and good works, retain their leaf of profession, and never perish. Once more, the palm-tree is a token of joy and victory, and has been used on such occasions, Lev. xxiii. 40. John xii. 12, 13. Rev. vii. 9. and may denote the victory and joy upon it, which saints have through Christ, over sin, Satan, the world, and death.

Ver. 17. *Then brought he me into the outward court,* &c.] The divine and glorious Person in human form, having brought the prophet up to the eastern gate, and through it, and the porch that belonged to it, to the inner gate of it, which lay westward; and having measured that gate, its threshold, the porch, the posts or pillars, and little chambers in it; introduced him into a spacious piece of ground, that lay open to the air, and surrounded the whole building; and answers to the court of the Israelites in the temple, where they worshipped promiscuously, good and bad: and so may design the outward visible state of the Gospel church, consisting of good and bad, of wise and foolish virgins; like a field that has both wheat and tares in it; or a corn-floor that has wheat and chaff upon it; which in the latter day will grow worse and worse, and be given to the Gentiles, Rev. xi. 2. but shall be recovered again, and make a considerable part of this fabric; which represents the state of the church, and the outward administration of the word and ordinances in it, and the visible fellowship of the saints together in them. *And, lo, there were chambers;* in the outward court, in various parts of it; which signify, as before, visible congregated churches, formed according to the order of the Gospel; in which the word is preached, ordinances administered, and saints have fellowship one with another. It is a different word here used from that in ver. 7, 10, 12, 16. and is by some rendered *cells, storehouses, treasuries* [f]; and here the unsearchable riches of Christ are preached, and the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hid in him are brought forth, and presented to the view of the saints. *And a pavement made for the court round about;* as this court went round about the whole building, so there was a pavement upon it all around. The word [g] used has the signification of a *burning coal.* Probably this pavement appeared as made of stones of various colours, of black, white, and red, like a chequered work of black and white marble; or as made of the porphyry-stone, which is variegated with divers colours. This pavement was for those that dwelt in the chambers to walk in, and converse together; and it may denote the walk of the saints, both in the ordinances of the Gospel, and in their outward conversation, as becoming it; in love to them that are within, and in wisdom towards those that are without: and this is walking as on a pavement, on firm ground, in a plain and even way, where there is no occasion of stumbling; it is walking clean, in righteousness and holiness, and not in the mire and dirt of sin; and it is pleasant walking in the courts of the Lord, and in the ways and paths of wisdom; and beautiful it is to see the saints walk harmoniously and comfortably together here, conversing with each other, and building up one another upon their most holy faith. *Thirty chambers were upon a pavement;* according to some, fifteen on each side of the eastern gate, as you came out of it into the court; or rather, according to Cocceius's tables, these were all around the court, eight to the east, eight to the north, eight to the south, and six to the west; or, as Villalpandus, seven to the east and west each, and eight to the north and south apiece. This suggests that there will be visible congregated churches in the latter day in all parts of the world, east, west, north, and south; see Isa. xliii. 5, 6.

Ver. 18. *And the pavement by the sides of the gates over-against the length of the gates* was *the lower pavement.*] That is, this pavement, which went along by every gate, and answered the length of them, and what appertained to them, east, west, north, and south, was either lower than the pavement in the inward court, adjoining to this, to which there was an ascent by steps; or the middle part of this pavement rose up in a convex form, and on all sides there was a declivity; by which means all filth was washed away, and it was kept clean, and always fit to walk on. This distiction of a higher and lower pavement, whether on one account or another, may point out; the one, the believer's walk by faith on Christ; and the other, his walk in the ordinances of Christ, and in all becoming conversation.

Ver. 19. *Then he measured the breadth from the fore front of the lower gate,* &c.] That is, from the front of the inner eastern gate before mentioned, ver. 7. called the lower gate, in respect of the gate opposite to it, which led into the inner court, to which there was an ascent of eight steps; and which the Targum calls the middle gate, because it lay between the eastern outward gate, and the gate of the inward court. Now there were from hence, *unto the fore front of the inner court without, an hundred cubits;* to the outside of the gate was such a length, or fifty-eight yards and one foot: *eastward and northward;* as so it was from east to west, so from north to south, and from south to north; there was just the same distance from the gate that led into the outward court to that which led into the inward court, on all sides; see ver. 23, 27. a man may be a long while an outward-court worshipper before he is an inward-court worshipper; the passage through the one to the other is long.

Ver. 20. *And the gate of the outward court that looked toward the north,* &c.] Or the north gate of this building: having finished the dimensions of the eastern gate, those of the north gate are taken: *he measured the length thereof, and the breadth thereof;* as be had the eastern gate, and which were the same; and so of the south gate, ver. 24. which denotes the uniformity in religion in the latter day, in the way of en-

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[f] לשכות cellæ, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, Cocceius, Starckius; παστοφόρια, Sept.; gazophylacia, V. L.

[g] רצפה pruna ardens, Isa. vi. 6.

trance into the churches, and in doctrine, discipline, worship, and ordinances.

Ver. 21. *And the little chambers thereof were three on this side, and three on that side,* &c.] As in the eastern gate, and the measures the same, ver. 7. Gospel churches in the latter day will be all on the same plan, and modelled according to the same pattern, and be in just the same order, one as another: *and the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, were after the same measure of the first gate;* the eastern gate: believers will be all pillars in the church of God, and partakers of the same like-precious faith: *the length thereof was fifty cubits, and the breadth five-and-twenty cubits;* see ver. 13, 15.

Ver. 22. *And their windows, and their arches, and their palm-trees, were after the measure of the gate that looked towards the east,* &c.] Ver. 14, 16. signifying that the light of the churches, their privileges, and flourishing condition, will be alike everywhere, as in one part of the world, so in another; see Isa. lii. 8. and xi. 9. Dan. xii. 4: *and they went up unto it by seven steps;* or stairs, ver. 6. the number of them is not there mentioned as here, but the same in both; see the note there: *and the arches thereof were before them;* the steps; or *within* them, as the Septuagint; the steps led to the arches of the gate, or to the porch of it, which were more inward.

Ver. 23. *And the gate of the inward court was over-against the gate toward the north, and toward the east,* &c.] Or, *and as to the east* [h]; that is, the north gate of the inner court was directly opposite to the north gate of the outward court; just as the eastern gate of the inward court was in a strait line opposite to the eastern gate of the outward court: *and he measured from gate to gate an hundred cubits;* from the north gate of the outward court to the north gate of the inward court; and it was exactly of the same distance from one another as on the left side; see ver. 19.

Ver. 24. *After that he brought me toward the south,* &c.] Having taken the dimensions of the east and north gates, the prophet was had on the south side of the building: and *behold a gate toward the south;* that led to the southern part of this fabric, and to the outward court there, exactly like the other two; there was no difference in them, which raised the prophet's wonder and attention; for, as Lipman [k] says, there was no outward court in the second temple, but to the east of the inward; and it did not encompass the other sides; and so the more wonderful: *and he measured the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, according to these measures;* the measures of the east and north gates, which were just alike; for these all signified but one gateway or door into the church below, into heaven above, or into the presence of God here and hereafter, which is Christ, John xiv. 6. and x. 1, 7, 9.

Ver. 25. *And there were windows in it, and in the arches thereof round about,* &c.] That is, in the little chambers, though not expressed; and in the porches of them on each side, as you passed from the outer to the inner gate: *like those windows;* that were in the chambers that were in the east and north gates, ver. 7. 16, 22: *the length was fifty cubits, and the breadth five-and-twenty cubits;* see ver. 13, 15.

Ver. 26. *And there were seven steps to go up to it,* &c.] To the south gate, as there were to the east and north gates; ver. 6. 22: *and the arches thereof were before them;* see the note on ver. 22: *and it had palm-trees, one on this side, and another on that side, upon the posts thereof;* that is, on the posts of this gate were palm-trees, two on each post, one on one side, and the other on the other: this verse shews us how many palm-trees were painted on the posts, and how they were disposed of; see the note on ver. 16.

Ver. 27. *And there was a gate in the inner court toward the south,* &c.] Which answered to the gate of the outward court before mentioned: *and he measured from gate to gate toward the south an hundred cubits;* from the gate of the inward court, to the gate of the outward court southward, were just the same dimensions as in the east and north gates, and between their respective ones, ver. 19, 23.

Ver. 28. *And he brought me to the inner court by the south gate,* &c.] Having done with the outer court, east, north, and south, the prophet is brought into the inner court by the south gate, which was nearest to enter by. No mention is made of a western gate, yet there was one in Solomon's temple; for there were porters appointed westward by David, and fixed by Solomon, 1 Chron. ix. 24. xxvi. 16, 18. but Josephus [i] says, in the second temple the western part had no gate, but a continued wall; for those that came out of the captivity, as Kimchi on ver. 5 observes, built it (as much as they could) according to the form of what they saw in Ezekiel's temple, which shall be in time to come. *And he measured the south gate according to these measures;* the gate which led into the inner court; for the south gate, which led to the outward court, he had measured before, ver. 24.

Ver. 29. *And the little chambers thereof, and the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, according to these measures,* &c.] These were at the gate of the inner court; and so they stand in Cocceius's tables; and were of the same measure with the little chambers, posts, and arches, that were at the several outward gates before described; and design the churches and members of them as spiritual worshippers, who, besides the outward form, have the power of godliness: *and there were windows in it, and in the arches thereof round about;* these are not said to be narrow, as the other; which perhaps may denote the greater and more increasing light of the churches, ministers, and members: *it was fifty cubits long, and five-and-twenty cubits broad;* that is, the space or portico where these chambers were; and this was the same measure with that where the other chambers were, ver. 13, 15.

Ver. 30. *And the arches round about were five-and-twenty cubits long,* &c.] That is, high; this was the height of them; these were the frontispiece of the gate to the inner court without, and faced the outward court, as appears by the following verse; these were a kind of portico over the eight steps to this gate after mentioned; they were fourteen yards and three inches

[h] ולקדים.
[k] Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 17.

[i] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 5. sect. 2. Vid. Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 19.

high, from the bottom to the top of them: *and five cubits broad*: two yards and a half, one foot and three inches; and which very probably were the breadth of the steps that came up to them: none of these arches were in the second temple, as Lipman [m] observes.

Ver. 31. *And the arches thereof were toward the outward court*, &c.] And so not within the gate of the inward court, but on the outside of it, towards the outward court, at the front of the gate as you went in: *and palm-trees were upon the posts thereof*: of the gate, or of these arches or porticos; signifying that none should enter here but righteous persons; this is the gate of the righteous, Psal. cxviii. 19, 20. Isa. xxvi. 2. see the note on ver. 16: *and the going up to it had eight steps*: one more than the ascent to the outward gates; some say eight more, and make these to be fifteen, answerable to the fifteen steps by which the Levites went up from the court of the women to the court of Israel [n], and sung upon them the fifteen songs of degrees, mentioned in the Psalms: but here are only eight; and denote the gradual progress of believers in faith and holiness; and that the nearer they come to the holy of holies, the greater their proficiency should be, and more advances made in the knowledge of divine things.

Ver. 32. *And he brought me into the inner court toward the east*, &c.] Into that part of it which lay to the east, having gone through that which lay to the south: *and he measured the gate according to these measures*: that is, the eastern gate of the inner court; for the eastern gate that led to the outward court he measured first, ver. 6. and this was according to the measure of that, and of the rest.

Ver. 33. *And the little chambers thereof*, &c.] These, and what follow in this verse, are exactly the same with those of the south gate of the inner court, ver. 29.

Ver. 34. *And the arches thereof were toward the outward court*, &c.] As those of the south gate, ver. 31. and the palm-trees on the posts, and the steps up to it, the same as there.

Ver. 35, 36, 37. *And he brought me to the north gate*, &c.] That is, of the inner court, for he had measured before the north gate that led to the outward court, ver. 20. and here the little chambers, posts, arches, and steps, in all things agree with those of the other gates: what were observed in it different from the rest, an account is given of it in the following verse.

Ver. 38. *And the chambers, and the entries thereof, were by the posts of the gates*, &c.] Of the north gate; the plural for the singular; for not at the other gates, only at the north gate, were the sacrifices slain and washed; as under the law, only on the north side of the altar, Lev. i. 11. now, by the posts of this gate, or at the entrance of it on one side, stood *a cell or chamber, and a door into it* [o], as the words may be rendered; for they are singular in the text: *where they washed the burnt-offering*: its legs and inwards, Lev. i. 9. according to the law, there were lavers in Solomon's temple, to wash the sacrifices in, 2 Chron. iv. 6. but there was no such cell or chamber there for such a purpose as here: and as this refers to Gospel times, and to the church in the latter day, no legal sacrifice can be intended here, which are all abolished; but this must be mystically and spiritually understood, and designs no other than the sacrifice of Christ, a sweet-smelling savour to God: that this kind of offering was typical of the sacrifice of Christ is clear from Heb. xiii. 11, 12, 13. which whether of the herd, a bullock, represented Christ in his strength and laboriousness; or of the flock, and was either a sheep, an emblem of the innocence and patience of Christ; or a goat, which pointed him out as in the likeness of sinful flesh, traduced as a sinner, and made so by imputation; or of fowls, turtle-doves, denoting his meekness and modesty; and all without spot or blemish signified the purity of his nature and life; and these being burnt with fire were expressive of the pain and shame he endured when he bore our sins, and the wrath of God was poured on him as fire; the washing of the burnt-offering denotes the purity of Christ's sacrifice, being offered up without spot. Some, as Polanus, have thought the ordinance of baptism is here designed, as the Lord's supper is by the tables next mentioned; and it is a note of Starckius upon the passage, that, "he who is washed in the "divine laver may be regaled with the heavenly feast."

Ver. 39. *And in the porch of the gate were two tables on this side, and two tables on that side*, &c.] This is still the north gate of the inward court, which had a porch that reached from the outward to the inner gate of it, in which were three little chambers on each side, ver. 36. between each of which were a space of five cubits, ver. 7. so that there were two such spaces on each side; and in these spaces, as Starckius well conjectures, these tables were placed, two on one side, and two on the other: the use of them was, *to slay thereon the burnt-offering, and the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering*: all typical of the sacrifice of Christ: concerning the *burnt-offering*, as such, see the note on the preceding verse; and as for the *sin-offering* and *trespass-offering*, which in the Hebrew language signify sin and guilt itself, they represented Christ, who had no sin in his nature, nor ever did any in his life, yet was made sin for his people; having all their sins laid upon him, with all that belong unto them, or are deserved by them: these were, the one for errors, strayings, and sins of ignorance; the other for known and wilful sins; and both shew that Christ is a sacrifice for all sorts of sin, even for the most vile and enormous: now these tables were for those sacrifices to be slain upon them, or to be laid upon them, being slain; and signify in Gospel times the table of the Lord, 1 Cor. x. 21. or the ordinance of the Lord's supper; in which there is not a reiteration, but a commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ; here he is evidently set forth as crucified and slain; his death as a sacrifice is shewn, and held forth to the faith of the Lord's people, for their joy and comfort, Gal. iii. 1. 1 Cor. xi. 26.

Ver. 40. *And at the side without, as one goeth up to the entry of the north gate, were two tables*, &c.] Or, *the door of the north gate* [p]; not the first, upon coming

[m] Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 22.

[n] Misna Succa, c. 5. sect. 4. Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 24.

[o] ולשכה ופתחה et cubiculum, et ostium ejus, Pagninus, Montanus; cæterum fuit cella, et ostium ejus, Tigurine version.

[p] לפתח השער הצפונה ad ostium portæ aquilonaris, Junius & Tremellius. So Cocceius and Starckius.

up the eight steps; but passing through that gate, and along the porch where the three little chambers and the two tables on each side were, before mentioned; and coming to the inmost gate, which opens directly into the inward court, on the outside of that towards the altar, were two other tables, for the same use as before: *and on the other side, which was at the porch of the gate, were two tables;* there were two on one side of the gate, and two on the other, that is, the last gate of the porch, in all eight tables; four within the spaces between the little chambers in the porch, and four as you come out of it, on each side of the last gate.

Ver. 41. *Four tables were on this side, and four tables were on that side, by the side of the gate,* &c.] These are the same tables repeated, to observe more diligently the situation and use of them; there were four on the right hand, two between the little chambers in the porch, and two on the outside of the inmost gate; and there were four on the left hand, two between the little chambers there, and two on the other side of the said gate: *eight tables, whereupon they slew their sacrifices;* the four tables last mentioned were for the same use as the four first; see the note on ver. 39.

Ver. 42. *And the four tables were of hewn stone,* &c.] These are either the same tables as before, the four that were on one side, and the four that were on the other; they were all made of hewn stone: in the second temple they were made of marble; so it is said in the Misnah [s], "the marble tables were between the "pillars;" and they were made of marble, as the commentators [t] say, because that cools the flesh, and preserves it from corruption: they were both decent and durable; and may denote the continuance of the ordinance of the Lord's supper till his second coming; and which is a decent and becoming ordinance, as well as perpetual: or these were other four tables, as Cocceius thinks; and which he places without the porch, near the cell or chamber, where the burnt-offering was washed, ver. 38. and these are said to be for that, as follows, *for the burnt-offering:* and also for the sin-offering, and for the trespass-offering, though they are not mentioned: *of a cubit and an half long, and a cubit and an half broad;* just a four-square: *and one cubit high;* these were the dimensions of each table: *whereupon also they laid the instruments wherewith they slew the burnt-offering and the sacrifice;* the knives with which they slew the creatures offered, and cut them to pieces, and the bowls and basins in which they received their blood; these were laid upon the tables, as the sacrifices were: and may signify, that in the ordinance of the Lord's supper are not only represented the sacrifice of Christ, but the means, instruments, causes, and occasion of it; the sins of his people, for which he was wounded and bruised in his body, and with which he was pierced in his soul; and here we may look on him whom we have thus pierced, and mourn; and yet rejoice that there is healing by his stripes, pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice.

Ver. 43. *And within were hooks, a hand broad, fastened round about,* &c.] These, very probably, were fastened on the posts of the gate, near which were the washing-room for the sacrifices, ver. 38. on which they were hung, when they were flaved, or the skin took off; in the slaughter-house in the second temple, to the north of the altar, there were eight low stone pillars, upon which were boards of cedar four-square, and iron hooks were fixed in them; and there were three rows of them in each, on which they hung the sacrifices [u], which were one above another; on the lowest they hung a lamb, on the middlemost a ram, and on the highest a bullock; these hooks stood out a hand's breadth from the pillars [v]: such-like iron hooks were fixed on the walls and pillars in the court, where they slew the passover-lamb, on which they hung it, and skinned it [w]: this may denote either, as Cocceius suggests, the exaltation of Christ, who suffered and was raised for our justification; or rather the lifting of him up, and holding him forth to view, as a suffering Saviour, in the ministry of the word, and in the ordinance of the supper. *And upon the tables was the flesh of the offering:* here another word is used, and may design that part of the flesh of the sin-offering that was eaten by the priest, Lev. vi. 25, 26. so that these tables were feasting-tables also; as the table of the Lord, or the ordinance of the Lord's supper, is a feast of fat things, a feast of love; a table where the flesh of Christ is laid, which is meat indeed, and only to be fed upon by those that are made kings and priests unto God. Now these tables being many shew that there will be a large number of Gospel churches everywhere; and wherever they are there will be tables: the ordinance of the Lord's supper will be celebrated in the four parts of the world; at present it is chiefly in the northern part, and where these tables were seen in this vision.

Ver. 44. *And without the inner gate were the chambers of the singers,* &c.] These *singers* are true believers in Christ, members of Gospel churches; whose duty and privilege it is to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; which is a part of internal, spiritual, and evangelical worship, Ephes. v. 19. Col. iii. 16. these are the spiritual harpers, that have harps in their hands, and make melody in their hearts, and are able to sing the songs of electing, redeeming, calling, pardoning, justifying, and adopting grace; these deservedly have a place in the churches of Christ, in the inward court, being inward-court worshippers, even all such who sing with the spirit and the understanding; for these chambers were in the inward court: the prophet being brought through the inner northern gate, into the open space between the inward court, saw these chambers; for it follows, *in the inner court, which was at the side of the north gate;* in that part of the court which lay near the north gate, where now the prophet and his guide were: *and their prospect was toward the south;* that is, some of these chambers, one row of them, were by the side of the north gate, and these faced the south; north and south being opposite to each other: *one at the side of the east gate, having the prospect toward the*

[s] Tamid, c. 3. sect. 5. & Middot, c. 5. sect. 5.
[t] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.
[u] Misn. Tamid, c. 3. sect. 5. & Middot, c. 3. sect. 5.
[v] Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 34.
[w] Misn. Pesachim, c. 5. sect. 9.

north; another row of chambers for the singers was in that part of the inner court which was on the side of the east gate, on the north side of it, and so faced the north part of the court. The Septuagint version, if admitted, makes the sense of it more clear, but different, "and he brought me into the inner court, and "behold two chambers in the inner court; one at the "back of the gate that looks to the north, bearing to "the south; and one at the back of the gate to the "south, looking to the north."

Ver. 45. *And he said unto me,* &c.] The illustrious Person that appeared in a human form, measuring the several parts of the temple, said to the prophet, as follows: *this chamber, whose prospect is toward the south;* the row of chambers that were on the side of the north gate, facing the south: *is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the house:* that observe the keeping of it; observe all the laws and ordinances of God's house, and are careful that the worship of God may be maintained and preserved, to his glory, and their mutual edification: and which is, or should be, the concern, not of ministers only, but of all true believers, who are priests unto God; that present their bodies and souls before him, as a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice, which is their reasonable service; and offer up the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise to him, through Christ, Rev. i. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 5. Rom. xii. 1.

Ver. 46. *And the chamber whose prospect is towards the north,* &c.] The row of chambers on the side of the east gate; that side of it that was towards the north, and which the chambers in it faced: *is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the altar:* the ministers of the Gospel, that take care of the altar, of public worship; that preach the Gospel, and administer ordinances; and who are to be taken care of themselves, and live of the Gospel, and have every thing provided for them that is necessary, 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14: *these are the sons of Zadok, among the sons of Levi;* these Levites, or priests, were of the family of Zadok; who descended from Aaron, and was the eldest house of Aaron, to whom the priesthood belonged; though it had been usurped a long time by the family of Ithamar; but, in Solomon's time, Abiathar, of that family, was dispossessed of it, and Zadok was placed in his stead, whose name signifies *just,* or righteous; and was a type of Christ, the holy and just One, whose spiritual children and offspring are here meant: *which come near to the Lord to minister unto him;* both preachers and people, who have near access to God through Christ, and minister before him in holy things, in praying, preaching, administering ordinances, and attending on the same.

Ver. 47. *So he measured the court,* &c.] The inward court, where the prophet and his guide now were; and the gates leading to which he had been measuring, with the chambers, arches, and tables belonging thereunto: *an hundred cubits long, and an hundred cubits broad, four-square;* the floor, or area of this court, which was a hundred cubits in length and breadth; so that it was a perfect square, equilateral, east, west, north, and south, and above fifty yards each way; such a court as never was in any temple whatever: hence Kimchi observes, there was no such court in the second temple; no, nor in the first neither: in the second temple, the length of the court of Israel, according to Abarbinel, was a hundred and thirty-five cubits, and the breadth eleven, but this was a hundred by a hundred; these things, says Lipman *, are wonderful in my eyes: this denotes the large increase of the church, and of spiritual worshippers, in the latter day; and the four-square of it signifies the order, perfection, and stability of it: see Rev. xxi. 16: and *the altar that was before the house:* the altar of burnt-offering, which stood before the house or temple, in the midst of the inward court; so that it might be seen by all in the inward court and chambers; and even by all in the outward court, through the several gates, which directly opened and led to it. This was typical of Christ, the altar, we Christians have a right to eat of; which sanctifies every gift offered upon it, and which every worshipper should by faith look unto for the expiation of their sins. The dimensions of this altar were now taken, and are given in ch. xliii. 13—17.

Ver. 48. *And he brought me to the porch of the house,* &c.] Having passed through the inner court, and measured that, he came to the body of the fabric, the principal part of it, the house or temple; to the porch that led into it. Here of right a new chapter should begin, for this and the next verse more properly *belong* to the following chapter. This porch was a large roof, and was a covering both from cold winds and storms, and from the scorching heat of the sun; and was an emblem of Christ, the hiding-place from the wind, and the covert from the tempest of divine justice and vengeance, and the wrath of God; and from the heat of a fiery law, of Satan's fiery darts or temptations, and of the persecutions of men: it was also, as is thought, a place for the priests to pray in, before they went into the temple; as Christ is the way in which the priests of the Lord go unto him, and pray before him; in whose name, and for whose righteousness-sake, they present their supplications to him. *And measured each post of the porch, five cubits on this side, and five subits on that side;* these posts stood, one on the north side of the porch, and the other on the south, and were each five cubits thick: *and the breadth of the gate was three cubits on this side, and three cubits on that side;* this gate signifies Christ, the door, or gate, or way of entrance into the spiritual temple the church, John x. 1, 7, 9. and it had two leaves, that on the north was three cubits broad, and that on the south was of the same measure: this two-leaved gate may shew, that both Jews and Gentiles, being converted, may enter into the Gospel church; as they will in the latter day, when the Jews shall be called, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in; here will be an open door set; the gate will be wide enough to let them all in, Rev. iii. 8, 9.

Ver. 49. *The length of the porch was twenty cubits,* &c.] From east to west; from the first gate of it to the last, which led directly into the house, or temple: *and the breadth eleven cubits;* which may be thus accounted for; two cubits apiece being allowed for each

* Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 27.

post, and three for each leaf of the door that were hung upon them, and one for the upright post in the middle on which they shut; in all eleven: *and he brought me by the steps whereby they went up to it*: as there was an ascent of seven steps to the several gates that led into the outward court; and another of eight steps, which led from that to the gates of the inner court; so there was an ascent from the inner court to the porch of the house, or temple; but how many steps there were is not said. The Septuagint and Arabic versions read ten steps; and the Vulgate Latin version eight steps. According to the Misnah*, there were twelve in the second temple; so say Jarchi and Kimchi, with whom Josephus[a] agrees. Cocceius thinks there could not be more than two, since the ground of the inward court and temple were continued; but as their number is not given, a determination cannot be made; only it may be observed, that the saints' progress in the knowledge of Christ, and of divine things, and in faith and holiness, is gradual. *And there were pillars by the posts, one on this side, and another on that side*: one on the north side, and the other on the south, somewhat like the two pillars of Jachin and Boaz, in Solomon's temple; which some apply to the ordinances of the Gospel saints partake of at their entrance into the Gospel church; but rather they are an emblem of Christ, the supporter of his church, and of all those that aright enter into it; and who, through his grace and strength, become pillars there also, Rev. iii. 12. he is their Jachin, who establishes them on himself, the sure foundation; and their Boaz, in whom their strength is, and from whom they have it to exercise grace, discharge duty, and persevere to the end.

CHAP. XLI.

IN this chapter the divine and illustrious Person, the prophet's guide, brings him to the temple itself, and gives the dimensions of the posts and doors, both of the holy and the most holy place, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. then of the wall of the house, its side-chambers, the winding about to them, and the doors of them, ver. 5—11. next of a building before the separate place, its door-posts, narrow windows, and galleries, ver. 12—17. after that the several ornaments of the house are described, ver. 18—21. then the altar of incense, ver. 22. and the chapter is concluded with observing the decorations and lights on the doors, porch, and side-chambers of the temple and sanctuary, ver. 23—26.

Ver. 1. *Afterward he brought me to the temple*, &c.] Having measured the porch into it, its posts, and gate. This is the body of the building, which was the frame of a city first shewn, the principal fabric; for hitherto he had been only measuring the outward and inner courts, and their gates, and what were in them; but now he is come to the house itself, called a *temple*; by which not only particular Gospel churches are called, 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Ephes. ii. 21. but the Gospel church-state in general, Zech. vi. 12, 13. and especially as in the latter day; so the Philadelphian church-state, which represents the spiritual reign of Christ, or the glory of the latter day, is called *the temple of my God*, Rev. iii. 12. which will be a holy temple to the Lord: where he will dwell in a gracious manner, and be worshipped in spirit and in truth; and here his glory will be seen; it will be built up of precious and costly stones, even living and lively ones; a spiritual house to offer up the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise: and, as in the material temple or holy place stood the candlestick and table of shew-bread; here the light of the Gospel will burn clearly; and Christ the bread of life be held forth in the ordinance of the supper; where, as at a table, saints shall have intimate fellowship with him: *and measured the posts, six cubits broad on the one side, and six cubits broad on the other side*: these were the posts of the door of the temple, and stood on each side of it, on the north and south; and this was the thickness, six cubits or a reed each, three yards and a half; this was the frontispiece of the door of the palace of the King of kings: *which was the breadth of the tabernacle*; the tabernacle of Moses; that is, these posts, or this frontispiece, were as broad as the whole tabernacle of Moses was; which had eight boards in the breadth, each board being a cubit and a half, made twelve cubits, just the breadth of these two posts, Exod. xxvi. 16, 25. this shews how far superior the Gospel church is to the old synagogue; how larger is the one, and the entrance into it wider, than the other. Some understand by *the tabernacle* the upper lintel, of the same breadth with the posts; and was in a recurve, and as a covering to the door; so the Jewish commentators, and others that follow them.

Ver. 2. *And the breadth of the door was ten cubits*, &c.] The temple-door: great care is taken to observe and give the dimensions of the doors and gates of various places; to put us in mind of Christ the door and gate into the church, and into fellowship with God: this was as broad again as the door of Solomon's temple; for that was but the fourth part of the wall of it, five cubits, 1 Kings vi. 1, 33; *and the sides of the door were five cubits on the one side, and five cubits on the other side*; the side-walls of the door, both on the north and south, were five cubits each; which, with the ten, the breadth of the door, made twenty; and is just the breadth of the temple or holy place afterwards given: *and he measured the length thereof forty cubits, and the breadth twenty cubits*; that is, the length of the temple from east to west, and the breadth of it from north to south, were of this measure; which exactly answers to the dimensions of Solomon's temple, a figure of the Gospel church, as this; see 1 Kings vi. 2, 17.

Ver. 3. *Then went he inward*, &c.] Through the temple or holy place he had measured, to the holy of holies: *and measured the post of the door two cubits*:

* Middot, c. 2. sect. 3.

[a] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 5. sect. 4.

this was the door into the most holy place; there was one in Solomon's temple; but in the second temple there was none; but two vails instead of it, which were rent at the death of Christ; and two cubits was the thickness of the post, on which this door was shut: *and the door six cubits, and the breadth of the door seven cubits*; this door was a two-leaved one; each leaf consisted of three cubits broad, and the post in the middle on which they shut one cubit broad, which made seven: though some think that the side-walls of the door are meant, as in ver. 2. which were each seven cubits; and the breadth of the door, six cubits, made twenty cubits; which was the breadth of the most holy place, as answering to the breadth of the holy place, as in the next verse.

Ver. 4. *So he measured the length thereof twenty cubits, &c.*] That is, of the most holy place, from east to west; which was the measure of it in Solomon's temple, 1 Kings vi. 20: *and the breadth twenty cubits before the temple*; that is answerable or according to the breadth of the temple or holy place; which was also twenty cubits in breadth: this stood at the west end of it, and was equal in breadth to it; see 1 Kings vi. 2, 20: *and he said unto me, this is the most holy place*: the divine Person in human form said to the prophet, take notice of this building; this answers to the most holy place in the temple. This was an emblem of the most holy and perfect state of the church on earth; it represents the New-Jerusalem church-state, that holy city, and into which nothing shall enter that defiles; and, as in the most holy place, the divine Shechinah or majesty of God dwelt; so here will dwell in person the God-man and Mediator, the head of the church, our Lord Jesus; whose tabernacle will now be with men, in this perfect state, raised from the dead, and he will dwell among them: and as this most holy place in its dimensions is a four-square, so is the holy city described; denoting its stability and perfection; see Rev. xxi. 2, 3, 16, 27.

Ver. 5. *After he measured the wall of the house six cubits, &c.*] Or a reed, three yards and a half thick: this was the wall of the holy of holies, or which divided that from the holy place, and was not in the second temple; or rather the wall of the temple, the whole house or building, both of the holy place, and of the most holy, which were contiguous; such a strong wall is the Lord to his church, and especially will be in the latter day, when salvation will be for walls and bulwarks against all enemies, and to preserve from all hurt and danger, Isa. xxvi. 1. and lx. 18. Zech. ii. 5. the New Jerusalem also will have a wall great and high, and made of a precious stone, Rev. xxi. 12, 18: *and the breadth of every side-chamber four cubits round about the house on every side*: or, *of every rib*[y]; as ribs are to the body, so were these side-chambers or buildings to the fabric, as Ben Melech observes, who interprets them of beams: adjoining to the above wall were chambers all around the holy place and the most holy on each side, north and south; for there could be none on the east, that being the entrance into the holy, and so into the most holy place; and the floor of these chambers were four cubits, or two yards and a foot, broad: that is, those of the lower story: these were for the priests, where they lodged, and laid up and ate their most holy things, and put their garments in which they ministered; see ch. xlii. 13, 14. and design, as the chambers everywhere do, particular congregated churches; where such as are made priests to God by Christ have a place, and communion with God in holy things; and appear in the righteousness of Christ, and in the beauties of holiness.

Ver. 6. *And the side-chambers were three, one over another, and thirty in order, &c.*] There were three stories of them, and thirty in every story, in all ninety; there were such chambers round about Solomon's temple, and so many stories of them, though their number is not expressed, 1 Kings vi. 5, 6. but Josephus[z] says they were thirty, and one above another, three stories of them, as here. Some think twelve were on the north side, twelve on the south, and six on the west; or fifteen on the north, and fifteen on the south. The Misnic doctors[a] say there were thirty-eight in the second temple, fifteen on the north side, fifteen on the south, and eight on the west. The Targum is, "the chambers were "chamber over chamber thirty-three, eleven in a "row;" and so some[b] understand it, that they were in all but thirty-three, eleven in the first story, as many in the second, and the same number in the third; and place them four in the north, four in the south, and three in the west, so Starckius; but the first account seems best. This denotes the number of churches in Gospel times, especially in the latter day; when there will be large conversions, and room enough for all the converts: and as there are many mansions in heaven for all the saints; so there will be room enough in the New Jerusalem, the more perfect state of the church on earth, to hold the whole palm-bearing company, whose number no man can number; and all the nations of them that are saved, who will walk in the light of it, Rev. vii. 9. and xxi. 24: *a[nd] they entered into the wall which was of the house for [the] side-chambers round about, that they might have h[old] but they had not hold in the wall* [illegible] beams of the floors of those side-cham[bers] [illegible] upon the wall of the house which w[as] [illegible] but were not inserted into it, or laid [illegible] in some buildings; but there were projections or buttresses in the wall, or what are called narrowed [rests] 1 Kings vi. 6. or rebatements of the breadth of a [wall] on which they were laid and rested; and so it w[as in] the upper stories, as in the lowermost; there being an abatement of a cubit in the thickness of the wall in each story, as in the following verse. This shews the firmness of this spiritual building resting upon such a wall and such buttresses as God himself is to it; see the note on ver. 5.

Ver. 7. *And there was an enlarging, and a winding about still upward to the side-chambers, &c.*] These chambers, as they rose up in stories one above another, were larger and larger; those in the middlemost story were larger than those in the lower story by a cubit;

[y] צלעת costæ, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.
[z] Antiqu. l. 8. c. 3. sect. 2.

[a] Misn. Middot, c. 4. sect. 3.
[b] Lipman. Taurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 69. fol. 10. 1.

so much being taken out of the thickness of the wall, to make the rests or rebatements for the beams of the floor to rest upon, by which so much was gained in breadth for the chambers; and those in the upper story, for the same reason, were a cubit broader than those in the middle, and two cubits broader than the lowermost; the floor of the first and lower story was four cubits broad, ver. 5. the floor of the second five cubits; and the floor of the third or uppermost six cubits. The wall of the temple at the bottom was six cubits thick, ver. 5. at the middlemost story five cubits; and at the uppermost four: and all this may denote the enlargement of the church of Christ, as it comes nearer the heavenly state; the present state of the church may be signified by the lower story, where the chambers are narrowest; the state of the church in the latter-day glory, or spiritual reign of Christ, by the middlemost, when it will be enlarged; its converts being very numerous, Isa. xlix. 19, 20. and lx. 4, 5. and the New-Jerusalem church-state by the uppermost story; which city or state will be very large, and next to heaven, or the ultimate glory; see Rev. xxi. 16. The *winding* that went upwards to the side-chambers were winding stairs, which went up from one story to another, higher and higher; see 1 Kings vi. 8. The Misnic doctors say*, that in the second temple these winding stairs went from one side of the tenacle to the other, from the north-east to the north-west; by which they went up to the roofs of these chambers and to the upper room over the sanctuary. These may signify the various afflictions and tribulations, trials and exercises, in which the Lord leads his people, and by which the churches of Christ pass from one state to another: *for the winding about of the house went still upward round about the house;* not on the outside, but within; properly round about the chambers, which are here called the house: *therefore the breadth of the house was still upward;* became broader and broader, as it rose up higher and higher: *and so increased from the lowest chamber to the highest by the* [illegible]; from being only four cubits broad in the lowest [illegible], it became five cubits in the middlemost, and [illegible] six cubits in the highest.

[illegible] *also the height of the house round* [illegible] of the temple itself, but of the [illegible] three stories of them, which went [illegible] about it; and particularly the height of the [illegible] story, which yet is not given: it could not be [illegible] as the temple itself; for then there would [illegible] no room for windows to let in light into [illegible] *foundations of the side-chambers were a full reed of six great cubits:* not of the lowest story of them, for that was but four cubits broad, ver. 5. nor of the middlemost, which was five; but of the uppermost, which was six; and these were cubits of the largest size, a hand's breadth larger than the common cubit, and made one full reed, or three yards and a half; see ch. xl. 5. these foundations signify the same as the twelve foundations of the wall of the New Jerusalem; and which are no other than the one foundation Christ, ministerially laid by his twelve apostles; and who is the only foundation of his church and people, and is a sure one, Rev. xxi. 14, 19. Ephes. ii. 20. 1 Cor. iii. 11. Isa. xxviii. 16.

Ver. 9. *The thickness of the wall, which was for the side-chambers without, was five cubits,* &c.] This is the outward wall of the chambers, north and south, which was five cubits thick, made of stone; see the note on ver. 5. *and that which was left was the place of the side-chambers that were within;* this was a void space, not built upon, which was before the chambers that stood within it; and was a space to walk in for those that dwelt in the chambers, or to go in from chamber to chamber; which also was five cubits in breadth, as appears from the next verse. This may denote the communion of churches, and the members of them one with another.

Ver. 10. *And between the chambers was the wideness of twenty cubits,* &c.] Not the side-chambers before mentioned, as if there was the space of twenty cubits between each chamber; for another word is used; more probably the meaning is, that between the side-chambers, or the void space before them of five cubits, and the chambers which were in the court facing them, was such a wideness of twenty cubits: *round about the house on every side;* on all sides of the temple, where the above chambers were, west, north, and south.

Ver. 11. *And the doors of the side-chambers were toward the place that was left,* &c.] These opened to the void space before them; that is, those of the lower story; the others must open to the winding staircase that led down to it: *one door toward the north, and another door toward the south;* which is not to be understood as if each chamber had two doors; but either of the two doors, which opened at the top of the staircase to the north and south; or of the doors of those chambers, which were on the north, and opened towards it; and of those that were on the south, that opened to that: indeed the Misnic doctors say* that each chamber had three doors; one to the chamber on the right; another to the chamber on the left; and a third to the upper chamber: and in the north-east corner were five doors; one to the chamber on the right; and one to the upper chamber; a third to the winding stairs; a fourth to the little gate; and the fifth to the temple: these signify the free entrance of men into the churches of Christ in the latter day, whose gates shall be opened to let in the righteous nation; and shall stand open continually, that the forces of the Gentiles and their kings may be brought, Isa. xxvi. 2. and lx. 11, 18. and in the New Jerusalem there are gates, east, west, north, and south, even twelve of them, and at them twelve angels; and which gates shall not be shut day nor night, Rev. xxi. 12, 13, 25: *and the breadth of the place that was left was five cubits round about;* the void space that was left before the side-chambers; see ver. 9.

Ver. 12. *Now the building that was before the separate place,* &c.] *The separate place* is the holy of holies, which was separated by a vail under the second temple, and by a wall as in this, and the first from the holy place: *before* or *over-against* which was a building, as it is rendered, ver. 15. a new building, not before

* Misn. Middot, c. 4. sect. 5.

* Misn. Middot, c. 4. sect. 3.

taken notice of: and it was situated *at the end toward the west*: or *sea*[e], the Mediterranean sea, which lay west to the land of Canaan. The meaning is, that this building was to the west of the temple, at which end stood the holy of holies, and this near to that: what building is here meant is not easy to say, there being nothing in the first or second temple which answered to it: it seems to be a new building; and what the mystical sense of it is cannot be easily guessed at. Cocceius thinks, that as the holy of holies signifies the heavenly or more perfect state of the church on earth, this, being over-against it, or behind it, as in ver. 15, may design heaven itself, the happiness and glory of the saints treasured up and reserved there: it *was seventy cubits broad*: Jerom seems to have the same mystical sense in view; since he observes, that after labours and perils, and the floods and shipwrecks of this world for seventy years, we come to enjoy the eternal rest: *and the wall of the building was five cubits thick round about*; which may answer to the vast gulf fixed between the godly in heaven, and the wicked in hell; so that there is no going the one to the other, Luke xvi. 26: *and the length thereof ninety cubits*; there are no outgoings to this building, as Hafenrefferus[f], a German divine, observes; so that those that are brought into it shall ever remain in it, which is the case of the saints in heaven.

Ver. 13. *So he measured the house, an hundred cubits long*, &c.] The whole temple, the parts of which he had measured; and this is the sum total: *and the separate place, and the building, with the walls thereof, an hundred cubits long*; these are the several parts of the house or temple: the *separate place*, the holy of holies, the *building*, the sanctuary or holy place; which, with the walls thereof, made a hundred cubits in length from east to west, thus; the thickness of the wall of the east porch, six cubits; the passage through the porch, eleven cubits; the wall between the porch and the temple, six cubits; the temple or holy place, forty cubits; the wall between that and the most holy place, two cubits; the holiest of all, twenty cubits; the thickness of the west wall, six cubits; the chambers at the end of it, four cubits; and the outer wall of them, five cubits; in all a hundred cubits: for this cannot be understood of the separate place, and the building before it, or rather behind it; since the separate place, or holiest of all, was twenty cubits, and the building ninety cubits; besides the thickness of each wall, five cubits a piece; in all a hundred and twenty.

Ver. 14. *Also the breadth of the face of the house, and the separate place toward the east*, &c.] The whole front of the temple, the holy and most holy place, which looked to the east: and was measured from north to south, *an hundred cubits*: which some reckon thus; the breadth of the temple twenty cubits; the thickness of the outward walls, twelve cubits; the side chambers, eight cubits; the walls of these chambers, five cubits on each side: the breadth of the void space, five cubits on each side; and twenty cubits round about the house; so that the length and breadth of this structure was the same, and made a perfect four-square, as the city of the New Jerusalem is said to be, Rev. xxi. 16.

Ver. 15. *And he measured the length of the building over-against the separate place*, &c.] Which was ninety cubits, as appears from ver. 12, when measured by itself: *which was behind it*; that is, behind the separate place, or holiest of all, at the back of it, at the west end. Noldius[g] renders the words, *he measured the length of the building before the separate place, and behind it*: or its back part, as the Syriac, and interprets it thus; that he measured the building or the porch which was before the temple, that is to the north; and the porch opposite to it, that is to the south: this *building* behind it, with the Jews[h], is the same with Beth-chaliphoth[i], or the house of knives, which the priests used in sacrificing: *and the galleries thereof on the one side, and on the other side, an hundred cubits*; as the above is the length of this building from east to west, this is the breadth of it from north to south; the breadth of the building itself was seventy cubits, ver. 12. and the galleries on the north and south sides of it, and the thickness of the walls, which were five cubits each, made thirty more; in all a hundred cubits; which is equal to the breadth of the temple, as in the preceding verse: these galleries, or balconies, or porticos, supported by pilasters, design places for the saints to walk in, converse, and commune with one another; and where Christ the King of saints is held forth, and seen in his beauty and glory; see Zech. iii. 7. Cant. vii. 5. John xvii. 24: *with the inner temple, and the porches of the court*: or, *and the inner temple*[k], &c. that is, and he also measured the inner temple or holy of holies, with all the porches, chambers, and their walls, and with all the spaces and appendages to it, which were of the same measure; see the preceding verse.

Ver. 16. *The door-posts and the narrow windows*, &c.] Of the inner temple or holy of holies; for this is what is last mentioned; of the door-posts of it, see ver. 3. in the holy of holies, both in Moses's tabernacle, and Solomon's temple, were no windows; Jehovah dwelt in thick darkness, 1 Kings viii. 12. but in this inner temple, or the more perfect state of the church on earth, there will be much light: these windows are said to be *narrow*, that is, without, but broad within; and let in a great deal of light, which, though not discerned by those without, yet comfortably enjoyed by those within; and will be so great, that there will be no need of the sun or moon; Christ the Lamb will be the light of this state; and the nations of the saved and their kings will walk in the light of it, Rev. xxi. 23, 24, 25: *and the galleries round about on their three stories*: these seem to be the same with the side-chambers, which were three story high, and were on the three sides of the house, west, north, and south; see ver. 6: *over-against the door, cieled with wood round about*: with cedar-wood, as the Targum: or, *answer-*

[e] הים ad mare, Piscator; obversa mari, Cocceius, Starckius.
[f] Apud Starckium in loc.
[g] Concord. Ebr. Part. p. 164. No. 521.
[h] Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 50.

[i] Misn. Middot, c. 4. sect. 7.
[k] והחיכל הפנימי & templum interius, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Starckius.

able were *the doors cieled with wood*[1]; door, for doors; that is, the doors of these side-chambers, which answered to one another, were lined with cedar-wood; all which doors, door-posts, windows, and galleries, were severally measured: *and from the ground up to the windows*; from the bottom of the floor of the most holy place up to the windows, which were above the third story of the side-chambers, he measured also: *and the windows were covered*; either by the jetting out of the side-chambers, so that they could not well be seen in the courts below; or they were lattice-windows with such small holes as at a distance were scarce discernible; or were covered with curtains within; or being very narrow on the outside, though broad within, looked as if they were covered; denoting how impenetrable the glories of this state are to those that are without, Rev. xxii. 15.

Ver. 17. *To that above the door, even unto the inner house,* &c.] The meaning is, either there were such windows as before described above the door of the eastern gate, that led into the holiest of all, and even unto the inner house, or holy of holies: *and without*; and to all the side-chambers that were built without it: *and by all the wall round about within and without*; both within the holy place, and without, in the places adjoining to it, on all sides, west, north, and south; or all were cieled with cedar-wood, that it might be more capable of being ornamented, either with gold, or with the decorations mentioned in the following verses: or the sense is, that all these were measured exactly: for it follows, *by measure*; or to all these *were measures*[m]; the dimensions were taken; every thing in the Gospel church-state, whether in its less or more perfect state, will be all according to rule and measure.

Ver. 18. *And it was made with cherubim and palm-trees,* &c.] That is, all the wall of the house round about was ornamented with these, even both of the holy and of the most holy place; with these the curtains of Moses's tabernacle, and the vail that divided between the holy and the most holy place, were decorated; as also the walls, both of the sanctuary and oracle, in Solomon's temple, Exod. xxvi. 1, 31. 1 Kings viii. 23—32. The former, according to the commonly received notion, were an emblem of angels; the latter of true believers, or holy upright men: why these are called palm-trees, see the note on ch. xl. 16: *so that a palm-tree was between a cherub and a cherub*; these were so placed all around, that there was first a cherub, next a palm-tree, and then a cherub again, and so on; and if angels and saints are meant, and that notion could be supported, which some have given into, that the number of men redeemed by Christ is the same with that of the angels that fell, and their places are filled up by them; this would serve to illustrate it, particularly as these were all around the walls of the most holy place; a type of heaven, as here of the New-Jerusalem state; that as there was a cherub and a palm-tree, a cherub and a palm-tree, throughout all the house, so an angel and a saint, an angel and a saint, throughout all the mansions in the holy city, and in the heavenly glory: *and every cherub had two faces*; which, by what follows, were the faces of a man, and of a lion. The *cherubim* Ezekiel saw in his first vision had four faces, Ezek. i. 10. and so these must be supposed to have, though only two were seen; because these were carved or painted on the walls, so that the hindmost faces, those of the ox and eagle, could not be perceived.

Ver. 19. *So that the face of a man was toward the palm-tree on the one side*, &c.] The cherubim in this verse are the same with the living creatures this prophet saw by the river Chebar, and which he knew to be the cherubim, Ezek. x. 20. and the same with John's four beasts or living creatures in Rev. iv. 7, 8. and he being the last that wrote concerning them, gives the clearest account of them; and by which the best judgment may be formed about them; and from which it appears that they are men redeemed by the blood of Christ; and as they are on the one hand distinguished from angels, so on the other from the four-and-twenty elders, or common Christians, Rev. iv. 8, 9. and v. 8—12. and plainly design the ministers of the word, and who are everywhere to be understood by them: their having the face of a man shews they are men, and have to do with men, and should be humane, kind, and tender, knowing and understanding as men; see the note on ch. i. 10. and their face being *towards the palm-tree* shews that they should be upright and sincere in their doctrine, ministry, and conversation; that they should bear all weights and pressures laid upon them patiently; and rise up heavenwards in their affections and desires, and in their expectation of help and assistance in their work, and triumph in Christ, through whom they are conquerors; the palm-tree being an emblem of these things: *and the face of a young lion toward the palm-tree on the other side*: this face of the cherubim denotes the strength of Gospel ministers they have from Christ to do their work, defend the Gospel, withstand gainsayers, and support the weak, and bear with their infirmities; as also their boldness, courage, and intrepidity, in preaching the Gospel of Christ without fear of men; of this their face, and the other two not mentioned here, see the note on ch. i. 10: *it was made through all the house round about*; that is, the cherubim and palm-trees were carved or portrayed in the form and order here described throughout the holy of holies, as Jarchi interprets the house; and signifies that Gospel ministers shall have a place, and peculiar honour done them, in the New-Jerusalem state, who will be particularly rewarded then, Rev. xi. 18.

Ver. 20. *From the ground unto above the door*, &c.] From the floor of the holy of holies to above the door of it to the east, where was the entrance into it; or from thence to the cieling, as the Septuagint version: *were cherubim and palm-trees made*; either in rows one above another, quite up to the place mentioned; or they were made so large, that each cherub and palm-tree reached from the ground to above the door, or to

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[1] נגד הסף שחיף עץ סביב contra uniuscujusque limen, stratumque ligno per gyrum in circuitu, V. L. Capellus.

[m] מדות mensuras accepit, Munster; in omnibus mensuræ constructæ sunt, Tigurine version.

the cieling: *and on the wall of the temple*: that is, they were not only thus placed in the holiest of all; but in the temple, or holy place on the wall of it all around; and shews, that in the state of the church in the latter day, which this part of the building represents more especially, will be great numbers of Gospel ministers, who will faithfully and uprightly preach it to men; see Dan. xii. 4. Rev. xiv. 6, 7, 8.

Ver. 21. *The posts of the temple were squared*, &c.] Or, were *four-square* [a]; the two posts on each side the door, the lintel and the threshold, made a square; the posts themselves were not round, as pillars, but flat and square; and the upper part was not arched, as in some buildings, but square. Jarchi says he had heard that the posts of Solomon's temple were four-square: but that is not certain; however, these were. The Vulgate Latin version renders it *four-cornered*; as doors formerly were: this was the ancient way of building, as Philander [a] observes; almost every thing in this wonderful building was four-square; denoting the firmness, stability, and perfection of all things in it: *and the face of the sanctuary*; *the appearance* of the one *as the appearance* of the other; that is, the front of the holy of holies was like that of the temple; they both had the same appearance, though one was larger than another. The posts of the one were squared, even as the posts of the other; shewing that the same is the way of entrance into the Gospel church and into the New-Jerusalem church-state, and even into the heavenly glory, which is Christ; and, whether in the less or more perfect state of the church on earth, there are the same precious faith, and love, and communion, though different degrees. The Targum is, "and the "face of the house of the propitiatory; and its appear- "ance as the appearance of its glory;" which Jarchi interprets, as the appearance of the throne of glory, seen by the prophet at the river Chebar, ch. i. 26—28.

Ver. 22. *The altar of wood was three cubits high, and the length thereof two cubits*, &c.] This was the altar of incense, and was typical of Christ in his intercession and mediation. It was made of *wood*: that in the tabernacle of Moses was of shittim-wood, a kind of cedar; and that in Solomon's temple was of cedar, Exod. xxx. 1. 1 Kings vi. 20. and may signify the human nature of Christ, in which he mediates and intercedes; which is excellent as the cedars; fair and beautiful, strong, durable, and incorruptible: though its original is of the earth, as wood: or was made of a woman; of the earth, earthly; but produced without sin. This altar, both in the tabernacle and temple, was covered with gold; as it was fit it should be with some hard substance that would bear incense to be burned on it; and therefore was called the golden altar, Exod. xxx. 3. Numb. iv. 11. 1 Kings vi. 20, 22. and so the altar at which our Lord officiates as Mediator and Intercessor is called a golden one, Rev. viii. 3. which may denote the deity of Christ, that gives virtue to his mediation; or the glorification of his human nature in heaven, in which he ministers; and also the preciousness of his intercession, and the duration of it. The incense burnt on this altar may signify both the mediation of Christ, which is pure and holy, though for sinners; large and frequent, continually made, and very fragrant and acceptable; and the prayers of the saints which are offered up on this altar, which sanctifies them; and through the much incense, which perfumes them, whereby they ascend up to God, and are sweet odours to him, being fragrant and fervent, pure and holy. This altar in the tabernacle of Moses, and probably in the temple of Solomon, though its dimensions there are not given, was four-square, Exod. xxx. 2. very likely so was this; and indeed the Septuagint version adds, *and the breadth two cubits*; which, being the same with its length, made it four-square; and so may point at the firmness, unchangeableness, and perfection of this part of Christ's priesthood, his intercession, which is true of the whole of it, Heb. vii. 19, 24, 25. and it may be observed, that the altar here was a cubit longer, and a cubit broader, as well as a cubit higher, than the Mosaic one, Exod. xxx. 2. Kimchi says this altar was not like to that which Moses or Solomon, or the children of the captivity, made; it was larger than any of them; which shews that the intercession of Christ our high-priest is larger and more extensive than that of the priests under the law; they offered incense only for the people of Israel; but Christ, as he is the propitiation, so the advocate for Gentiles, as well as Jews; though not for the whole world of men, yet for the world of the elect; and of all blessings of grace and glory for them, 1 John ii. 1, 2. John xvii. 9, 20. and, moreover, that under the Gospel dispensation there would be more praying souls, and more use made of the Mediator, of his name, blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and intercession; and a greater spirit of grace and supplication poured out, especially in the latter day; hence we read of Christ's *much incense*, John xvi. 23, 24. Zech. xii. 10. Rev. viii. 3: *and the corners thereof, and the length thereof, and the walls thereof, were of wood*: that is, the horns that were at the four corners of it; and the top of it, which was its length and breadth; and the sides of it, called its walls, were all of wood, though covered with gold. The mystical sense of which has been given; only it may be observed, that the four corners or horns of it may denote the strength of Christ's intercession; and to which men have recourse, and lay hold on for their relief, even from all parts of the world, east, west, north, and south: *and he said unto me, this is the table that is before the Lord*: that is, either the altar before described is the table before the Lord, which he has spread, and where his people feed in his presence; the intercession of Christ being a feast to the faith of saints: or it may be, that the divine guide of the prophet, turning himself to the right hand of the altar, pointed to the table of shew-bread, which stood in the same place; and said this or that which stands yonder is the table before the Lord; and which also was typical of Christ, the true bread that comes down from heaven, who is the food of his people; for quality, the finest of the wheat; for quantity, enough and to spare; for savour, such as gracious souls desire always to have; for duration, continual bread, set forth by

[a] מרבע quadratus, Montanus, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[a] Not. in Vitruvium de Architect. l. 4. c. 6. p. 153.

priests, and only eaten by them; and, like that, *bread of faces*, as the shew-bread is called [p]; denoting the intercession of Christ, the Angel of God's presence; and who always appears in the presence of God for his people, bearing on him the names of the children of Israel, to which the twelve shew-bread loaves answered. The *table* on which they were set signifies the communion saints have with Christ in his word and ordinances; which are called a feast, of which Christ is the sum and substance; and where, as at a table, he sits and favours them with fellowship with himself; see Prov. ix. 2. Cant. i. 12, and v. 1. Rev. iii. 20. The Jews [q] have an observation upon this text, that it begins with an altar, and ends with a table; and further observe, that, while the temple stood, the altar atoned for a man, but now a man's table atones for him: but this is not a man's table, but the Lord's table; and Christ the sacrifice held forth on this table does indeed atone for a man.

Ver. 23. *And the temple and the sanctuary had two doors.*] Or the house of propitiatory, as the Targum; that is, the most holy place; not two doors apiece, but each had one door, which made two; the door of the temple was ten cubits broad, and the door of the most holy place six cubits, ver. 2, 3. shewing the door is wider, and more enter into the outward visible church, or less perfect state, even some bad, as well as good, than the door of the Jerusalem church-state, or heavenly glory, into which fewer enter.

Ver. 24. *And the doors had two leaves apiece, two turning leaves,* &c.] Each of these doors had two leaves, which met in a middle post, and might be opened either singly or together, as occasion required; see the note on ch. xl. 48: *two leaves for the one door, and two leaves for the other door;* two for the door of the temple, and two for the door of the most holy place; or each leaf of both doors had two foldings; as there were two leaves in a door, there were two foldings in every leaf; so that the door might be opened wider or narrower, as was thought fit; denoting the greater number of persons let in, and the greater light and knowledge had, at one time than at another; see 1 Kings vi. 31, 34.

Ver. 25. *And there were made on them, on the doors of the temple,* &c.] Both of the holy, and the most holy place: *cherubim and palm-trees, like as were made on the walls:* the doors of both places had the same decorations as the walls of each; see the notes on ver. 18, 19, 20. and so it was in Solomon's temple, 1 Kings vi. 32, 35. a cherub and a palm-tree on each leaf, or on each folding of a leaf, according as it would admit of: and *there were thick planks upon the face of the porch without;* on the outward front of the porch were some thick wainscot boards, which projected as a cover to the entrance into it; or, as it may be rendered, also on *the thick* piece of *wood in the front of the porch without* [r]; which, as Starckius thinks, was a large wooden bar, which shut and held in the folding leaves of the door; and on this, or these thick planks, were cherubim and palm-trees.

Ver. 26. *And there were narrow windows,* &c.] See ver. 16: and ch. xl. 16: *and palm-trees on the one side and on the other side, on the sides of the porch;* upon the posts that were on each side the porch, north and south; see ch. xl. 16, 26: *and upon the side-chambers of the house, and thick planks;* that is, there were palm-trees upon the side-chambers, which were in number thirty, ver. 6. and upon the planks also; every part of this fabric within and without were ornamented.

CHAP. XLII.

IN this chapter are a description of some chambers in the northern part of the outward court, ver. 1—12. an account of the use made of them by the priests, ver. 13, 14. the measuring of the area, or whole compass of ground, on which the whole building before measured stood, with the wall that surrounded it, ver. 15—20.

Ver. 1. *Then he brought me forth into the utter court, the way toward the north,* &c.] After the dimensions of the gates and courts of this building had been shewn, and that of itself, the holy and most holy place, with the ornaments thereof; the prophet is brought by his guide into the outward court, which encompassed the building to the north part of it; probably he came out of the north gate of the house into it. So the Targum renders it, "by the way of the gate which is open to the "way of the north:" *and he brought me into the chamber that was over-against the separate place;* or holy of holies; see ch. xli. 12. over-against or before this, to the north of it, were a *chamber* or *chambers;* the singular being put for the plural; whither the prophet was brought to take a view of, being a new and distinct building from all others he had seen before; unto one of them, or to the place of them, as Jarchi, where they stood: there were two rows of them opposite to each other, and a walk between them: they are afterwards called the north and south chambers, ver. 13: *and which was before the building toward the north;* this chamber or chambers were over-against or before the whole fabric, to the north of it. The Jews here confess their ignorance, there being nothing in the first or second temple answerable to these. Lipman [s] expressly says these chambers were not in the second temple; perhaps they may design the Protestant reformed churches in the northern parts of the world; the religion of Protestants is by the Papists called the northern heresy: and if our northern churches are here pointed at and described, it is a great honour that is done them, to have a particular apartment allotted them in this wonderful building; compare Psal. xlviii. 2.

[p] לחם פנים panis facierum, Exod. xxv. 30.
[q] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 55. 1. Chagiga, fol. 26. 1. Menachot, fol. 97. 1.
[r] ועב עץ אל פני האולם מהחוץ etiam denso ligno in fronte vestibuli extrinsecus, Junius & Tremellius; & trabs lignea ante vestibulum erat foris, Starckius.
[s] Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 71.

Ver. 2. *Before the length of an hundred cubits was the north door*, &c.] That is, the north door of the house opened to a space that lay between that and the chambers, which was a hundred cubits long: *and the breadth was fifty cubits*; or the sense is, that the prophet was brought, as Noldius renders the words[t], *to a place whose length was an hundred cubits towards the north door*: so that they describe the length and breadth of these chambers, the whole of them; and to this agrees the Arabic version: this account of them makes them larger than Solomon's temple, 1 Kings vi. 2. which may signify the largeness of these churches; the number of men in them; and the abundance of spiritual blessings and privileges, of light and knowledge, peace and joy, possessed by them: but the measure being oblong, and not four-square, as the city of the New Jerusalem, Rev. xxi. 16, shews they are not yet come to stability and perfection.

Ver. 3. *Over-against the twenty cubits which were for the inner court*, &c.] Starckius thinks that the breadth of the chambers being fifty cubits, is here parted, and disposed of, and accounted for. The chambers were in two rows over-against each other; that row which looked to the south, and so to the temple, was twenty cubits broad; and because it led to the temple, its court is called the inner court: *and over-against the pavement which was for the utter court*; or that row which was over-against the pavement of the outward court, to the north, was also twenty cubits broad, which make forty; and the walk of ten cubits between them, ver. 4, account for the breadth of the fifty cubits: *was gallery against gallery in three stories*; or, there was *post before post in three stories*[u]; each chamber had a post or pillar, so Jarchi; which distinguished or divided one from another, and ran up with the chambers three story high; and as the chambers, so these posts in both rows answered to one another. These may denote the ministers of the Gospel, who are as pillars in the house of God, and churches of Christ; and every distinct church has its pillar or pastor, Prov. ix. 1.

Ver. 4. *And before the chambers was a walk of ten cubits' breadth inward*, &c.] That is, within-side, or between the two rows of chambers, there was a walk of this breadth, for those that lodged in the chambers to walk in for their pleasure and profit, and to converse with one another. Such who by these *chambers* understand places of retirement for private devotion, or the duties of the closet, which fit and prepare for public worship, as these chambers were near and in sight of the temple, so by this walk think Christian conference and conversation is intended; and shews, that the whole of religious time is not to be spent between the church and the chamber; but some part of it should be allotted for spiritual discourse, about gracious experiences, the truths of the Gospel, and the duties of religion; but as chambers design churches, this walk denotes the outward walk and conversation of the saints; which should be according to the rule of God's word, as becomes the Gospel, and worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. Starckius applies this to the decalogue or ten commandments, which is a broad way, Psal. cxix. 32, 96. and the moral law, as in the hands of Christ, is a rule of walk and conversation to believers under the Gospel: and besides, there *was a way of one cubit*; which led into the chambers, and out of them into the broad walk: this is a narrow way, as Christ is said to be, Matt. vii. 14. and whoever profess faith in him, and in this way enter into a Gospel church-state, and into the kingdom of heaven, must be attended with much affliction and persecution, and pass through many tribulations; and there being both a broad walk and a narrow way, and these lying near one another, and a passage from the one to the other, may denote that the churches and people of God are sometimes in prosperity, and sometimes in adversity; one while they walk at liberty, as in a large place; and at other times in great straits and difficulties: *and their doors toward the north*: that is, the doors of that row of chambers nearest the temple; these opened to the north into the walk of ten cubits; though one would think that the row opposite to them, their doors must be to the south, into the broad walk between them; unless this is to be understood of the doors that opened into the way of one cubit, and were to the north in both rows; but then the way of one cubit could not in both lead into the broad walk.

Ver. 5. *Now the upper chambers were shorter*, &c.] The chambers were in three stories, as in the following verse, one above another; the middlemost were shorter than the lowermost, and the upper shorter than either; just the reverse of the chambers in ch. xli. 7. they were not so high from the floor to the cieling, nor so broad from side to side. The reason follows: *for the galleries were higher than these*: or, *ate out of these*[w], *than the lower, and than the middlemost of the building*: the meaning is, that the galleries or balconies in the middlemost and upper chambers were taken out of them, and so made them lesser than the lower ones, and the upper ones lesser than either; or the posts or pillars, as the word may be rendered, see ver. 3, which supported the chambers, took more out of the uppermost than the others, and so made them shorter. This may signify the diversity of gifts and grace, of light and knowledge, and of liberty and comfort, in the churches; and that, as those that are uppermost have most light, they are usually the least, and fewest members in them; who are the few names in Sardis, Rev. iii. 4. and are generally more straitened, afflicted, reproached, and persecuted.

Ver. 6. *For they were in three stories*, &c.] Not only the galleries or posts, but the chambers; they were one over another; there were the lowermost, middlemost, and uppermost; which, as before, may denote the difference in churches, and the different states, conditions, and characters of those that are in them; some being fathers, others young men, and others little children; or their different offices and relations; some being pastors, others deacons, and others private members: or their knowledge of and profession of faith in the doctrine of the Trinity, the mystery of God, and of the

[t] Concord. Ebr. Partic. p. 82.

[u] אתיק אל פני אתיק בשלשים postis ante postem in triplici, Starckius.

[w] יוכלו מהנה Keri, יאכלו comedebant ex ipsis, Marinus; demordebant ab illis, Cocceius, Starckius.

Father, and of Christ; and their being baptized in the name of the three divine Persons; and their being built on Christ the foundation, a habitation for God through the Spirit: *but had not pillars as the pillars of the courts*: those which supported the porticos and galleries in the courts of the temple, not pillars so thick and strong as they: so the churches represented by these chambers, though they have Gospel ministers, which are as pillars, and valuable members, which are as such, that shall not go out; yet they have not those external supports from great and rich men, but consist generally of the poor of this world, as churches on a civil establishment have, who are supported by the state: *therefore the building was straitened more than the lowest and the middlemost from the ground*: the upper part of it, or the uppermost chambers, were more straitened, and had less room in them, than the middlemost, and the middlemost than the lowest; suggesting, that the more heavenly and spiritual men are, the further they depart from the men of the world and their conversation, from the sentiments and practices of natural men, the more they are exposed to their scorn and contempt, and are the more afflicted and straitened by them.

Ver. 7. *And the wall that was without over-against the chambers*, &c.] This wall separated and distinguished the chambers from the outward court, as well as was a protection of them; and signifies the grace and power of God, which separates his true churches from the world, and is the security of them; see the note on ch. xl. 5. this was *towards the utter court, on the fore part of the chambers*; or front of them, which seems to be to the north of them; since their doors were towards the north, ver. 4. though Cocceius makes it to be to the west, which better agrees with what follows: *the length thereof was fifty cubits*; which answers to the breadth of the chambers, ver. 2. and what is called length here, with respect to the wall, is called the breadth with respect to the chambers. The wall of divine protection is equal to the length and breadth, and even the whole compass, of the churches of Christ.

Ver. 8. *For the length of the chambers that were in the utter court was fifty cubits*, &c.] Which was the reason why the wall was of the same length, that it might be answerable to them; here length is put for breadth; see ver. 2. this measure was from the north to south, as Lipman[x] observes: *and, lo, before the temple were an hundred cubits*; as the breadth of the wall and chambers was fifty, so in length, as they were over-against the temple, they were an hundred cubits, as in ver. 2. unless the account is to be taken thus; that the row of chambers towards the north were fifty cubits long, and the row towards the south over-against the other was fifty cubits, and so both made a hundred; to which sense is the Septuagint version, "for "the length of the chambers that look to the outward "court was fifty cubits, and those (that is, those that "looked to the temple, or were before that) answered "to them, the whole a hundred cubits;" that is, both rows made a hundred cubits; but rather, as Lipman[y] says, the chambers contained from east to west a hundred cubits.

Ver. 9. *And from under these chambers*, &c.] Or, *from the lower part of these chambers*[z]; or, *from the lowest* of them there was a space, as may be supplied, and as is by Cocceius and Starckius; and as there was a wall to the west of them, so there was a void space to the east; and as follows: *the entry on the east side*; or, *he that brought me from the east*[a], as the Keri; and coming eastward to these chambers, one must needs go through this space: *as one goeth into them from the utter court*; if a man went eastward into those chambers from the outward court, he must go through this space, which lay to the east of the lowest chambers; or the sense is, that from under the north chambers to the south was an entry on the east side, which led from one to the other.

Ver. 10. *The chambers were in the thickness of the wall of the court toward the east*, &c.] As there were chambers in the northern part of the outward court, some which looked to the north, and others to the south, so likewise some to the east; and these were built on the breadth, as it may be rendered, of the court-wall to the east; signifying there will be churches raised in all the northern parts of the world: *over-against the separate place, and over-against the building*; as the other chambers were; see the note on ver. 1.

Ver. 11. *And the way before them was like the appearance of the chambers which were toward the north*, &c.] The way before these eastern chambers was exactly like to that of the northern chambers; which was either the way of one cubit into them, or the walk of ten cubits before them, or both; signifying that the way into Gospel churches is the same everywhere, and the walk and conversation of the saints the same in all places: *as long as they, and as broad as they*; which seems to confirm that both the way and the walk are meant, which were the same in those eastern chambers as in the northern; the way being as long, of one cubit, and the walk as broad, of ten cubits: *and all their goings out were both according to their fashions, and according to their doors*; the form and fashion of them were alike; they were built three stories high, were as long, and as broad, and the upper shorter than the middlemost and lowest; the way of going into them, and coming out of them, were just the same; their doors were in the same position: in Gospel churches there are the same ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper; the same laws and rules; the same privileges and immunities; the same graces in the members of them, like-precious faith, hope, and love; whatever difference there may be in temporal things, there is none in spiritual ones; be they rich or poor, their communion is equal, their benefits the same.

Ver. 12. *And according to the doors of the chambers that were toward the south*, &c.] That is, the doors of these eastern chambers were exactly like to the doors of the southern chambers, as well as to the northern ones: was *a door in the head of the way*; or beginning of the way; the door opened into the way

[x] Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 71.
[y] Ibid.
[z] ומתחתה הלשכות ה' & ab ima parte exedrarum, Vatablus; & infra cellas has *fulcis spatium*, Cocceius, Starckiu,

[a] מהקדים המבוא is qui deducebat me ab oriente, *Junius & Tremellius*; quumque is qui introduxerat me ab oriente, *Piscator*.

of one cubit, and that led into the walk of ten cubits: and such a way and walk were before these eastern chambers as were before the southern and northern ones: even *the way directly before the wall toward the east, as one entereth into them*: or, also *a way before the wall direct, a way to the east, as one goes into them*[b]; which seems to describe such a way from under these eastern chambers as were from under the northern or southern chambers, ver. 9.

Ver. 13. *Then said he unto me, &c.*] The divine Person that measured and described these chambers, and brought the prophet to take a view of them, said to him, as follows: *the north chambers, and the south chambers, which are before the separate place, they be holy chambers*: these are the two rows of chambers before described, which were southward and northward to each other, though both in the northern part of the outward court; these were for holy persons to dwell in, and for holy things to be done in, as the churches of Christ are; they consist of holy persons, men called with a holy calling, and in them the holy word of God is preached, and holy ordinances administered: *where the priests that approach unto the Lord shall eat the most holy things*: which is to be understood not of the ministers of the Gospel, for whom a proper maintenance is to be provided, and who should live of the Gospel they preach; but of all the saints, who are made *priests* to God by Christ; and who *approach* unto the Lord by him, in his name and righteousness, and by the faith of him, with true hearts, in a spiritual manner; and which is profitable to themselves, and acceptable to God; for whom spiritual provisions are made in his house: these have most holy things to eat of, the holy word of God, the law part of which is holy, just, and good; and the Gospel part is our most holy faith, which is food for faith, savoury and salutary, milk for babes, and meat for strong men; and which is found and eaten, and digested by them: also our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the most holy, and is the sum and substance of the word and ordinances, and the food of believers, the bread of life, the hidden manna, the Lamb of God, and fatted calf; whose flesh and blood are meat and drink indeed, and are eaten and fed upon by faith. *There shall they lay the most holy things*: lay up the word of God in their minds and memories, and remember the love of God, his sufferings and death, and the benefits arising from them, particularly in the ordinance of the supper: *and the meat-offering*: the *minchah*, or bread-offering, made of fine flour, typical of Christ, the bread of life: *and the sin-offering, and the trespass*-offering: both typical of Christ, made sin for his people; and who, by one sacrifice of himself, has made atonement for it, and an end of it; see the note on ch. xl. 39. these were called the most holy things, and were laid up in the sanctuary for the priests and their families to live upon, Lev. vi. 17: *for the place is holy*: the place of these chambers holy, as the temple itself, where these most holy things and holy persons were.

Ver. 14. *When the priests enter therein, &c.*] Into the holy place, these holy chambers, and approach unto God, and eat of the most holy things, and minister therein to the Lord: *then shall they not go out of the holy* place *into the utter court*: denoting, not that the ministers of the word should not concern themselves in secular employments, but give themselves up to the word and prayer, though so to do is right; but the perseverance of the saints in the house and worship of God, in grace and holiness, and in all the duties of religion; these should not relinquish their profession, desert their station and the service of God, and return to the world; but continue as pillars in the temple of God, and go no more out, but abide by the truths and ordinances of the Gospel: *but there they shall lay their garments wherein they minister, for they are holy*: these signify Christ's robe of righteousness and garments of salvation, that fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints; and fitly represented by the linen garments of the priests, in which they ministered in their office, and were like them holy, pure, and spotless; in these only saints appear before God, and present their supplications to him, not for their own, but for Christ's righteousness-sake, making mention of that only; and herein they have acceptance with God now, and shall be introduced into his presence hereafter, and behold his face, clothed with these garments, and serve him for ever: *and shall put on other garments, and shall approach to those things which are for the people*: these are the conversation-garments of the saints, which are not fit to appear in before God, being attended with imperfection and sin; but very proper to appear in before men, among whom their lights should shine, and their good works be seen, for the adorning of the doctrine of Christ, the recommending of the Christian religion, and the stopping of the mouths of gainsayers: for this respects not the different habits of ministers, when they are in their ministrations, and out of them; though the allusion is to the priests under the law, who wore their priestly garments only in the temple, and whilst ministering there, and never elsewhere, or when among the common people on civil accounts: so Josephus says[c], the priests only wore their holy garments when they ministered, at other times they appeared in the habit of private persons; with which agrees what Maimonides[d] says, their garments are not upon them when they are not ministering in the priestly office, but then they are clothed as laymen; or when, as the Targum here has it, "they were mingled with the people." There were places in the temple where they put on and off their clothes, and where they were laid up. So Adrichomius[e] says, speaking of the temple, "there were "rooms, otherwise called treasuries, and priests' apart- "ments, which were houses on the side of it, like "towers, long, broad, and high; in which the priests, "when they went into the sanctuary, put off their "common woollen garments, and put on their holy "linen ones; and, when they had performed their holy "services, laid them up there again." And another writer, quoted by Solomon Ben Virga[f], observes, that

[b] דרך בפני הגדרת הגינה דרך הקדים בבואן via, saepem, quae erat ante maceriam rectam orientem versus, qua venitur ad illas, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; via ante maceriam recte, via orientis in introitu illarum, Cocceius, Starckius.

[c] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 5. sect. 7.

[d] Cele Hamikdash, c. 10. sect. 4.

[e] Theatrum Terrae Sanct. Jerusalem, No. 92. p. 161.

[f] Shebet Judah, fol. 42. 2. Ed. Gentii, p. 404.

"here (that is, the temple) was a house for the priest, "whose office it was to clothe the rest of the priests "at the time of service; and he gave to every one of "them four sorts of garments, as were commanded, "and fetched them out of the chests of the wardrobe: "and on every chest, which were at the walls of this "house, that is, above every one of them, was the "name of the garment, that there might be no mistake "nor confusion when they were wanted." And this agrees with what is said in the Misnah[g], that there was one that was appointed over the priests' garments, and who might be properly enough called the master of the wardrobe; on which one of the commentators says[h], his business was "to clothe the priests at the "time of service, and to unclothe them after service "was done, and to keep the garments of the priest-"hood in the chambers made for that purpose." Very wrongly, therefore, is the learned Selden[i] charged by Mr. Sheringham[k] with a mistake, in denying that the priests wore their holy garments at any other time but when they were at divine service.

Ver. 15. *Now when he had made an end of measuring the inner house*, &c.] The holy place, and the holy of holies, with all the courts and chambers belonging to them; even the whole building within the compass of the outermost wall, and all that pertained unto it; the chambers last mentioned, as well as the rest, the dimensions of which are given in this and the two preceding chapters: *he brought me forth toward the gate whose prospect is toward the east;* not to the east gate of the outward wall, but to the east gate which led into the outward court; the gate he was first brought unto, and which was first measured, ch. xl. 6: *and measured it round about;* not the east gate, nor the outward wall that went all round the house; though this was measured, and its dimensions given, last of all; nor the house itself, which had been measured already; or the figure of it, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions; but all that space that was between this building and the wall that surrounded it; the area or compass of ground on which the building stood.

Ver. 16. *He measured the east side*, &c.] He began with that, being at the east gate: the building was four-square, and so was the wall about it, and had each four equilateral sides, which were separately measured; here the east side, from the two angles of it, the north and south points: *with the measuring-reed;* which consisted of six cubits, and which cubits were larger than the common sort by a hand's breadth; so that a measuring-reed measured three yards and a half: and the whole measure of the east side were *five hundred reeds:* which make one thousand seven hundred and fifty yards: *with the measuring-reed round about;* not round about the building, since only one side, as yet, was measured; but round about that side, or from angle to angle, or from one side to the other: having finished one side, he went to another, until he had measured all round; but did not go four times round it, only once.

Ver. 17. *He measured the north side, five hundred reeds*, &c.] From the two angles of that side, east and west; and it was of the same dimension as the east side, just five hundred reeds, or one thousand seven hundred and fifty yards: *with a measuring-reed round about;* he measured with the same reed, from point to point; and having measured this side, he went to another.

Ver. 18. *He measured the south side, five hundred reeds*, &c.] From the two angles of that side, east and west; and it amounted to just the same number of reeds, even five hundred reeds, or one thousand seven hundred and fifty yards: *with the measuring-reed;* the same as before; here, and in the next verse, the phrase *round about* is not used, but is to be understood; and having been repeated, there was no need of mentioning it again.

Ver. 19. *He turned about to the west side*, &c.] And took the dimensions of that, from angle to angle, the south and north points of it: *and measured five hundred reeds, with the measuring-reed;* and it was exactly of the same measure with the other three sides.

Ver. 20. *He measured it by the four sides*, &c.] Which were equilateral, parallel to each other, each measuring five hundred reeds; which in all made up two thousand reeds, or seven thousand yards: this shews that no material building can be designed; never was an edifice of such dimensions; this seems rather to describe a city than a temple; and denotes the largeness of the Gospel church-state in the latter day, when the Jews will be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in: *it had a wall round about:* the same with that in ch. xl. 5: *five hundred* reeds *long, and five hundred broad;* it was four-square, as the building was, and exactly answered to that in its dimensions. The Jews say[l] the mountain of the house was five hundred cubits by five hundred; that is, a perfect square of five hundred cubits on every side, two thousand cubits in the whole compass about. Josephus[m] says the whole circuit was four furlongs, every side containing the length of a furlong. Now, says Doctor Lightfoot[n], if any will take up the full circuit of the wall that encompassed the holy ground, according to our English measure, it will amount to half a mile, and about one hundred and sixty-six yards; and whosoever will likewise measure the square of Ezekiel, ch. xlii. 20, will find it six times as large as this, ch. xl. 5. the whole amounting to three miles and a half, and about one hundred and forty yards, a compass incomparably larger than Mount Moriah divers times over; and by this very thing is shewed that that is spiritually and mystically to be understood; wherefore these measures no doubt did, as Mr. Lee[o] observes, signify the great fulness of the Gentiles, and that the compass of the church in Gospel days should be marvellously extended. The use of it was, *to make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place;* the church and the world; the world is profane, and lies in wickedness, and the men of it ought not to be

[g] Shekalim, c. 5. sect. 1.
[h] Bartenora in ib.
[i] De Success. in Pontif. Heb. l. 2. c. 7. Vid. ib. de Synedriis, l. 3. c. 11. sect. 6. & Braunium, de Vestitu Sacerdot. Hebr. l. 2. c. 25.
[k] Ad Codicem Joma, c. 7. sect. 1. p. 78, 79.
[l] Misn. Middot, c. 2. sect. 1.
[m] Antiqu. l. 15. c. 11. sect. 3. Ed. Hudson.
[n] Prospect of the Temple, c. 2. p. 1051.
[o] Temple of Solomon portrayed, &c. p. 241.

admitted into the church of God, and partake of holy things in it; a difference must be made between the precious and the vile; and greater care will be taken in the latter day of the admission of members into Gospel churches, Isa. lii. 1. see the note on ch. xl. 5.

CHAP. XLIII.

THE temple or house of God being measured, the worship of God in it is pointed out and observed in this and the following chapter; and which, though evangelical, is expressed in the language of the Old Testament. An account is given of the glory of the Lord returning to the house, and the way he did, and his taking possession of it, which the prophet was favoured with a view of, ver. 1—5. a promise is made of his continuance there, provided his people behaved as they should, ver. 6—9. an order is given to the prophet, to shew them the form and fashion, the laws, orders, and ordinances of the house to them, to be observed by them, ver. 10, 11, 12. then follows the measuring of the altar of burnt-offerings; which, though measured before, ch. xl. the dimensions are here given, ver. 13—17. and the chapter is concluded with directions about the consecration of it, ver. 18—27.

Ver. 1. *Afterward he brought me to the gate,* &c.] The dimensions of this wonderful building being finished, the prophet's divine guide brought him from the wall about it, he had last measured, to the gate he first had him to, after he had observed to him the same wall, ch. xl. 5, 6: even *the gate that looketh toward the east:* or, as the Targum, which was open to the way of the east. The reason of his being brought hither follows.

Ver. 2. *And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east,* &c.] The God of Israel is Jehovah the Father, the covenant-God of literal Israel; and the covenant God and Father of the whole spiritual Israel, or his elect, whether Jews or Gentiles; whom he has taken into covenant, loves, cares, provides for, and protects: Christ, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, whose glory is the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, is here meant; and who has the same glorious attributes, the same glorious names, and the same worship, honour, and glory, his Father has; and in whom, as Mediator, is displayed the glory of all the divine perfections: he is said to *come from the way of the east;* which agrees with him in his character as the rising sun of righteousness; and with his incarnation, when as the day-spring from on high, from heaven, he visited us, was born in the east, where his star appeared; from this part of the world his Gospel first came; here it was first preached, and churches planted; and though these parts have been forsaken by him a long time, he'll return hither again; when he will dry up the river Euphrates, and make way for the kings and kingdoms of the east to be converted to him, Rev. vii. 2. and xvi. 12. to which a *behold* is prefixed, as a note exciting attention, and raising admiration; as it was matter of wonder and joy to the prophet, to see the glory of the Lord returning to his house, the same way he departed, ch. x. 4, 19: *and his voice* was *like a noise of many waters:* this is to be understood of his Gospel, in which he speaks to men, and which is a voice of love, grace, and mercy; of peace and reconciliation; of pardon and righteousness; of life, liberty, and salvation: and the metaphor here used is expressive of the swiftness of its motion in the world; of its general spread in it, and all over it; of the noise it will make, as it always does among men, wherever it comes; and of the rapidity and force of it, being attended with almighty power; and is a soul-shaking, heart-melting, soul-quickening, enlightening, alluring, and comforting voice; see Dan. 10. 6. Rev. i. 15. The Targum is, "and the voice of them that bless his "name is as the voice of many waters." The Septuagint and Arabic versions, the voice of the camp or army. *And the earth shined with his glory:* with the brightness of his glory, as the Targum; with his glorious Gospel, in which the glory of his person, office, and grace, is displayed; this will be spread all over the earth, and that will be enlightened by it: it will remove the darkness and infidelity, error, superstition, idolatry, and all false doctrines from the world, and the darkness of calamity and distress from the church; which will cast a lustre and glory upon it; and with the brightness of which the Lord will destroy antichrist, and by it set up his kingdom in the world, and reign before his antients gloriously: this will bring on Zion's light and glory, to which kings will come, and upon which will be a defence; see Rev. xviii. 1. 2 Thess. ii. 8. Isa. lx. 1, 3. and iv. 5.

Ver. 3. *And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw,* &c.] Recorded in the 1st, 9th, and 10th chapters of this book; the form in which the glory of the God of Israel now appeared was like to what he then saw; in each of which visions was the likeness of a throne, and on it the appearance of the glory of God: *even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city;* the city of Jerusalem; not that the prophet destroyed it, or came to destroy it himself, which was to be done, and was done, by the Chaldeans; but to foretel the destruction of it; which prediction of his made it as certain as if it was done. So the Targum, "when I prophesied to "destroy the city;" and this was, when he was bid to cause, in a visionary and prophetic manner, six men, with their destroying weapons, to draw near unto it, and smite it; at which time he saw the glory of the God of Israel go up from the cherub, ch. ix. 1, 2, 3. *And the visions* were *like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar;* the four living creatures and the wheels; the throne of sapphire-stone, and the glorious appearance above it, ch. i. 3.—28. and x. 1—20. only with this difference, then he saw the glory of the God of Israel departing, especially in the last vision, but now returning: *and I fell upon my face:* in reverence of such glorious majesty: affected with such a display of grace and goodness, and sensible of his own unworthiness to behold it: the clearer and fuller views saints have of the grace and glory of Christ, the more humble they are; see Isa. vi. 1, 2, 3, 5.

Ver. 4. *And the glory of the Lord came into the house,* &c.] Before described and measured; and being fitted and prepared, the builder and owner of it comes and takes up his residence in it; as Christ will do in his church, more especially and more visibly in the latter day: *by the way of the gate whose prospect is towards the east;* which was the direct way into the outward court, and so to the inward court, and into the holy, and into the most holy place; and was the way by which he departed from hence, ch. x. 18, 19.

Ver. 5. *So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court,* &c.] The prophet was fallen down on his face, upon the sight of the glory of the Lord, and there he lay, until a wind came, as the word signifies; or the Holy Spirit, which is compared to the wind, for its invisible and irresistible power, came and took him up: humble souls are regarded by the Lord; he raises them up, and exalts them, and brings them into nearer and more intimate communion with God; and gives them clearer views still of the glories of Christ's person, grace, and love: and it is the spirit of God only that does this, and that to priests only, such an one as Ezekiel was; for none but priests went into the inner court: *and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house;* the body of it; both the holy and the most holy place, with all its courts and apartments; so the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle when that was set up in the temple of Solomon, when it was built; and the glory of the Lord will fill the church of God, yea, the whole earth, in the latter day, Isa. vi. 3. of this Christ's personal appearance in the second temple, which gave it a greater glory than the former, was an emblem and pledge, Hagg. ii. 7, 9. here, it may be observed, no mention is made of a cloud, as at the setting up of the tabernacle, and dedication of the temple; denoting the clear light of the Gospel in those times, and how the glory of the Lord will be seen with open face by all the saints.

Ver. 6. *And I heard him speaking unto me out of the house,* &c.] The holy place, the prophet being in the inward court: this is Jehovah the Father, the God of Israel, whose glory entered into it; who utters his voice out of Zion; who speaks in his church by his word, and the ministers of it; and which is to be heard and regarded, not as the word of man, but as the word of God: *and the man stood by me:* whom he saw at first with a measuring-line in his hand, ch. xl. 3. and with whom he had been all along, and had seen him measure the house, and all belonging to it: he stood by him as the Mediator between God and him; as the medium of communion with him; as the advocate with the Father: he stood by him to interpret what was said to him; to guide him further into the knowledge of divine things; to assist him, protect and defend him; to continue him in fellowship with God, and to preserve him in grace to glory. Here is an appearance of the three Persons in the Godhead; the Father speaking to the prophet out of the house; the Son in human form standing by him; and the Spirit of the Lord, who had took him up from the ground, and had brought him into the inner court.

Ver. 7. *And he said unto me, son of man,* &c.] A kind, usual, and singular appellation, given to this prophet: these are the words either of the man that stood by him, so the Arabic version; or of Jehovah, speaking out of the house to him: *the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet;* that is, this house, the church of God, is the place where the throne of the Lord is set; where he rules and reigns; where he sets his feet, and is his resting-place; even his, whose throne is the heaven, and the earth his footstool; here Christ, as King of saints, dwells, and here he walks and shews the glory of his majesty: *where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever;* not carnal, but spiritual Israel; such as are Israelites indeed, of which the church will be full in the latter day, both Jews and Gentiles; and in the midst of these will Jehovah dwell, and grant his gracious presence, and never more depart from them: this shews that this house or building cannot be understood of the second temple; since the Lord did not dwell in that for ever, but has left that house desolate hundreds of years ago: some Jewish writers[p] have owned that it belongs to the times of the Messiah: *and my name shall the house of Israel no more defile,* or *profane;* or cause to be blasphemed by immoralities, or false doctrines, or superstition and will-worship; denoting the holiness of life, purity of doctrine and worship, in the churches of Christ in the latter day; see Isa. iv. 3. Joel iii. 17. Zech. xiv. 20, 21: *neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom;* that is, idolatry, which is spiritual fornication; such as the kings of Israel, and their subjects, were often guilty of, before their captivity in Babylon, though not after; nor will they ever return to it in the latter day, when converted; for they'll never espouse the idolatries of Rome; and those kings and people that bear the name of Christians, and yet commit fornication with the whore of Babylon, shall do so no more after these times, Rev. xvii. 2, 16: *nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places;* or, and *their high places*[s]; that is, by both; by the carcasses of their kings being buried in or near the house of God; so the Targum adds, at their death[t]; or by human carcasses being sacrificed to Molech or Milchom, which signifies their king; or else the idols themselves are so called, because lifeless and abominable; see Jer. xvi. 18. and the worship of which the kings of Israel encouraged by precept and practice, order and example, and therefore called theirs; and also by their high places, which they made for idolatrous worship, and which were made where the carcasses of their kings were laid, as Ben Melech observes; and all which were done, especially in the reigns of Manasseh and Ammon: but now nothing of this kind shall be hereafter, or any thing now similar to it, in the antichristian state.

Ver. 8. *In their setting of their threshold by my threshold,* &c.] The threshold is the way of entrance into the house; when men open any other way of entrance into the house of God than he has directed, it is setting up their threshold by his: the Gospel way of entrance into the church of Christ is Christ himself,

[p] Vid. R. Isaac Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 51.
[s] במותם & excelsis suis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[t] So Abendana takes this word to signify in their *death*; their carcases being buried in their gardens, as Manasseh, 2 Kings xxi. 18.

and faith in him, and a profession of it, and submission to the ordinance of baptism, John x. 1, 7, 9. Acts ii. 41. and ix. 18, 26. but when men make carnal descent, religious education, mere morality and civility, the way of entrance into church-communion; this is opposite to God's way, and is resented by him; this shall not be hereafter: *and their post by my post;* which is done when the ordinances of men are substituted in the room of the ordinances of God, or set upon a level with them; when the ordinances of God are changed and altered, or that brought into his worship which he has not commanded; and the commandments of men are taught for the doctrines of God: so the Pharisees set up the traditions of the elders as equal to the written word, and made it of no effect by them; as the Papists do, by setting up their traditions, under the name of the traditions of the apostles, and of the church, upon a level with the Scriptures; and the same is done when men set up their own doctrines, concerning the Persons in the Godhead, concerning the power and purity of human nature, and the way of redemption; and oppose their own works to the grace of God, in justification, pardon, and salvation; the allusion is to the setting up of altars and idols in the house of the Lord, by his altar, 2 Kings xxi. 4, 7: *and the wall between me and them:* that these sins and abominable practices were a wall of separation between God and them, and caused him to hide himself from them, withdraw his presence, and deny them communion with him, Isa. lix. 2. some render it, *for* or *so that* there was but *a wall between me and them*[*]; so near were their thresholds, posts, and altars, to his: *they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed:* by their false doctrines, idolatrous worship, and immoral lives; such abominations as before mentioned: *wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger;* as the Jews are now, and all the antichristian states will be.

Ver. 9. *Now let them put away their whoredom,* &c.] Idolatry, superstition, and will-worship, with which the corrupt church of Rome abounds; and whatever appearance thereof is in the reformed churches: *and the carcasses of their kings far from me;* their idols; see the note on ver. 7: *and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever;* now though the Jews were never guilty of idolatry after their return from the Babylonish captivity, nor even to this day; yet the Lord has departed from them, and left them to blindness and stupidity, they having rejected the Messiah he sent unto them; which shews that this passage refers not to those times, but to future times; when the whole Israel of God shall be cleared of all corruptions in doctrine and worship, and the Lord will take up his abode with them, and no more depart from them.

Ver. 10. *Thou son of man, shew the house,* &c.] That is, the house the prophet had seen measured, its gates, courts, and all belonging to it; which he was at first bid to observe, that he might shew it to others; the house that the glory of the Lord was now come into, and had filled; and which is no other than the Gospel church in its perfection and glory in the latter day. This the prophet, who is addressed under his usual character in this book, is bid to shew *to the house of Israel;* either to the captives in Babylon, among whom he was, and to whom he often speaks in this book, being sent with a message to them: and this he is ordered to shew them, both to comfort them in their present state, with a view of what would be hereafter; and to humble them, and bring them to a sense of their sins, and shame for them, which had brought them into the condition they were, and so greatly short of this happy one: or else to the Jews in the first times of the Gospel; the prophet personating the apostles of Christ, who delivered out the form of a Gospel church-state to the believing ones, far superior to that they had been in, and into which they entered: or rather he personated the ministers of the word in the latter day, shewing to the Christians of those times the order, worship, and discipline of a pure Gospel church, who have been greatly deficient in their observance of them; and which is the work and business of Gospel ministers to do, as well as to preach the doctrine of the Gospel: *that they may be ashamed of their iniquities;* how far short they have come of the model of true Gospel churches, and of observing the order, and maintaining the ordinances, and keeping up the discipline of such churches; and when persons are brought to blush and be ashamed, it looks as if they had a true sight and sense of their mistakes, and of repentance for them: *and let them measure the pattern;* that is, of the house, and what belongs to it; by which they will see their defects, and correct them; see Rev. xi. 1, 2.

Ver. 11. *And if they be ashamed of all that they have done,* &c.] As sinful and criminal, at least as very imperfect and defective, and not answerable to the pattern shewn them, from which they have sadly deviated; if made sensible of this, and they acknowledge it with shame, not only the house in general, but the particulars of it, are to be shewn with them; for, to sensible and penitent persons, more grace, light, knowledge, and judgment in divine things, are given: *shew them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof;* the form and order of a Gospel church; which is not national, provincial, or parochial, nor Presbyterian, but congregational; consisting of persons called out of the world by the grace of God, and who are incorporated and knit together in Gospel bonds; among whom the word of God is faithfully preached, and the ordinances truly administered, and furnished with proper officers, pastors, and deacons; the one to take care of the spiritual, the other of the temporal affairs of the church; and to see a church in such form and order, and thus organized, is a very beautiful sight. *And the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof;* the gates and way of entrance into it, which is only by Christ, and a profession of faith in him; and care should be taken that none be admitted but such who appear to be regenerated and sanctified by the spirit of God; to be righteous through the righteousness of Christ; and that keep the truth, and hold the doctrines of the Gospel: and also the way and manner of excluding unworthy persons, such who are immoral in their lives, and erroneous in their principles, should be ob-

[*] והקיר ביני וביניהם ita ut paries tantum esset inter me & illos, Piscator.

served. *And all the forms thereof;* the decorations of it, signified by the cherubim and palm-trees; so Jarchi and Kimchi; and these expressive of ministers of the word, and faithful men: this is often repeated, that it might be the more observed; for to have ministers to answer such characters is of great consequence. *And all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof;* the *ordinances* are those of baptism and the Lord's supper, which are to continue until the second coming of Christ: the *laws* are, besides the moral law, in the hands of Christ the lawgiver, the law of loving one another, called the law of Christ, and his new commandment; and all the laws relating to worship and discipline, concerning the reproof of members, in case of private or public offences; and concerning the exclusion of disorderly or heretical persons: *and write it in their sight;* the plan and model of this house, and all things belonging to it, that they may have it before them, as the rule of their conduct and behaviour: *that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them;* for all this is shewn, not for mere speculation, and to gratify curiosity, but in order to be put in practice; all these rules, laws, and ordinances, are to be kept in faith, from a principle of love, in the name and strength of Christ, and with a view to the glory of God.

Ver. 12. *This is the law of the house,* &c.] Which follows, the more general one, which comprehends the rest: *upon the top of the mountain;* denoting the exaltation and visibility of the church of Christ in the latter day, as well as its firmness and stability; see Isa. ii. 2, 3: *the whole limit thereof round about* shall be *most holy;* all belonging to it shall be as the most holy place in the temple, sacred to the Lord; laws, ordinances, doctrines, worship, members, ministers, all holy; nothing said or done, or have a place here, but what is holy; see Zech. xiv. 20, 21: *this is the law of the house;* the principal one, according to which all are directed and governed.

Ver. 13. *And these are the measures of the altar after the cubits,* &c.] Of the altar of burnt-offering, which though measured before, the dimensions were not given till now; see ch. xl. 47. this altar was a type of Christ, Heb. xiii. 10. with respect to his deity, which is greater than the sacrifice of his human nature, the support of it, which sanctified it, and gave virtue and efficacy to it, and rendered it acceptable to God, Matt. xxiii. 19. and the measures of it are said to be after the cubits used in the measuring of places and things belonging to this house, described; and what these were appears by what follows: *the cubit is a cubit and an hand-breadth;* not the common cubit, but what was larger than that by a hand-breadth, or three inches: *even the bottom shall be a cubit, and the breadth a cubit;* or, *the bosom*[t]; that is, the foundation of the altar, as the Targum and Jarchi; the basis, foot, or settle of it: this was a cubit high, and a cubit broad: *and the border thereof by the edge thereof round about shall be a span;* the edge or *lip*[u], of this bottom or settle, was a cubit broad, for the priests to stand on, and go round the altar, and to this there was a border of a span, or half a cubit, to prevent their slipping; or else to keep the blood, poured at the foot of the altar, from running upon the pavement: *and this shall be the higher place of the altar;* or the projection or jetting of it out beyond others, which was further than any other part; otherwise it was the lower part of the altar.

Ver. 14. *And from the bottom upon the ground, even to the lower settle,* &c.] From the basis or foundation of the altar, as it stood upon the ground, to the lower settle or *court*[w], as it is called, where the priests stood; and in which they could walk round the altar, to do their business: *shall be two cubits, and the breadth one cubit;* that is, two cubits high, and one broad: *and from the lesser settle* or court, *to the greater settle* or court, *shall be four cubits, and the breadth one cubit;* the lowermost settle is called the lesser, not in quantity, but in height, it being but two cubits high from the ground; but the upper settle was four cubits from that, and one broad, for the priests to walk on round about; in all six cubits from the bottom.

Ver. 15. *So the altar shall be four cubits,* &c.] That is, from the greater settle; so that in the whole it was ten cubits high, the same with Solomon's, 2 Chron. iv. 1. some make this to be eleven cubits high, one higher than Solomon's; it is here called *Harel,* the mountain of God, because it looked like a mountain in the court, for its bigness: it was on a mountain our Lord was offered up a sacrifice for the sins of his people; and which was far superior to all other sacrifices, and for more persons than those sacrifices offered up on the altar of burnt-offerings. *And from the altar and upward shall be four horns;* or, *from Ariel*[x]; which was the focus or hearth where the wood was laid, and the fire kindled, called *Ariel;* which some render the lion of God, because, as the Jewish Rabbins[y] say, the fire of the altar lay upon it in the form of a lion; or rather, because like a lion it devoured the sacrifices: this name of the altar agrees well with Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah; who was strong to bear the sins of men, and the wrath of God for them, whereby they are no more; though it rather signifies the fire of God, which consumed the sacrifice, and denoted the wrath of God on Christ, and also the divine acceptance of his sacrifice: now from hence and upwards were four horns at the four corners of the altar; which denote the strength of Christ, to save all that come unto God by him, and his being a refuge to them that by faith lay hold upon him; and that he is accessible to persons that come from all parts, from the four corners of the earth.

Ver. 16. *And the altar shall be twelve cubits long, twelve broad,* &c.] The length of it, from east to west, was twelve cubits; and the breadth, from north to south, was the same; so that it was a proper foursquare, as follows: Christ the altar, or the doctrine of his sacrifice and satisfaction for the sins of men, is the doctrine of the twelve apostles of Christ, and embraced by the twelve times twelve, the 144,000 that belong

[t] חיק sinus, Montanus; gremium, Munster, Cocceius, Starckius. Ben Melech interprets it the middle of the altar.
[u] שפתה labium ejus, Pagninus, Montanus.

[w] העזרה atrium auxilii, Montanus.
[x] מהאריאל ab Hareil, Starckius.
[y] Misn. Middot, c. 4, sect. 7.

unto him: *square in the four squares thereof;* as the altar in the tabernacle, and Solomon's temple, were, Exod. xxvii. 1. 2 Chron. iv. 1. denoting the largeness of Christ's sacrifice, the perfection of it, and its stability and permanency, to take away the sins of his people.

Ver. 17. *And the settle shall be fourteen* cubits *long and fourteen broad in the four squares thereof,* &c.] Here Kimchi confesses his ignorance. Jarchi interprets it, the top of the altar, with the place of the horns, and of the feet of the priests, and was twenty-eight cubits by twenty-eight, the fourteen mentioned being to be measured from the middle [z]; and he seems to be right in making it to be the upper part of the altar, and not the lower settle, as some; the focus or hearth where the wood was laid, and the sacrifice burnt, and which had a projection of a cubit on each side, and so made the twelve cubits, the length and breadth of the altar, fourteen: *and the border about it shall be half a cubit;* or the enclosure, as the Targum; the ledge about it, which went round the altar, to keep the fire or sacrifice from falling, or that the feet of the priests might not slip: the Jews expound it of the horns: *and the bottom thereof shall be a cubit about;* or the foundation, as the Targum; which was between the altar, and the border on which the priests walked, when they went round it, to do the business of it: here Kimchi owns his ignorance again: *and his stairs shall look towards the east;* steps to the altar were forbidden by the law of Moses, Exod. xx. 26. wherefore, as the height of the altar of Solomon, and so of the second temple, required some way and method of ascent to the top of it, to do the business upon it; the Jews had what they call *kibbesh*, a way made of earth thrown up, which rose gradually, and led to the top of it, and was about two-and-thirty cubits long, and sixteen broad [a]; but here steps or stairs are expressly mentioned, which shew that this refers to times when the Mosaic and ceremonial laws should be abolished. These stairs were placed eastward, so that those that went up them looked toward the west, toward the temple and house of God, where he dwelt; and turned their backs to the east, or rising sun, in direct opposition to the worshippers of the sun, whose faces were to the east. How many steps or stairs there were to the altar is not said; Starckius conjectures there might be twelve or fourteen of them, and allows for each step half a cubit; but as the altar was ten, or, as others, eleven cubits high, there should be twenty steps or more, of such a measure. These may signify the several ways and means of coming to, and increasing in, the knowledge of the doctrine of the altar, or of Christ's satisfaction for sin; as hearing, reading, prayer, meditation, &c.

Ver. 18. *And he said unto me, son of man, thus saith the Lord God,* &c.] This is the voice of the Lord continued, speaking out of the house to the prophet; see ver. 6: *these are the ordinances of the altar;* not what go before, concerning the measures of it, but what follow, concerning the sacrifices to be offered on it: *in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt-offerings thereon, and sprinkle blood thereon;* this plainly shews that this altar is the altar of burnt-offerings; such were to be offered on it, and the blood of them to be sprinkled thereon, as follows; that is, upon the horns, corners, and border of it, ver. 20.

Ver. 19. *And thou shalt give to the priests the Levites, that be of the seed of Zadok,* &c.] Who, in Solomon's time, was put in the room of Abiathar; see ch. xl. 46. his name signifies a *righteous* one, a type he was of Jesus Christ the righteous; and here his seed signify the seed of Christ, such whom he makes priests unto the Lord; to these, in a visionary way, the prophet was to give this altar, for them to serve at, and eat of; and all the rites and ordinances to observe and keep; and the sacrifices to offer on it, after mentioned: *which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord God;* see the note on ch. xl. 46: *a young bullock for a sin-offering;* typical of Christ, strong and laborious, able to bear the sins of his people; to become a sin-offering, and to be made sin itself for them.

Ver. 20. *And thou shalt take of the blood thereof,* &c.] Ezekiel being a priest. This must be understood in a visionary way; for, as Kimchi observes, Ezekiel did not live to come up out of the captivity, but died, and was buried in the land of Babylon, and so did not actually do this: though it is a mere dream of the same writer, that this is to be understood of the resurrection of the dead, when he supposes Ezekiel will be high-priest, though Aaron be present; or however be the second, or deputy to him. *And put it on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about;* that is, on the four horns of the altar, and on the four corners of the settle which went round it, for the priests to walk on, and do their business; either the uppermost, or as others the lowermost, and as some both; and also on the border or ledge that enclosed the settle. The prophet's doing this, putting the blood on these several things, represents the nature of the Gospel ministry, and the business of it; which is to hold forth the blood of Christ, and the blessings of grace through it, as redemption, peace, pardon, righteousness, and life. *Thus shalt thou cleanse and purge it;* the altar; thus Christ, though without sin, and needed no cleansing and purging for himself, yet was sanctified by his own blood; that he might sanctify his people, and perfect by his sacrifice them that were sanctified, John xvii. 19. Heb. x. 14, 29. and xiii. 12.

Ver. 21. *Thou shalt take the bullock also of the sin-offering,* &c.] Which was appointed for the sin-offering, according to the divine direction, ver. 19. the prophet was to take it out of the herd, and separate it from the rest for this purpose, and deliver it into the hands of one of the priests: *and he shall burn it in the appointed place of the house;* that is, one of the sons of Zadok should receive it of the prophet, and burn it in its proper place; not within the house, without the court, but within the wall of the house: this burning of it was typical of the dolorous sufferings of Christ; see the note on ch. xi. 39. or of the zeal and fervency of the ministers of the Gospel, in preaching a crucified Christ in the proper place, in the house and church of God: *without the sanctuary;* the holy place or temple, properly so called; or without the camp, typical of

[z] So Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 40. Vid. Misn. Middot, c. 3. sect. 1.

[a] So Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 43.

Christ's suffering without Jerusalem, and of his being preached not only there, but in the Gentile world; see Heb. xiii. 11, 12. this was the work of the first day of the consecration of the altar.

Ver. 22. *And on the second day thou shalt offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin-offering*, &c.] Jarchi observes, that this was not in the tabernacle, but ordered to be in future time by him that speaks; instead of this, another ram was appointed by the law, Exod. xxix. 15, 19. this shews the ceremonial law to be changeable, and now abolished: this was typical of Christ, without spot and blemish, and yet figured by the goat, being made sin for his people: *and they shall cleanse the altar, as they did cleanse it with the bullock;* see the note on ver. 20.

Ver. 23. *When thou hast made an end of cleansing it*, &c.] The altar, by the sacrifices of the bullock and the kid, on the first and second days; then, on the third day, *thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish;* all these sacrifices point at the one sacrifice of Christ; which was pure and perfect, and once offered up for the sins of many, and needs no reiteration; only the doctrine of it is to be frequently inculcated in the ministry of the word and ordinances.

Ver. 24. *And thou shalt offer them before the Lord*, &c.] Upon the altar of burnt-offering, which stood before the house or temple where Jehovah dwelt, ch. xl. 47: *and the priests shall cast salt upon them;* which was to be used in all sacrifices under the law, Lev. ii. 13. this may denote the savoury doctrines and lives of the ministers of the Gospel, who thereby recommend the truths they deliver, concerning a crucified Christ, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, to others; see Matt. v. 13: *and they shall offer them up for a burnt-offering unto the Lord;* throughout the whole seven days of the consecration and cleansing of the altar, as follows:

Ver. 25. *Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat for a sin-offering*, &c.] By this it appears that the altar was seven days a consecrating and cleansing; and that on each day a goat was prepared and offered, typical of Christ, as before observed. Here Kimchi owns that this was not according to the order of Moses, or was done by those that came out of the captivity of Babylon; and is obliged to confess that there will be a change or an innovation in the order of sacrifices in time to come, or under the Messiah. *They shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock without blemish;* which, either one or all of them, should be offered up on each of the seven days; see the note on ver. 23.

Ver. 26. *Seven days shall they purge the altar, and purify it*, &c.] Which denotes the perfect purity and sanctification of it; which how to be applied to Christ, see the note on ver. 20: *and they shall consecrate themselves;* the priests shall consecrate themselves, or devote themselves to the service of the altar; so Gospel ministers to the ministry of a crucified Christ: or they themselves should consecrate the altar by the above rites: or rather it may be literally rendered, *and they shall fill its hands*, or *their own hands* [b]; that is, either they shall fill the sides of the altar with sacrifices, as much as it could hold; or the hands of the priests with parts of the sacrifice, or with gifts, as a token of their being inaugurated into, and invested with, the priestly office: so Gospel ministers should have their hands full of, or be filled with, the gifts and graces of the spirit, and with the knowledge of Christ, his person, offices, grace, righteousness, and sacrifice, that they may minister unto others.

Ver. 27. *And when these days are expired*, &c.] The seven days of consecration, and all these rites and sacrifices observed: *it shall be, that upon the eighth day, and so forward;* that is, on the first day of the week, or Lord's day, the Christian sabbath, the next day after the seventh, and so upon every return of it; in which Christian ministrations are exercised, the word preached, ordinances administered, and works of righteousness and charity done; see John xx. 19, 26. Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 2. *The priests shall make your burnt-offerings upon the altar, and your peace-offerings;* or *thank-offerings* [c]; preach Christ and him crucified to the people, and offer up the sacrifices of prayer and praise unto God for them: *and I will accept you, saith the Lord God;* through Christ the Mediator, in whom he is well-pleased: who is the altar on which such sacrifices are accepted, and become well-pleasing to God, Isa. lvi. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 5.

CHAP. XLIV.

THIS chapter treats of the eastern gate of the temple being appropriated to the use of the prince, ver. 1, 2, 3. of the sin of the Lord's people, in admitting strangers and unholy persons into the sanctuary, either to officiate or communicate there, ver. 4—9. of the degrading of the Levites that went astray, assigning them inferior posts and service in the house of God, ver. 10—14. and of the establishment of the sons of Zadok in their ministry, who were faithful, ver. 15, 16. then follow several laws relating to their garments; shaving of their heads; drinking wine; their marriage; performance of their ministerial work; their regard to the dead; and their food and maintenance, ver. 17—31.

Ver. 1. *Then he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary*, &c.] The prophet was brought by his divine guide, from the altar of burnt-offerings, which stood before the house, where he had given him the dimensions of it, and the ordinances concerning it, to the temple or holy place, called the outward sanctuary, in distinction from the inward sanctuary, or holy of holies; and to one of the gates of it, which was a gate of the inner court: *and which*

[b] There is a double reading of the words; the Cetib or textual reading is ידו, *its hand;* the Keri or marginal reading is ידיו, *their own hands.*

[c] שלמיכם eucharistica vestra, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator.

looketh toward the east; the eastern gate, and was the same he had been at before, and therefore is said to be brought back the way of it; see ch. xliii. 1: *and it was shut*; when he was there before, it was open; for he saw the glory of the Lord enter into the house by the way of it; but now it was shut, and for that reason, because he had entered into it; signifying, among other things, that he would never return, or remove from thence any more. The Misnic doctors [s] interpret this of one of the little doors to the great gate of the temple, that had two little doors, one in the north, the other in the south; that which was in the south no man ever entered in by, and this they say is understood here; but it is not a little door, but a gate here spoken of, and that the eastern one; of which more in the following verses.

Ver. 2. *Then said the Lord unto me, this gate shall be shut*, &c.] In time to come, as Jarchi interprets it, in the latter day; it was shut, and it should continue to be shut: *it shall not be opened*: any more; though it has been, yet hereafter no more: *and no man shall enter in by it*, into the house of the Lord, *because the Lord the God of Israel hath entered in by it*; the same with the glory of the God of Israel, ch. xliii. 2, 4, 5: *therefore it shall be shut*; no one being to enter after him. Various are the sentiments of expositors concerning this gate. Some of the ancients have interpreted it of the Virgin Mary, by whom Christ came into this world in human nature, being born of her, a virgin, who had never known man, and as is thought never did after the birth of Christ; nor were any afterwards born of her; no man might come into the world by her, by that self-same way the incarnate God did, and for that reason. This sense is approved of, not only by Papists, but by many Protestant writers. Others understand it of the Scriptures, the word of God, which as it is a sealed book to men learned and unlearned, so a gate shut up; it cannot be opened by a mere natural man, or be understood by the light of nature; none can open it but the Lion of the tribe of Judah; who gives the spiritual knowledge of it to whom he pleases, the perfect knowledge of which is reserved to a future state; and there are some things in it which will be always shut, and ever secrets; as the modus of the subsistence of the three Persons in the Godhead; the generation of the Son, the procession of the Spirit, and the union of the two natures in Christ; see Isa. xxxix. 11, 12. Rev. v. 1—5. John iii. 13. others think that the gate of heaven, or the way to eternal glory and happiness, is meant; which was shut by the sin of man, and could never be opened again by any mere man; but Christ by his blood has opened the way into it; and has entered into it, not as a private, but public person, representing all his people; and none but those that belong to him, that are members of him, shall enter there; as none but Christ personal, so none but Christ mystical: but I am rather of opinion, since this whole fabric, as we have seen, is an emblem of the church of Christ on earth in the latter day, the way into that is designed here; and its being shut signifies, that, as the church is a garden enclosed, a spring shut up, and is only for the use of Christ, and should be a chaste virgin to him, he should have all her heart, affection, and faith; so it should not be pervious unto others; no natural or unregenerate man should enter into it; and when the Lord shall have taken up his residence in the church in the latter day, in a more spiritual and glorious manner than ever, there shall no more come into her the uncircumcised and the unclean, Isa. lii. 1. and especially in the New-Jerusalem state nothing shall enter that defiles, or makes an abomination, or a lie, Rev. xxi. 27. none but those that are Christ's, that are true members of his, and one with him; and this sense agrees with what follows in this chapter, and receives light and confirmation thereby; in which the Lord complains of the Israel and church of God in these its present declining times, that unregenerate persons were admitted into the sanctuary of the Lord, to communicate with the saints, and officiate there, ver. 7, 8, 9. and commends such who are faithful ministers and members, who are established therein, ver. 15, 16.

Ver. 3. It is *for the prince: the prince shall sit in it to eat bread before the Lord*, &c.] Or, *as for the prince, the prince shall sit in it* [t]; in the gate which is shut to others: not the high-priest, as Jarchi, though he might have a particular seat in the temple, as Eli had in the tabernacle, 1 Sam. i. 9. where he might eat the bread and flesh of holy things: nor the political prince, the king of Israel, though he might have a place in the temple peculiar to himself; see 2 Chron. vi. 12, 13. and xxiii. 13. and xxxiv. 31. and the Jews say only the kings of the house of David were allowed to sit in the sanctuary: but the King Messiah, as Kimchi and Ben Melech rightly interpret it, is here meant; who before, in this prophecy, is called David a Prince, ch. xxxiv. 24. and xxxvii. 25. he who is the Prince of peace; Michael the great Prince; the Prince of life, and the Prince of the kings of the earth; the Messiah the Prince. Such who interpret the gate of the gate of heaven understand this of Christ's sitting down there at his father's right hand, on the same throne with him, having done his work, and being at ease, and in honour; and of his enjoyment of glory there, as the heavenly glory is sometimes signified by a feast, by sitting down at a table, and eating bread in the kingdom of God, Matt. viii. 11. Luke xiv. 15. and xxii. 30. and so it may intend his being in the presence of God with the utmost delight and joy; having that glory he had with him before the world was, and all power in heaven and in earth; dispensing gifts and grace to men, and receiving honour and glory from them, and seeing the travail of his soul with satisfaction: but why may it not be understood, more consistent with the scope of the vision, of his sitting in his church, at his table there with his saints, eating with them, and they with him, in his word and ordinances before the Lord? see Cant. i. 12. and iv. 16. and v. 1. Rev. iii. 20: *he shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate, and shall go out by the way of the same*: which some explain of Christ's ascension to heaven, and descent from thence in the same way; he went up to heaven in the

[s] Misna Middot, c. 4. sect. 2.

[t] את הנשיא נשיא הוא ישב בו veruntamen ad principem quod attinet, princeps ipse inquam, &c. Piscator; quantum ad principem; princeps sedebit in ea, Noldius, Ebr. Part. Concord. p. 120.

eastern part of the world, from the mount of Olives, to the east of Jerusalem; and in like manner shall he descend, and his feet shall stand on that mount, Acts i. 11, 12. Zech. xiv. 4. but it may be interpreted of his going in and out of his church at his will and pleasure; and affording his gracious presence and fellowship with himself in his house and ordinances.

Ver. 4. *Then brought he me the way of the north gate before the house*, &c.] The north gate of the inward court, whither he was brought from the east gate, which was shut: this, and what follow, may have some respect to the churches in these our northern parts of the world, in their now declining circumstances, which are aptly represented in some following verses; but will hereafter be filled with the glory of the Lord, as follows: *and I looked, and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord*; as he had seen at the eastern gate, ch. xliii. 2, 4, 5: *and I fell upon my face*; as he had done before, under a sense of the greatness and glory of the divine Majesty, and of his own vileness and unworthiness; see ch. xliii. 3.

Ver. 5. *And the Lord said unto me, son of man*, &c.] This is still the voice of the Lord speaking out of the house to the prophet, ch. xliii. 6: *mark well*: or, *set thine heart*[r]; be attentive to what is about to be said, as being of great concern and importance: *and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears all that I say unto thee*; heart, eyes, and ears, are all to be employed in the most diligent manner in regarding the things hereafter delivered; the same expressions exciting attention were used at the first of this vision, ch. xl. 4: *concerning all the ordinances of the house of the Lord, and all the laws thereof*; see the note on ch. xliii. 11: *mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary*; the way of entrance into the Gospel church, and the manner of exclusion from it, and the laws and rules concerning these; the prophet is bid particularly to observe these well, because it was in these things God's professing people chiefly offended, as appears by what follows; they were not so careful as they should have been in the admission of persons among them, or in the exclusion of delinquents.

Ver. 6. *And thou shalt say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel*, &c.] This is a character of literal Israel from the beginning, Deut. ix. 24. and frequently given it in this prophecy, ch. ii. 2, 3, 5, 6, 7. 8. and iii. 9, 26, 27. and well agrees with these declining churches in the latter day, and even in our times; it represents them as rebellious, because of their disregard to the ordinances of God's house, and to the laws and rules of it; and are not only called *rebellious*, but *rebellion*[s] itself; expressive of the greatness of their sin, and the aggravations of it: *thus saith the Lord God, O ye house of Israel, let it suffice you of all your abominations*; that is, let the abominations you have committed, will-worship and superstition, paying a regard to the doctrines and commandments of men, be sufficient; stop, and proceed no further; relinquish those things which are so abominable in my sight; let the time past suffice to have wrought them; cease entirely from them; see 1 Pet. iv. 3. these abominations are more particularly expressed in the following words.

Ver. 7. *In that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers*, &c.] Unregenerate men, who are in a state of alienation and estrangement to divine and spiritual things: strangers to God; to the true knowledge of him in Christ; to the fear and love of God; to the true grace of God in conversion; and to communion with him: strangers to Christ, to his person and offices; to the way of peace, life, and salvation by him; to his righteousness; to faith in him, love of him, and fellowship with him: strangers to the Spirit; to his person, to regeneration and sanctification by him; to the graces of the Spirit, faith, hope, love, humility, self-denial, *&c.*; to the things of the Spirit, which they neither know nor savour; and to the several offices he performs, as a comforter, the spirit of adoption, an earnest and sealer: strangers to their own hearts, and the plague of them, and sin that dwells in them: strangers to the nature of sin, and the exceeding sinfulness of it; to the deceitfulness of sin, and the consequences of it; to true repentance for it, and to the right way of atonement of it, by the blood of Christ: strangers to the Gospel of Christ, and the truths of it; and to the saints and people of God: *and uncircumcised in heart*; who never were pricked in the heart for sin, or felt any pain there on account of it; never had the hardness of their heart removed, or the impurity of it discovered to them; never were filled with shame and loathing because of it; or ever put off the body of sins in a course of conversation; or renounced their own righteousness: *and uncircumcised in flesh*; carnal, as they were born; men in the flesh, in a state of nature, mind and savour the things of the flesh, and do the works of it; having never been taught by the grace of God to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to abstain from fleshly ones: or, who put their trust in the flesh, in outward things, in carnal privileges, and external righteousness: these the Lord complains were brought *to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it*, even *my house*; either to be members here, and partake of all the ordinances and privileges of the Lord's house; or to officiate here as priests and ministers of the Lord: *when ye offer my bread, the fat and the blood*; which, under the law, were the Lord's; and here signify the ministry of the word and ordinances, the goodness and fatness of the Lord's house; and especially the ordinance of the Lord's supper, that feast of fat things; in which Christ, the true and living bread of God, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed, is represented to the faith of God's people: *and they have broken my covenant, because of all your abominations*; that is, have broken the rule of the divine word and everlasting Gospel by such abominations; by admitting such ministers and members, the one to administer, the other to partake of, Gospel ordinances: this is the true state of the case of most of the reformed churches in our days; it is to be feared that there are multitudes of unregenerate ministers in them; that they are full of carnal professors; and notorious it is that the ordinance of the Lord's supper is prostituted

[r] שים לבך pone cor tuum, Vulg. Lat. Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus; pone ad cor tuum, Starckius.

[s] אל מרי ad inobedientiam, Cocceius; Starckius.

to wicked persons, and to answer ends it never was designed for; which must be an abomination to the Lord.

Ver. 8. *And ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things*, &c.] That is, have not kept and retained the holy doctrines of the Gospel; nor observed the holy ordinances of it, as they were first delivered: *but ye have set keepers of my charge in my sanctuary for yourselves*: meaning either, that such as were in public office did not attend to it; but were idol-shepherds, and left the flock, their care and charge, to others, to surrogates and curates, to do their work for them; whilst they indulged themselves in sloth and idleness: or that the members and hearers set up preachers for themselves, according to their lusts, agreeable to their own carnal sentiments, without any regard to the will and glory of God.

Ver. 9. *Thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] This that follows is the law and rule to be observed, and which will be observed by the churches in the latter day, though so little regarded now: *no stranger uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary*; of these see the note on ver. 7. unregenerate men may not be admitted members of a Gospel church; for that is holy, and holiness becomes it; but they are unholy, and as unfit to be received as swine into a king's palace; saints and they can't talk together, their language being different, they barbarians to one another; nor can they walk together, being not agreed in sentiment and practice; besides, such persons disquiet the churches of Christ by their quarrelsome behaviour in it, and immoral conversation out of it; and are dangerous and infectious persons, whether heterodox in principle, or immoral in life: and much less should such be admitted to public service, to preach the word, and administer ordinances; since they should be holy that bear the vessels of the Lord, his name, and Gospel; they are blind and ignorant, and so not apt and fit to teach others; they are dumb, and can't speak to cases they are strangers to, as those of wounded consciences, tempted and deserted, or backslidden ones; they will bring in strange doctrines, foreign to the Scriptures, and the experience of saints; and it is no wonder they are unsuccessful in their ministry, and churches don't thrive under them; to which, among other things, we must impute the great decline of religion, even among Protestant dissenters, who, it is to be feared, have too many of this character among them: but there should not be here *of any stranger that is among the children of Israel*; though they are among them, nay, though they are the children of them, and have had a religious education; yet being strangers to the grace of God, should not be admitted members, and much less ministers, of the churches of Christ.

Ver. 10. *And the Levites that are gone away far from me*, &c.] These Levites were priests, as appears from ver. 13. who professed themselves Gospel preachers, ministers of the reformed churches; but departed from the reformation-principles; erred from the faith; and either mixed it with the doctrines of men, or wholly dropped, concealed, or dissembled it; departed from the word of God, as the rule of faith and practice; and set up their own reason as their guide in matters of religion; were gone off from the pure worship of God and his ordinances, and entirely neglected the discipline of his house: *when Israel went astray, which went astray away from me after their idols*; though there may be an allusion to some apostacy of literal Israel, under the Old Testament, and from whence language may be borrowed to express this; either to the Israelites joining themselves to Baal-peor in the fields of Moab, in the time of Phinehas, who was zealous and faithful to the Lord, from whom Zadok descended after mentioned: or to the defection in the times of Jeroboam and Rehoboam, when all Israel forsook the word of the Lord: or to the times of Ahaz, when Uriah the priest made an altar like to that at Damascus by the king's order; and which idolatrous practices increased in the times of Manasseh; when, no doubt, many of the priests and Levites, either through fear of kings, or on account of gain, and for the sake of their livelihood, departed from the Lord and his worship: but the reference is to a defection in the times of the New Testament, and in the latter days of those times; not to the falling away of the church of Rome, and its departure from the faith and order of the Gospel, predicted 2 Thess. ii. 3. 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3. 2 Tim. iii. 1—5. though, no doubt, some truly godly ministers have been carried away with the errors of that church, and afterwards restored, as these Levites: but the case here referred to is the declension in the reformed churches; their formality; their great imperfection in the service of God; their departure from the doctrine of faith they once heard and received, which they are called upon to repent of; their defiling themselves with superstition and will-worship, and going after the idols of their own hearts, corrupt reason, the doctrines and inventions of men, and carnal rites and ceremonies; see Rev. iii. 1—4: *they shall even bear their iniquity*; that is, the Levites, priests, or ministers; they shall bear the shame and disgrace, when they come to see their errors, and the punishment and chastisement of their sin, of which hereafter.

Ver. 11. *Yet they shall be ministers in my sanctuary*, &c.] Though degraded from their office as priests and ministers of the word, yet being restored from their sins and errors, shall have a place in the house of God, and do their work there in a less honourable and a more servile way; as in former times, when ministers had sinned foully, and were degraded from their office, upon repentance they were not restored to that, but only admitted to lay-communion; see 2 Kings xxiii. 9: having *charge at the gates of the house*; like those sort of Levites who were porters and doorkeepers in the temple, or like our sextons or pew-openers now; *and ministering to the house*; employed as the Gibeonites were in hewing wood and bringing water for the use of the sanctuary, or in repairing of it; learning and exercising the business of smiths, masons, and carpenters: *they shall slay the burnt-offering, and the sacrifice for the people*; not bring it to the altar, and offer it there; only slay it, and skin it for the priests; which is not to be understood literally, there being no such sacrifice in Gospel times: but to denote the menial service and inferior post that such shall be employed in; if they have no trade, they shall learn one, in order to get a livelihood for themselves, and be serviceable to the interest of religion in a lower way; but ministers of

the word they shall not be: *and they shall stand before them to minister unto them*: either before the priests, whose servants they shall be, or before the people; signifying that those that sin publicly shall be rebuked before all.

Ver. 12. *Because they ministered unto them before their idols, &c.*] Had officiated for them in the priest's office, their idols being in the courts of the Lord at the same time; or preached unto them false doctrines, such as are not agreeable to the word of God; and led them into superstition and will-worship, and confirmed them therein: *and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity*; or, *were for a stumbling-block of iniquity*[k]; unto them the means of their stumbling and falling; by their ministrations, teaching them unsound doctrine; and by their practices and example, leading them into a way of false worship, and dissoluteness of life and conversation; who ought to have been examples to them in word and conversation, in faith and purity: *therefore have I lifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord*, to smite and afflict them, and chastise them for the same; or, *upon them*, or *concerning them*[l]; and so it may be expressive of an oath, of which lifting up the hand is a sign; wherefore, that what the Lord had said of them might be believed and expected, he swears to it: *and they shall bear their iniquity*; which is repeated for the confirmation and certainty of it; see ver. 10. what is meant by it follows.

Ver. 13. *And they shall not come near unto me, to do the office of a priest unto me*, &c.] To bring the sacrifice to the altar, and offer it there; to sprinkle the blood, or burn the fat, or the incense; to intercede for the people, or bless them; see Hos. iv. 6: *nor to come near to any of my holy things in the most holy place*; to do any business, either in the holy or in the most holy place; to offer holy things, or eat of them. The sense is, that these degraded ministers, who had sinned so greatly, and had fallen so foully, though restored by repentance; yet should not preach the word, nor administer any ordinance: *but they shall bear their shame, and their abominations which they have committed*: that is, the shame of their abominations, of their abominable principles and practices, which they have held and maintained; being publicly disgraced and degraded, and so notoriously distinguished.

Ver. 14. *But I will make them keepers of the charge of the house, &c.*] To be watchmen or porters in it; to open and shut the doors of it; to sweep and keep it clean; to repair and mend it, and to do such-like works, as it follows: *for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein*; in a servile way; but not as priests or ministers of the word.

Ver. 15. *But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, &c.*] The priests who were of the tribe of Levi, whom the Lord chose and separated, to minister to him, and so had a lawful call to this office, and were regularly invested with it; and design true and lawful, as well as faithful, ministers of the word; these are called the sons of Zadok, who descended from Eleazar the son of Aaron in the line of Phinehas, to whom the Lord promised the everlasting priesthood, and who was put into this office by Solomon in the room of Abiathar, 1 Kings ii. 35. his name signifies *righteous*, and was a type of Christ; who, as a divine Person, is essentially righteous; as man, truly and perfectly so; and, as Mediator, God's righteous servant; and who, by his obedience and sufferings, is the author of righteousness to his people; who are his spiritual seed and offspring; children given him of his father; who have his sonship and adoption through him, and are born of him, his spirit, and grace; and these are made righteous by him, through his righteousness imputed to them, and may be rightly called sons of Zadok: and this agrees with all the saints; and who, under the Gospel dispensation, are all priests, and offer up themselves, souls and bodies, and their spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, unto God by Christ; though all have not a right to preach the word, and administer ordinances, as ministers lawfully called have, and who seem to be more particularly designed here; and such as are regenerated persons, and justified by Christ's righteousness, and preach the doctrine of free justification by it, are the only fit persons for such an office: *that kept the charge of my sanctuary, when the children of Israel went astray from me*; that kept and held fast the pure doctrines of the Gospel, committed as a sacred depositum to them, without mixture, and without wavering, with courage and valour; though a greater number were on the other side, and though they were reproached and persecuted for it; and who taught the people to keep the ordinances of the Gospel as they were first delivered, in faith and love, and without sinister ends, and so administered them themselves; and such faithful ministers and members of churches, especially in a time of great declension and general defection, God takes notice of, and has promised them great and good things; see Rev. ii. 7, 10, 11, 13, 17, 26, 27, 28. and iii. 5, 10, 11, 12, 21, 22. Matt. xxv. 21: *they shall come near to me to minister unto me*: in holy things to his people, which is called ministering unto him; as to pray to him for them; to preach to them in his name, and administer ordinances: all the saints indeed are priests, and may draw nigh to God through Christ; men are at a distance from him, through sin; there is no coming near to him but by Christ; and this coming near is not local, but spiritual, and includes all acts of worship, particularly prayer; and is a great favour and blessing: *and they shall stand before me, to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord God*: which, under the law, were both the Lord's; the one was burnt, and the other sprinkled, on divers things, and in divers places: here it may respect the administration of the ordinance of the Lord's supper, that feast of fat things, and which may be eminently called the goodness and fatness of the house of God; and in which the blood of Christ is represented as shed for the remission of sins, and as spiritual drink indeed to believers; and the sacrifice of Christ is commemorated, the feast being kept in remembrance of that.

[k] לְמִכְשׁוֹל עָוֹן in offendiculum iniquitatis, Pagninus, Montanus; offendiculo ad iniquitatem, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; offendiculo pravitatis, Starckius.

[l] עֲלֵיהֶם super eos, Pagninus, Montanus; super ipsos, Starckius; super ipsis, Cocceius.

Ver. 16. *They shall enter into my sanctuary*, &c.] Both to officiate, and to participate, which strangers and uncircumcised persons might not do, ver. 9: *and they shall come near to my table to minister unto me;* which some understand of the altar of burnt-offering, which was as a table, and the sacrifice on it was the food of the Lord, Lev. iii. 11, 16. others, the altar of incense; see ch. xli. 22. Kimchi interprets it of the table of shew-bread; but, whatever is meant in the letter, the mystical sense is, the ordinance of the Lord's supper, called the Lord's table, 1 Cor. x. 21. a table richly spread, and well furnished with spiritual provision: here Christ himself sits, bids his people welcome, eats with them, and they with him; and here all the saints are guests, and ministers in particular officiate: *and they shall keep my charge*, continue to do so; for this they did before, ver. 15. but now should be confirmed in their office, and never be displaced, as others; they that honour God he will honour, 1 Sam. ii. 30.

Ver. 17. *And it shall come to pass, that when they enter in at the gates of the inner court*, &c.] The priests before described; when they enter the right way into a true Gospel church, consisting of such who are internally renewed, and have an inward work of grace upon their hearts, and are inward-court worshippers: either as private Christians, to pray together, to praise the Lord, to hear his word, and sit down at his table; or as public ministers, to preach the Gospel, and administer ordinances: *they shall be clothed with linen garments;* meaning not the outward conversation-garments of the Lord's people; nor their inward garment of sanctification: but the robe of Christ's righteousness, and garments of salvation; that fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints; and which, though but one, serves for many; and answers not only all the purposes of a garment, but even of many, of change of raiment: like a garment, it is on, and not in, the saints; it is put upon them by imputation; and, like a garment, it covers them, protects them from all injuries, keeps them warm and comfortable, and beautifies and adorns them; and is compared to linen for its whiteness and purity; see Rev. iii. 18. and xix. 8. and in this all the people of God, ministers and private Christians, perform all their services in the house of God; making mention of this, and of this only, whereby they become acceptable unto God, Psal. lxxi. 16. Ephes. i. 6: *and no wool shall come upon them, whilst they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within;* it is certain that the priests under the law had wool upon them in the time of their ministry; for the purple, blue, and scarlet, as the Jewish writers [k] observe, were all of them died wool: of which, with other things, the girdle common to all the priests, and the ephod and breast-plate of the high-priest, were made, Exod. xxviii. 5, 6, 8, 15. and which they wore in their common service: to the Jews in general it was not lawful to wear a garment of linen and woollen, Lev. xix. 19. Deut. xxii. 11. and therefore, as Josephus says [l], to the priests only it was allowed to wear such a garment; and it is common with the Jewish doctors [m] to observe, that "the priests were not "clothed to minister in the temple but with wool and "linen;" indeed, on the day of atonement, the high-priest, when he went into the holiest of all, had only linen garments on him; and of the service of this day Jarchi interprets the text; but Kimchi rightly objects, that the holiest of all cannot be called a court; and besides, it is said in the plural number, *they shall be clothed*, and *minister;* whereas only the high-priest went into the most holy place; and therefore he truly observes, that this is a new thing to be done in future times: and this is true of the spiritual priesthood of saints and ministers of the Gospel, who are to have no wool upon them in their ministrations, whether in a more private or public way; who are, and should profess to be, justified by the righteousness of Christ only, without any works of their own to be joined with it; which to do is unnecessary, indecent, and dangerous: wool is observed to be the clothing of brute beasts, and therefore not a fit emblem of the clothing of saints; and likewise of such as are most slow, and sluggish, and inactive [n], and so an emblem of sloth; and which ought not to be in any of the people of God, and especially in ministers, who of all men should not be slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. It may be further observed, that clothes made of wool are heavy, and render unfit for business, and cause sweat, which is offensive; and which seems to be a reason, ver. 18, why wool should not be upon them, only linen garments wore by them; that they might be more quick and expeditious in the dispatch of business, and avoid every thing that gives offence, that the ministry may not be blamed: woollen clothes are also liable to moths, and worms, and to contract filth; and may signify that the priests of the Lord should be clear of carnal and sensual lusts; these should not be upon them, or they under the predominancy of them, and particularly avarice; they should feed the flock, and not fleece it, and clothe themselves with the wool of it, Ezek. xxxiv. 2, 3. The phrase, *and within*, or *in the house*, seems to denote some place distinct from the inner court, even the more inmost place of the temple, the holy of holies; which signifies heaven itself, into which only the high-priest entered once a year, typical of Christ's entering into heaven; and who has opened a way, and given all his people, who are priests unto God, boldness to enter there also by prayer, in the exercise of faith and hope; and which service they perform in the righteousness of Christ, and that only; see Heb. ix. 8. and x. 19, 20. and vi. 20. Dan. ix. 18.

Ver. 18. *And they shall have linen bonnets upon their heads*, &c.] Denoting gravity and modesty, subjection to God, and authority among men under him; and also purity of doctrine, and clearness of light and knowledge: *and shall have linen breeches upon their loins:* expressive of chastity; see Exod. xxviii. 40, 42: *they shall not gird themselves with any thing that causeth sweat;* so not with wool, which is apt to cause sweat;

[k] Jarchi and Aben Ezra in Exod. xxv. 4.
[l] Antiqu. l. 4. c. 8. sect. 11.
[m] Misna Kilaim, c. 9. sect. 1. Maimon. Hilchot Cele Hamikdash, c. 8. sect. 12.

[n] Lana segnissimi corporis excrementum est & prophanus vestitus, itaque lanea vestis videtur desidiam, & segnitiem indicare, Apuleius.

and is thought to be the reason why it is forbidden in the preceding verse; and so this girdle must be different from the priest's girdle under the law, for that had wool in it: sweat is of an ill smell, and very offensive; and may denote unsound doctrine and immorality in life and conversation, which give offence, and cause the ministry to be blamed, to which is opposed the girdle of truth and holiness, Ephes. vi. 14. The Talmudic doctors interpret this of the place of girding, which is liable to sweat; and they say [s], "they used "not to gird neither below the loins, nor above the "arm-holes; but over-against, or about the arm-"holes:" which is observed by Jarchi and Kimchi on the text; and the Targum is, "they shall not gird upon "or about the loins, but about the heart;" that is, about the breast or paps; hence Christ our great High-priest is described as girt about the paps with a golden girdle, Rev. i. 13. so these are girt that are made priests by him; denoting their hearty zeal and affection for the truths of his Gospel, and the honour of his name, and their readiness to serve and glorify him: or, *they shall not gird themselves loosely* [t]; in a negligent manner, which is both indecent, and hinders business.

Ver. 19. *And when they go forth into the utter court,* &c.] Out of the inner court where they minister, when they have done their service: even *into the utter court to the people;* out of the church into the world, where the people are, doing their business, whether good men or bad: *they shall put off their garments wherein they ministered, and lay them in the holy chambers;* the north and south chambers; see the note on ch. xlii. 13, 14: *and they shall put on other garments;* which are their outward conversation-garments, which are proper to appear in before men, for the honour of religion; though not sufficient to appear in before God, and render acceptable unto him: *and they shall not sanctify the people with their garments;* the garments of the priesthood were reckoned holy, and whatsoever was holy, that which it touched was accounted holy also; and therefore, to preserve a difference between the priests and the common people, they were not to wear their holy garments but in the time of service; or lest any superstitious notion should obtain among the people, that they were sanctified by touching their clothes; as the Papists give out, that if a man is buried in a monk's cowl, he shall be saved: or the sense is, that they should not possess the minds of the people with a notion of any real sanctity in their garments; or that their conversation-garments, or good works, can be of any service to them: this may be opposed to works of supererogation.

Ver. 20. *Neither shall they shave their heads,* &c.] As the priests and worshippers of Isis and Serapis did, as Jerom on the text observes; and as the Romish priests now do, from whom the Lord's faithful ministers must be distinguished: *nor suffer their locks to grow long;* as the Nazarites, that a distinction might be preserved between those who were and were not such; or rather, after the manner of women, their locks hanging down, and flowing about their shoulders, as a token of levity, wantonness, effeminacy, pride, and vanity; see 1 Cor. xi. 14, 15: *they shall only poll their heads;* observe a medium between both; neither shave their heads close, nor let their hair grow long, but keep it in an even moderate length; for which reason godly men of the last age among us were called *round-heads.*

Ver. 21. *Neither shall any priest drink wine,* &c.] That is, to excess, immoderately, so as to be inebriated with it, Lev. x. 9, 10, 11. should not be given to it, and greedy of it, and drink it so as to disguise themselves: this is reckoned among the qualifications of a Gospel minister, 1 Tim. iii. 3. otherwise it is not forbidden good men, or ministers of the word, to drink wine, for health's sake, and for the refreshment of nature, provided it is done in moderation, 1 Tim. v. 23. and particularly care should be taken that they drink it in such a manner, *when they enter into the inner court;* to attend divine service, since immoderate drinking affects the memory; and such may forget the law and doctrines of the Lord they are to deliver or hear; and may put them upon saying and doing that which is improper and indecent: drunkenness in any Christian professor is abominable, especially in a minister of the word; and when it appears in his ministration, it is scandalous to the last degree.

Ver. 22. *Neither shall they take for their wives a widow,* &c.] Who has been not only another man's, but at her own will, and done her own pleasure, and been her own mistress, and so not easily brought into subjection, and to behave as becoming her station: *or her that is put away;* or, *thrust forth* [v]; out of doors; whose husband has given her a bill of divorce; since she may be suspected of having done some ill thing: *but they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel;* virgins, and not of the families of unconverted persons, who have been brought up in an irreligious way, but of godly families, and who have had a religious education: *or a widow that had a priest before;* and so used to religious exercises, and to the manner of living of such persons. All good men should be careful whom they marry, and especially ministers of the Gospel; who are here supposed and allowed to marry, contrary to the church of Rome, which forbids her priests to marry. It is observed by some, and with great propriety, that in the latter days antichristian churches will be disowned; and that godly faithful ministers will become pastors, and take the care of such churches, who are like a chaste virgin espoused to Christ, and such who have had faithful pastors over them before. This seems to refer to the law concerning the marriage of the high-priest, Lev. xxi. 13, 14. and what is there enjoined him is here enjoined all the priests of the Lord; and therefore, as Kimchi rightly observes, this is a new rule respecting future times.

Ver. 23. *And they shall teach my people* the difference *between the holy and the profane,* &c.] Persons and things; not in a ceremonial, nor merely in a moral, but in an evangelical sense, between truth and error;

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[s] T. Bab. Zevachim, fol. 18. 2. and 19. 1.

[t] לא יחגרו ביזע non cingent seipsos modo instabili, nempe negligenter circumponendo cingulum nimis laxum, Gussetius, p. 315. The Tigurine version is, quæ non adstringent arctius.

[v] גרושה expulsam, Montanus, Heb.; ejectam, Piscator.

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between the doctrine which is according to godliness, and that which is corrupt and unsound, and eats as doth a canker; between holy worship, and superstition; between holy duties, and profane and Heathen rites and ceremonies; and between persons sanctified by the spirit and grace of God, and unconverted ones: *and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean;* impure persons, doctrines, and manners, and those which are agreeable to the word of God; the sense is, that they shall take pains to instruct persons in the knowledge of divine things, and shall do it truly, faithfully, and sincerely.

Ver. 24. *And in controversy they shall stand in judgment,* &c.] When any controversy arises among the saints concerning civil things, this shall not be carried into a court of judicature, of the men of the world; but it shall be brought before the church, and there heard, tried, judged, and determined; the ministers of the word there presiding, who shall give the definitive sentence, and stand to it, and abide by it, 1 Cor. vi. 1—7. and when any controversy arises about the doctrines of the Gospel, or modes of worship, or rules of discipline, they shall rise up, discuss the point, determine the question, pass the sentence, and not depart from it: *and they shall judge it according to my judgments;* not according to their own judgments, or according to their own fancies, or the reasonings of their own minds, but according to those directions and rules given in the word of God; which is profitable for the settling and establishing true doctrine, and for the reproof and correction of error, and for the instruction of men in the paths of righteousness: *and they shall keep my laws and my statutes in all mine assemblies;* which assemblies are the churches of Christ, gathered according to Gospel order; where the saints assemble together for divine worship, and where the Lord grants his presence; and where his word is preached, and his ordinances administered, and so called his; and of which assemblies Gospel ministers are the masters, and where they preside; and whose business is to observe the laws and statutes the Lord has made, and to interpret them unto the people, and enforce them on them, and see that they are kept by them: *and they shall hallow my sabbaths;* such times as are appointed for divine worship; these they shall keep holy themselves, in the exercise both of private and public worship, and shall exhort and stir up all with whom they are concerned to do the same.

Ver. 25. *And they shall come at no dead person to defile themselves,* &c.] Shall not come into places where they are, nor touch them, nor attend their funerals, Lev. xxi. 1, 11. that their work might not be interrupted, or they through grief and sorrow be made unfit for it, Matt. viii. 22. this, in a spiritual sense, may signify, that they should have no conversation or fellowship with men dead in trespasses and sins; and should abstain from all dead works, as all sinful ones are: *but for father, or for mother, or for son, or for daughter, for brother, or for sister that hath had no husband, they may defile themselves;* by coming near them, touching them, at least attending their funerals, because of their near relation to them, and that natural sympathy and affection that must be in them: all sorrow and mourning for dead relations is not forbidden saints, nor ministers of the word; provided it is in moderation, and not to excess, and is not for gracious persons, as those without hope; and should as little as possible break in upon the duties of their office, 1 Thess. iv. 13. John xi. 33, 35.

Ver. 26. *And after he is cleansed,* &c.] From any sin or iniquity, failing and imperfection, that he has been guilty of at such seasons, in mourning for the dead, by a fresh application of the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin; typified by the water of separation, made of the ashes of the red heifer, by which those who were in this way ceremoniously unclean were cleansed, Heb. ix. 13, 14: *they shall reckon unto him seven days;* that is, seven days shall be reckoned from the time of his cleansing, before he enters on public service again: according to the old law, seven days were reckoned from the defilement to the purification; here seven more are numbered after the purification is made; and therefore, as Kimchi truly notes, this is a new law or rule, to be observed in after-times.

Ver. 27. *And in the day that he goeth into the sanctuary,* &c.] Into the house and church of God, after his cleansing, and when the seven days from thence are up: *unto the inner court, to minister in the sanctuary;* among the inward-court worshippers, to minister in holy things to them; to preach the Gospel, and administer Gospel ordinances: *he shall offer his sin-offering, saith the Lord God;* though he has been privately cleansed in the fountain of Christ's blood, in which he has washed for sin and uncleanness; yet when he comes into the house of the Lord, he must acknowledge his sins and imperfections over Christ the sin-offering; which he must bring in the arms of his faith, and so enter into the courts of the living God, and do the service of the sanctuary.

Ver. 28. *And it shall be unto them for an inheritance,* &c.] Either the sin-offering, or the priesthood, and the perquisites belonging to it: or, *they shall have an inheritance*[f]; but what shall it be? God himself: *I am their inheritance;* the Lord is the portion and inheritance of his people, who are made priests unto him, whether in a private or public capacity; they are heirs of God, he is their portion in the land of the living, and for ever: God in all his perfections is theirs; and though incommunicable, they have the use and advantage of them, so far as they are capable and stand in need of them; as his eternity, immutability, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, grace, mercy, goodness, truth, and faithfulness: he is theirs in all his persons; God the Father is their covenant God and Father; the Son of God is their Head and Husband, their Saviour and Redeemer, Mediator and Peacemaker, their Prophet, Priest, and King; his blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and faithfulness, theirs, and even all that he is and has: the Spirit of God is their convincer and enlightener, their quickener and sanctifier; their Comforter, and the Spirit of adoption to them, the seal and earnest of their future glory; and God under every character is theirs, as the God of nature and providence, and as the God of all

[f] והיתה להם לנחלה habebunt etiam hereditarium aliquid, Tigurine version.

grace; and this is an inheritance rich and large, a soul-satisfying portion, an inconceivable and an inexhaustible one. *And ye shall give them no possession in Israel:* so the priests and Levites had none under the law, but were provided for in another way, Numb. xviii. 20, 21. Deut. xviii. 1, 2. Josh. xiii. 14. the Lord's people and priests, under the Gospel dispensation, for the most part are the poor of this world, who have no share in the possessions of it; their good things are not here, but in the world to come, and in God himself: *I am their possession;* the Lord is enjoyed by them now; his love is shed abroad in their hearts; they have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and communion with the Holy Ghost; and which is infinitely better than all the possessions of this world; and besides, provision is made for their outward maintenance, as follows:

Ver. 29. *They shall eat the meat-offering, and the sin-*offering, *and the trespass-*offering, *&c.*] Which were typical of Christ; the meat-offering, or rather bread-offering, it being made of fine flour, was a type of Christ the bread of life; and the sin and trespass offerings pointed at his being made sin and a sacrifice for it; which the people and priests of the Lord in a spiritual sense eat, feed, and live upon by faith: and besides, as the priests under the law had a part in all these offerings, whereby they and their families were maintained, Lev. ii. 3. and vi. 20. and vii. 6. so it is the will and ordination of Christ, that as those that ministered about holy things, and waited at the altar, should live of them, and partake with that, so they that preach the Gospel should live by it, 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14: *and every dedicated thing in Israel shall be theirs;* or, *every devoted thing*[a]; that is, to holy uses, what the people willingly offer to support the interest of religion; signifying that the ministers of the word shall live upon the free contributions of the people.

Ver. 30. *And the first of all the first-fruits of all things, and every oblation, of all of every sort of your oblations shall be the priests,* &c.] Suggesting, that their offerings or contributions, which should be made out of their substance, should be in proportion to it, and early as well as free; see Prov. iii. 9: *ye shall also give unto the priest of your dough;* either of the first they made of the new corn of the year, or a piece or cake of whatsoever at any time they made; signifying, that the ministers of the word, that communicate spiritual things to men, should partake of their carnal ones, and have a part and share with them in all good things, in all the enjoyments of life, 1 Cor. ix. 11. Gal. vi. 6: *that he may cause the blessing to rest in thine house;* that is, that he, the priest or minister of the word, that partakes of the above things, and is comfortably provided for and supported, may pray to the Lord for such who liberally contribute to him; that a blessing may come and abide upon them and their families, and prosperity and success may attend them in their worldly business and employments of life; as well as they and theirs may be blessed with all spiritual blessings, with grace here, and glory hereafter.

Ver. 31. *The priests shall not eat of any thing that is dead of itself, or torn,* &c.] They shall have no need to eat of such things, being plentifully provided for with better; nor will it become them so to do through avarice, not allowing themselves to enjoy what is liberally given them. Here the Jewish doctors[b] observe that it is said, the priests shall not eat of these things, suggesting that Israelites might; this puzzles them, therefore they say, Elias will explain this verse; and the gloss says, till Elias comes, and explains it to us, we know not how to explain it. In the mystic sense it may signify, that the priests of the Lord should have no communication with such as are dead in sin, or are given to rapine and violence, and should abstain from every thing of this kind themselves. *Whether it be fowl or beast;* whether Pharisees and high-flown professors of religion, or earthly and worldly persons, and such that are immersed in carnal pleasures, in sensual and brutish lusts. The allusion is to the law in Lev. xvii. 15. which was common to all Israelites, priests and people.

CHAP. XLV.

THIS chapter treats of the division of the land in future time, and the persons and uses for which it is to be made; one part being for the sanctuary, and the priests that serve in it, and for their houses for them to dwell in, ver. 1—4. another for the Levites and their chambers, ver. 5. and another for the city, for the Israelites in common, ver. 6. and the last for the prince; and of the situation and extent of it, ver. 7, 8. and of the righteous administration of civil government in the time of the spiritual reign of Christ, in abstinence from violence and exactions, and doing justice, for which orders and directions are given, ver. 9, 10, 11, 12. then of the oblations of the people of the land, ver. 13, 14, 15, 16. and next of those that are to be prepared by the prince, ver. 17. and the times of the offering of them, at the beginning of the year, on the feasts of the passover and tabernacles, ver. 18—25. the rules for which are so different from the Mosaic law, as shew the abrogation of that; and that all this is to be understood in a spiritual and evangelic sense.

Ver. 1. *Moreover, when ye shall divide by lot the land for inheritance,* &c.] This is not to be understood literally of the division of the land of Israel; which agrees not with the division of it begun by Moses, and finished by Joshua, upon his conquest of it, and the introduction of the people of Israel into it; nor was such a division as this made when the Jews returned from Babylon; nor is there any reason to expect the like when they shall be converted in the latter day: nor is it meant typically of the heavenly inheritance,

[a] כל חרם omne anathema, Montanus, Junius & Tremelius, Piscator; omne devotum, Cocceius, Starckius.

[b] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 45. 1.

which saints obtain in Christ by lot, Ephes. i. 11. of which the earthly Canaan was a type; though some in this way interpret it: but since the whole vision respects the church of Christ on earth, it must be meant mystically and spiritually of the kingdom of Christ, and the settlement and establishment of it throughout the whole world, according to the allotment and determination of God; and they are a distinct and special people that are admitted into this state; it is by the distinguishing grace of God that they are taken into the Gospel church, and have a part and share in all the privileges and immunities of it. *Ye shall offer an oblation unto the Lord, an holy portion of the land;* which should be lifted up as the heave-offering was, and dedicated to the Lord: this designs such persons who are separated from the world, and sanctified by the spirit of God, who shall be brought by the ministers of the word to the Lord, as trophies of his efficacious and victorious grace, ascribing the whole glory of their conversion to him; and these shall present themselves, souls and bodies, a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice to him: see Isa. lxvi. 20. Rom. xv. 16. and xii. 1. *The length shall be the length of five-and-twenty thousand reeds, and the breadth shall be ten thousand:* the kind of measure is not expressed in the original, so that it is a question whether reeds or cubits are meant; some think the latter, and the rather, because mention is made of them, ver. 2. and 'tis added, *and of this measure shalt thou measure the length of five-and-twenty thousand:* which, if understood of cubits, will greatly reduce the length and breadth of this holy portion of the land; wherefore it is best to take the largest measure, since that seems better to answer the design of the Holy Ghost in this passage; and the rather, since this measure is more proper to measure land with, and is that which the measurer is said to have in his hand, ch. xl. 5. and besides, the measure of the sanctuary, said to be five hundred square, ver. 2, was measured with the measuring-reed, and not the cubit, ch. xlii. 16—20. and which therefore must be supplied here; and a measuring-reed being six cubits, by a cubit and a hand's breath, ch. xl. 5, makes this portion of land to be more than six times larger than if it was supposed to be measured by the cubit; and twenty-five thousand of this measure, according to Cornelius à Lapide, made five hundred miles, which was three times as large as the land of Canaan; that being, as Jerom* says, a hundred and sixty miles long, and forty-six broad; and is a proof that the land of Canaan literally taken is not here meant; but the whole is designed to set forth the amplitude and large extent of the church of Christ in the world, in the times the vision refers to. *This shall be holy in all the borders thereof round about:* that is, this portion of land measured out, and distinguished from the rest: holiness of heart and life shall appear in all the subjects of Christ's kingdom, and members of his church, which becomes his house for ever.

Ver. 2. *Of this there shall be for the sanctuary,* &c.] Or temple, the house before described in the preceding chapters: *five hundred in length, and five hundred in breadth, square round about:* that is, five hundred reeds square, as is manifest from ch. xlii. 16—20. and this denotes the largeness, perfection, and stability of the church of Christ, which the sanctuary was a type of: *and fifty cubits round about for the suburbs thereof;* which were a void place of fifty cubits round about the sanctuary, measuring from the wall to that; this was done in reverence to the holy place, and to shew that we should not rush hastily into the house of God, and church of Christ, but first pass through the suburbs or void place. Cubits being here mentioned, shew that reeds are to be understood where the kind of measure is not expressed.

Ver. 3. *And of this measure shalt thou measure the length of five-and-twenty thousand, and the breadth of ten thousand,* &c.] Not that the sense is, that of and according to the cubit measure last mentioned, this length and this breadth should be measured; but *after this measure*, as Starckius renders it, and as the particle is rendered, Dan. xi. 23. see also Neh. xiii. 21. and which Sanctius mentions; and Jerom seems to have understood it in this light: and the sense is, that after he had finished the measure of five hundred reeds square, and fifty cubits round, he should proceed to measure the rest of the twenty-five thousand in length, and ten thousand in breadth: *and in it shall be the sanctuary, and the most holy place;* that is, in the midst of this portion of land, consisting of the above measures, should be the holy place, and the holy of holies; this is but a further explanation of the two preceding verses.

Ver. 4. *The holy portion of the land shall be for the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary,* &c.] That is, the rest of it, which is not for the sanctuary, shall be for the use of the priests that minister in holy things in the sanctuary; either the ministers of the Gospel, who shall have a sufficient maintenance from the churches of Christ, as the priests had under the law: or it may be meant of all the saints, who are priests unto God, and serve and worship him in his sanctuary; who shall all be satisfied with the goodness and fatness of his house, the word and ordinances, and the blessings of grace conveyed by them: *which shall come near to minister unto the Lord;* these sons of Zadok, these faithful ones, in the worst of times; see ch. xliv. 15, 16. and xlviii. 10, 11: *and it shall be a place for their houses;* in this large spot shall be many congregated churches, houses of the living God, where his priests and people dwell, and will be serving and praising him: *and an holy place for the sanctuary;* which may denote the church of God in general, as houses may do particular churches.

Ver. 5. *And the five-and-twenty thousand of length, and ten thousand of breadth,* &c.] This seems to be another portion of the land, distinct from the former, though of the same measure; see ch. xlviii. 13: *shall also the Levites, the ministers of the house, have for themselves;* separate from the priests, to whom they ministered, and were as numerous, or more numerous, than they; this is still designed to set forth the largeness of the church, and the great numbers of its members, who will all be accommodated and supplied with good things: *for a possession for twenty chambers;* which

* Ad Dardanum, tom. 3. fol. 21. I. K.

some understand of twenty rows of chambers: by which may be meant particular congregated churches, as we have seen all along in this vision, erected for the better use and conveniency of the saints in all places and parts of the world, where they are called.

Ver. 6. *And ye shall appoint the possession of the city*, &c.] Which is something distinct from the house or temple, which was as the frame of a city, being so large, and consisting of so many parts, ch. xl. 2. and seems also different from the city in ch. xlviii. 30, 35. the measures of the one and of the other not agreeing. Starckius thinks that this city prefigures the academies that should be among Christians, in which the priests or ministers of the word should teach those that came out of all parts unto them; but I am rather of opinion that the civil state of the people of God is here meant, as it will be in the spiritual reign of Christ; when all civil power and authority will not as yet be put down, only it will come into the hands of the saints, and be administered by Christian kings and princes. *Five thousand broad, and five-and-twenty thousand long, over-against the oblation of the holy portion*: five thousand reeds in breadth are allowed less for the civil than the church state; and though they are contiguous, and there is a connexion between them, yet are separate from each other; the material temple was in the city of Jerusalem; but the holy portion, in which the sanctuary shall be, is without the city, and the city over-against that; hence John seems to have borrowed his idea and language, *I saw no temple therein*, Rev. xxi. 22, though speaking of another city: the church and the world shall be no more mixed together; Christ's kingdom is not of this world, nor to be fixed on a civil establishment: *it shall be for the whole house of Israel*: they shall all be under one and the same form of government; I don't say they shall be all under one temporal king or prince; but all Christian kings and princes shall exercise the same kind of rule and government; so that, as their church-state will be uniform, their civil state or polity will be alike.

Ver. 7. *And a portion shall be for the prince*, &c.] Meaning not the civil magistrate; though he ought to be supported in his dignity and authority, and in such manner that he may be under no temptation to oppress his subjects; and who ought to be, and at this time will be, the protector of the Lord's people, both in their civil and church state; but the Prince Messiah, of whom see ch. xliv. 3. to whom God will divide a portion with the great; Jacob shall be his portion, the Heathen his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth his possession, Isa. liii. 12. Deut. xxxii. 9. Psal. ii. 8, 9: *on the one side and on the other side of the oblation of the holy portion, and of the possession of the city*: on each side, both of the holy portion, in which are the sanctuary, the houses of the priests, and the chambers of the Levites, and also of the city for the house of Israel; so that his portion will lie, or he be placed, on each side both of the church-state and civil state of the Lord's people, and so be the protector of both; he will be a wall of fire round about them, a covert and a hiding-place for them; he will be near them, and they to him; he'll be on every side of them, and preserve them from persecuting enemies, and false teachers; they shall enjoy his word, his ordinances, and Gospel ministers, and be kept in the utmost peace and prosperity of all kinds; he'll protect and defend them, both in their civil and religious liberties, and none shall make them afraid. *Before the oblation of the holy portion, and before the possession of the city*; or rather, *over-against* them [w], as it is rendered, ch. xlii. 15. so, as the possession of the city was over-against the holy portion, the portion of the prince was to be over-against them both: *from the west side westward, and from the east side eastward*; which explains on which sides of them it lay: *and the length shall be over-against one of the portions*; that is, against every one of the portions: *from the west border unto the east border*: now as there is no measure given to the portion of the prince, but the whole space eastward and westward is left for it, it shews the large extent of Christ's kingdom; that his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth; his Gospel shall be preached everywhere; the spirit shall be poured down upon all flesh to make it successful; multitudes shall be everywhere converted, and churches set up in all places; the kingdoms of the world will become Christ's, even all the Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan nations; Christ will be King over all the earth, and his name shall be one; there will be but one religion everywhere, Psal. lxxii. 8. Zech. xiv. 8, 9. Rev. xi. 15. Some of the Jewish writers interpret this of the King Messiah, to whom they suppose is here allotted the thirteenth part of the land: so Kimchi says, "to Israel belong twelve parts or "portions, and to the prince the thirteenth part; the "portion of the prince is as the portion of one of "the tribes in length and in breadth, excepting that "within the inheritance of the prince should be an "oblation," as in ver. 13. and Maimonides [x] says, "the King Messiah takes out of all lands, subdued by "the Israelites, one part out of thirteen; and this "thing is a statute for him and his sons for ever;" which seems plainly to refer to this passage in Ezekiel; though there are some who understand him of any anointed king of Israel, as being his right: but the learned Selden [y] is of opinion that he is speaking of the King Messiah, and has respect to this distribution: and rightly observes, from the same author [z], that all that was subdued by him was his own, and he could dispose of it at his pleasure to his servants and soldiers.

Ver. 8. *In the land shall be his possession in Israel*, &c.] Or, *as for the land, it shall be his for a possession in Israel* [a]; the people of the land shall be a people for possession, as in 1 Pet. ii. 9. or a peculiar people of his throughout all Israel; all the spiritual Israel, whether Jew or Gentile, shall be Christ's possession and inheritance: *and my princes shall no more oppress my people*: neither ecclesiastical princes, as the Scribes and Pharisees formerly, nor civil magistrates; not the one with false doctrines, carnal rites and ceremonies; nor

[w] אל פני contra faciem, Vulg. Lat.
[x] Hilchot Melachim, c. 4. sect. 8.
[y] De Jure Naturæ & Gentium, l. 6. c. 16.

[z] Maimon. Hilchot Melachim, c. 4. sect. 10.
[a] לארץ יהיה לו לאחזה de terra, vel quod attinet ad terram, sive terræ (illud) erit in possessionem in Israel, Starckius.

the other with heavy taxes, and rigorous exactions: *and the rest of the land shall they give to the house of Israel according to their tribes*; the spiritual and mystical Israel, Jews and Gentiles, who shall now inherit the earth, and possess all temporal good things, as well as spiritual ones.

Ver. 9. *Thus saith the Lord, let it suffice you, O princes of Israel*, &c.] Christian kings and princes, for such there shall be in those times; and who will have large and ample salaries provided for them, as they should have to support their dignity; and with which they should be content, as they will be, and not encroach upon the properties of their subjects: *remove violence and spoil*; from your administration; the sense is, do not use violence, and exercise rapine and spoil, let these be far from you; seize not on the goods of your subjects, or spoil them of them by heavy taxes and impositions, or by vexatious lawsuits, and unjust sentences: *and execute judgment and justice*; between men; let every one enjoy his own property; and when any matter of controversy arises about it, fairly hear and examine the case, and do justice: *take away your exactions from my people, saith the Lord*; such as had been exacted of them in former times by tyrannical and unjust princes: or, *your expulsions* [a]; driving them from their houses, estates, fields, and vineyards; either by taking them away from them, and annexing them to their own, as Ahab did; or by levying such taxes upon them they could not pay, and so were obliged to leave their inheritances and possessions. This, and some following verses, contain rules for regulating the civil state of the people of God in the latter day; which did not take place upon the Jews' return from Babylon, as appears from Neh. v. 15. but will be strictly observed by Christian princes in the latter-day glory; see Isa. lx. 17, 18.

Ver. 10. *Ye shall have just balances*, &c.] That is, take care that true weights and just measures be used in trade and commerce, that so one man may not impose upon and cheat another; which is the business of the civil magistrate to look after: *and a just ephah, and a just bath*; and not make the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit, as some did, Amos viii. 5. the *ephah* was a measure for dry things, as wheat, barley, &c. and the *bath* for liquid things, as wine oil, &c. as Jarchi and Kimchi observe; see Lev. xix. 35, 36.

Ver. 11. *The ephah and the bath shall be of one measure*, &c.] The one held as much of dry things as the other of liquor; which, according to Bishop Cumberland, were seven wine-gallons, four pints, and a little more: *that the bath may contain the tenth part of an homer, and the ephah the tenth part of an homer*; this *homer* must be carefully distinguished from another measure, called *omer*, written without an *h*, which was but the tenth part of an *ephah*, Exod. xvi. 36: *the measure thereof shall be after the homer*; as the *homer* was, so should the *ephah* and *bath* be, just the tenth part of it.

Ver. 12. *And the shekel shall be twenty gerahs*, &c.] This is a rule for money or coin; the shekel was a silver coin, and is generally reckoned about the value of two shillings and six-pence of our money, so a gerah about three half-pennies: Bishop Cumberland reckons the shekel more exactly at two shillings and four pence farthing, and a little more, and the gerah at eleven grains of silver; see Lev. xxvii. 25: *twenty shekels, five-and-twenty shekels, fifteen shekels, shall be your maneh*; these were several pieces of money; one was a twenty-shekel piece, which according to the common account was fifty shillings of our money; another was a five-and-twenty-shekel piece, which was three pounds, two shillings, and sixpence; and a third was a fifteen-shekel piece, which was one pound thirteen and sixpence; and together made a maneh or pound, which consisted of sixty shekels, or seven pounds, ten shillings; by which the other pieces should be tried, whether they were of just weight: the sense of the whole is, that no adulteration of coin should be made, which is very prejudicial in civil affairs.

Ver. 13. *This is the oblation that ye shall offer*, &c.] Not at the dedication of the temple, to be built in time to come, as Kimchi thinks; nor for the daily sacrifices, as others; but for the maintenance of the priests, that is, the ministers of the Gospel; for here begin the rules for the right ordering of ecclesiastical affairs of those times: *the sixth part of an ephah of an homer of wheat, and ye shall give the sixth part of an ephah of an homer of barley*; this confirms that an *ephah* was for dry measure, of wheat and barley; and as it was the tenth part of an homer, a sixtieth part of an homer of wheat and barley was to be given for this service; that is, if a man had an homer of wheat or of barley, he was to give a sixtieth part of it for the use of the ministers of the Lord: the meaning is, that the people should give freely and liberally, according to their substance, for their support and maintenance.

Ver. 14. *Concerning the ordinance of oil, the bath of oil*, &c.] This shews that the bath was for liquid measure; and as oil was a part of food with the Jews, as well as used in their offerings, a rule is given for the distribution of that to the Lord's ministers, that they may have every thing convenient for them: *ye shall offer the tenth part of a bath out of a cor*; which was the same measure with the *homer*, only another name for it, as follows: *which is an homer of ten baths, for ten baths are an homer*; so that if a man had an homer or ten baths of oil, he was to give a hundredth part of it for the use of the priests and Levites, or ministers of the word; a greater portion of wheat or barley is given than of oil, because there is a greater expense in families of the one than of the other.

Ver. 15. *And one lamb out of the flock, out of two hundred*, &c.] As provision is before made for bread and oil, so here for meat for the servants of the Lord: if a man had two hundred lambs in his flock, one of them was to be given to them; it may be observed, that this plainly refers to times when the Mosaic dispensation should be abrogated: not tithes of all things are to be given to the priests, as heretofore; only the sixtieth part of wheat and barley, the hundredth part of oil, and but one lamb of two hundred; and which denotes the moderate maintenance of Gospel ministers, with which they should be contented, and the people

[a] גרושתיכם depulsiones vestras, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus; expulsiones vestras, Cocceius, Starckius.

should not grudge to give; nothing extraordinary or extravagant being required of them: this lamb was to be taken *out of the fat pastures of Israel*: or, *out of the watery* places[c]; out of those fields which were well watered, and produced good pasture, which fattened the sheep and lambs that were fed in them; and denotes that the best of the kind is to be given to the Lord, and to his servants, or for the support of his interest; not the lean and the lame, the halt and the blind, Mal. i. 8, 14: *for a meat-offering, and for a burnt-offering, and for peace-offerings*: not that the lamb was given for all these; but the wheat and the oil for the meat-offering, and the lamb for the burnt-offering and peace-offerings. The sense may be, that this provision of wheat and barley, oil and lambs, or the sufficient maintenance signified by them, was in the room of the meat-offering, burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings, which fell to the share of the priests under the legal dispensation: *to make reconciliation for them, saith the Lord God*; either to this end, that the ministers of the Gospel, who have the word of reconciliation committed to them, might cheerfully and faithfully dispense it to the people; or that they, by these liberal and generous contributions of theirs to the maintenance of them, might testify that they have truly by faith received the atonement by the sacrifice of Christ.

Ver. 16. *All the people of the land shall give this oblation*, &c.] None shall be exempted from it; all according to their capacity and ability shall contribute to the support of the ministry, and the service of religion: *for the prince in Israel*; not the high-priest, nor the civil magistrate, but the Prince Messiah: or rather *to the prince in Israel*[d]; what the people shall do in this way, they shall do it as to the Lord, freely and cordially, and for his honour and glory; and he will take it as done to himself; see Matt. x. 41, 42.

Ver. 17. *And it shall be the prince's part* to give *burnt-offerings*, &c.] Or, *upon the prince shall be the burnt-offerings*[e]; it shall lie upon him to provide them; who is not the high-priest, as Jarchi; nor the civil magistrate or king, as Menachem; but Christ, who is both Prince and Priest; and whose sacrifice of himself is designed by these, and the other sacrifices after mentioned, of which the sacrifices were all typical; though he is but one, they many, his answers to them all, and is one for all; and though his is but once offered up, they often, because of the fulness of efficacy in the one, and the want of it in the other; and though in itself infinitely superior to these. Of the burnt-offerings, and of their being typical of Christ, see the note on ch. xl. 39: *and meat-offerings, and drink-offerings*: the meat-offerings, which were rather *bread-offerings*, were made of fine flour, with oil poured, and frankincense put thereon, Lev. ii. 1. and were typical of Christ, compared to a corn of wheat dying in the earth, and bringing forth fruit, John xii. 24. and to wheat as bruised and ground into fine flour, kneaded and baked, which may denote his various sufferings, and so made bread of; he being the true and living bread, which gives life to men. The *oil* poured upon this offering may signify the grace of the spirit without measure on Christ; and the *frankincense* how savoury and acceptable he is to his people. The *drink-offering* was of wine, which went along with other sacrifices, and was very acceptable to God; and may denote the blood of Christ, which is drink indeed; and his love expressed in shedding it, which is better than the choicest wine; both these are held forth, Christ's flesh, which is meat, and his blood, which is drink, in the ordinance of the supper, administered by his priests, whom he furnishes with such offerings to set before his saints: *in the feasts, and in the new moons, and in the sabbaths, and in all solemnities of the house of Israel*; in the feasts of the passover, tabernacle, and pentecost, which were all figures of Christ; of his being the passover sacrificed for us, of his tabernacling in our nature, and of the effusion of his spirit; and the *new moons*, and *sabbaths*, and *solemn days*, are only Old-Testament phrases to express the times of New-Testament worship; see Isa. lxvi. 23. as monthly days for the administration of the ordinance of the supper, and the Lord's day for the preaching of the word, and other parts of public worship; in all which the sacrifice of Christ, his blood, righteousness, and satisfaction, make a principal part: *he shall prepare the sin-offering*; which also was a type of Christ; of which see the note on ch. xl. 39. and this, with the *meat-offering, and the burnt-offering*, of which before, were to be prepared by the prince himself, or our Lord Jesus Christ: and also the *peace-offerings*, or *thank-offerings*[f]; his own thank-offerings for himself and his people; see John xi. 41. Matt. xi. 25, 26. and the thank-offerings of them, or their sacrifices of praise, which become acceptable through him, Heb. xiii. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 5. and even himself, for whom the saints offer thanks to God, 2 Cor. ix. 15. Ephes. i. 3. and v. 20. and as the end of all the legal sacrifices was *to make reconciliation for the house of Israel*: so this is the end and use of the sacrifice of Christ, typified by them, to make peace for the Israel of God; which could not be made by them, by their obedience, repentance, or faith; and yet was necessary to their happiness, to their communion with God, and enjoyment of him; this Christ has made by his obedience, sufferings, and death, whereby he has fulfilled the law, satisfied justice, and made atonement for sin: this is all at his expense, and is meant by his *preparing* these offerings; which denotes his ready and cheerful engagement to become a sacrifice; his voluntary offering up himself unto God, or giving himself an offering and a sacrifice unto him; and also his furnishing his ministers with proper matter for their ministrations in all the solemn times and seasons thereof, which is the doctrine of his sacrifice and satisfaction, or salvation by a crucified Christ; and so as the people are to offer to their maintenance, Christ the Prince takes care to furnish them for their ministry.

Ver. 18. *Thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Here begins the account of the times and seasons in which the above

[c] ממשקה de irriguo, Montanus, Vatablus; ex irriguis pascuis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus.
[d] לנשיא principi, Castalio, Cocceius, Starckius; so Abendana.

[e] ועל הנשיא יהיה העלות & super principem erunt holocausta, Vulg. Lat. Starckius; nam principi incumbet dare holocausta, Junius & Tremellius.
[f] את השלמים eucharistica, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Piscator.

sacrifices should be prepared and offered; or that which was signified by them be held forth in the ministry of the word to the faith of God's people: *in the first month, in the first day of the month:* the month Nisan, as Kimchi observes, who adds, "which is the "month of redemption, in which Israel were re-"deemed out of Egypt, and in which they shall be "redeemed in time to come:" this month answers to part of our March and part of April; it was the first month in the year with the Jews for their ecclesiastical affairs; so that the first day of this month was New-year's Day: *thou shalt take a young bullock without blemish, and cleanse the sanctuary:* or, *make a sin-offering for* it[z]; here the Jews are puzzled; since, according to the law of Moses, in the beginnings of their months, they were to offer a burnt-offering of two young bullocks and a ram, &c. Numb. xxviii. 11. whereas here only one bullock, and that a sin-offering; wherefore R. Jochanan and R. Judah say, this must be left till Elias comes to explain it; and as much at a loss are they how to account for it that Ezekiel should do this, whom they suppose to be the person spoken to; and therefore imagine this will be done by him after the resurrection, not being able to see that this shews the abrogation of the law of Moses; and that not the Prophet Ezekiel, but Christ the Prince and Priest, is here addressed; and whose sacrifice is designed by the young bullock without blemish; a type of him both in his strength and purity; and by which his sanctuary, his church and people, have all their sins expiated; and particularly the sins of the year past, this being represented as done on New-year's Day, which the annual atonement prefigured.

Ver. 19. *And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin-offering,* &c.] An emblem of the blood of Christ, who was made sin for his people, and an offering for their sin; and which blood cleanses from all sin: *and put it upon the posts of the house:* of the house of God, the sanctuary or temple; upon every one of the posts of it, which stood at the entrance into it. The Targum is, "upon the threshold of the house:" *and upon the four corners of the settle of the altar:* or four horns of it; see ch. xliii. 14, 15: *and upon the posts of the gate of the inner court;* that is, of the temple: this is also a new rule or law about putting the blood of the sacrifice into these several places, of which nothing is said in the law of Moses; and shews that admission into the church of God, and the right participation of Christ, the altar, and the blessings of his grace, as well as entrance into heaven itself, are all through the blood of Christ.

Ver. 20. *And so thou shalt do the seventh day of the month,* &c.] Of the first month Nisan; here's another new rule or law, as Kimchi owns, of which no mention is made in the law of Moses: *for every one that erreth, and for him that is simple: so shall ye reconcile the house;* or, *expiate it*[a]; make atonement for it; that is, for the house of God, the whole church, all his people; particularly for fallen believers, who have gone astray, either in principle or practice; through ignorance and simplicity, through the prevalence of corruption, the temptations of Satan, and the snares of this world; but are recovered again, and brought to repentance; to whom the doctrines of peace and reconciliation, of free and full pardon by the blood of Christ, and of atonement of all their sins by his sacrifice, are to be preached for the comfort and refreshment of their souls; and they are to be received into the church, having their consciences sprinkled by the blood of Christ; the same things being done on this day as on the first. Jarchi thinks these words are to be transposed thus, *and ye shall reconcile, or expiate the house from the man that erreth, and the simple one:* quite contrary to the design of the text, which directs to the reception, and not the exclusion, of such persons.

Ver. 21. *In the first* month, *in the fourteenth day of the month,* &c.] Of the month Nisan, that day fortnight from the cleansing of the sanctuary; and that day week from the expiation of the house, and the recovery and reception of backsliders: *ye shall have the passover;* Christ the passover sacrificed for us; held forth in the ministry of the word, and in the ordinance of the Lord's supper; for the passover was a type of Christ: his purity and strength were signified by the lamb without blemish, a male of the first year; his separation to his office, his death, and the time of it, by the taking of this lamb from the flock some time before, and by slaying it between the two evenings; the manner of feeding on him, with fervent faith, and as a whole Saviour, attended with true repentance, and being willing also to suffer for him, by the lamb being eaten not raw, nor sodden, but roasted, and all of it, and with bitter herbs; and the security of his people by his blood from wrath and ruin, through the sprinkling it upon their consciences, by the sprinkling the blood of the passover on the lintel and door-posts of the Israelites, which the Lord seeing passed by, and destroyed them not; and the new rules of keeping this passover, after observed, shew that this respects not the type, but the antitype: *a feast of seven days:* kept a whole week; and indeed Christ the passover is by faith to be lived upon throughout the week, as well as on Lord's days, and indeed in every week: *unleavened bread shall be eaten;* and not leavened; with reference to which the Gospel feast is to be kept, not with old leaven, with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.

Ver. 22. *And upon that day,* &c.] The fourteenth day of the month Nisan; the first day of the passover, as Kimchi observes: *shall the prince prepare for himself, and for all the people of the land, a bullock for a sin-offering:* here every thing again is new, as the above Jewish writer observes; no one circumstance according to the law of Moses; which shews that this respects Gospel times; when the law would be null and void, the types and shadows gone; and the antitype take place, Christ the sum of all; under the law, every family was to prepare a lamb for themselves; but here the prince is to prepare for himself, and all the people of the land; by that it was to be a lamb, here a bullock,

[z] וחטאת expiatoque, Piscator; expiabis, Cocceius, Starckius.

[a] וכפרתם ut expietis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; et expiabitis, Cocceius, Starckius.

and that for a sin-offering; whereas not a bullock, but a goat, was used for a sin-offering. Christ himself is this Prince, and who has prepared himself a sacrifice, even for himself, his church, which is mystically himself; and to make atonement for all those sins which he took upon himself by imputation, and made his own; even for all his chosen people, and for all their sins: of his preparing this sacrifice, both to be offered up, and to be held forth in the ministry of the word, see the note on ver. 17. and who is very fitly represented by a bullock for his laboriousness and strength, in bearing the sins of his people, when he became an offering for them.

Ver. 23. *And seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt-offering to the Lord, &c.*] Which is as follows: *seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish daily the seven days;* that is, a bullock and a ram for each day: *and a kid of the goats daily for a sin-offering;* all which were typical of Christ, signified by the *bullock*, for his labour and patience; by the *ram*, for his strength; and by the *kid* of the goats, for his likeness of sinful flesh, and having the sins of his people reckoned to him; which made him of ill savour to the justice and holiness of God, and for which he fell a sacrifice. This is also different from the law of Moses, which required two young bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs, Numb. xxviii. 19. and therefore Jarchi confesses he knew not how to make this Scripture stand, or establish the sense of it.

Ver. 24. *And he shall prepare a meat-offering of an ephah for a bullock, &c.*] Of the meat-offering, see the note on ver. 17. this was to consist of an ephah of fine flour; and for every bullock on each of the seven days of the passover was a meat-offering of such a quantity to be made: *and an ephah for a ram;* a like quantity of fine flour was to be made into a meat-offering for every ram on the same days: *and an hin of oil for an ephah;* to every ephah of fine flour was to be allowed an *hin* of oil, which, according to Bishop Cumberland, was a gallon and two pints, being the sixth part of an ephah or bath: here also, as Kimchi observes, will be an innovation in the offerings in future times, whether we will or no, he says; and Jarchi confesses his ignorance of these things; since, according to the law, three tenth-parts of an ephah of fine flour were only allowed to make a meat-offering for one bullock, and two tenth-parts for a ram, Numb. xxviii. 12. this may denote the more abundance of grace, and of the knowledge of Christ, under the Gospel dispensation, and especially in the latter-day glory.

Ver. 25. *In the seventh month, in the fifteenth day of the month, &c.*] The month Tisri, which answers to part of our September and October: *shall he do the like in the feast of the seven days;* the feast of tabernacles, which began the fifteenth of Tisri, and was kept seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, which is not here taken notice of: this feast was in commemoration of the Jews dwelling in tabernacles in the wilderness; and was typical of Christ's tabernacling in our nature, or of his incarnation; and which feast is to be kept in Gospel times, and particularly in the latter day, by believing in the incarnate Saviour, and in all the blessings flowing from his incarnation; and by attending the Gospel feast, his word and ordinances, which hold him forth as the only Saviour; see the note on Zech. xiv. 16. now, the same things are to be done at this feast as at the feast of the passover: *according to the sin-offering, according to the burnt-offering, and according to the meat-offering, and according to the oil;* that is, so many bullocks and rams for the burnt-offering, and a kid of the goats for the sin-offering, as before; and the same quantity of fine flour and oil for the meat-offering: this also is a new thing, as Kimchi observes; for, according to the law, the sacrifices at the feast of passover, and at the feast of tabernacles, were very different; and it might be further observed, that no notice is taken of the feast of pentecost, or first-fruits; and the whole confirms what has been already observed, that this shews the abrogation of the Mosaic economy; and that these things are to be understood in a spiritual and evangelic sense.

CHAP. XLVI.

THIS chapter treats of the shutting of the eastern gate of the inner court on working days, and opening it on sabbaths and new moons, for the prince and people to worship in, ver. 1, 2, 3. gives a further account of the sacrifices of both at these seasons, and of their different ways of going in and out, ver. 4—15. delivers some rules about the prince's disposing of his gifts to his sons and servants, ver. 16, 17, 18. and describes the places for the priest's baking and boiling the sacrifices, ver. 19—24.

Ver. 1. *Thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Which is premised, to raise the greater attention to what is about to be said: *the gate of the inner court that looketh towards the east;* the eastern gate of the inner court; the court of the priests, where stood the altar of burnt-offerings, and where they offered the sacrifices for atonement; and seems, in the mystical sense, to design the ministry of the Gospel, which is a ministry of reconciliation; which holds forth Christ as the altar saints have a right to eat of; and who is the sacrifice for sin, and has made reconciliation for it; and, where this is preached, he, the angel descending from the east, comes; here appears the rising sun, the sun of righteousness, who arises on those that fear his name, and love his Gospel, with healing in his wings: this gate *shall be shut the six working days;* which seems to be the same with the gate of the outward sanctuary, ch. xliv. 1, 2. said to be always shut, and never opened: but by what follows here it appears that that must be understood with some exception and limitation: the six working days are the six days of the week in which men should labour, and do all the work and business of their callings, that they may thereby provide for themselves and families, and have wherewith to give to the poor; during which time the public ministry of the word is intermitted, that men may not be taken

off of their necessary and lawful employments; and that the ministers of the word may have sufficient time to prepare in their studies for their ministerial service: *but on the sabbath it shall be opened;* by which is meant, not the Jewish sabbath now abrogated in the times this vision refers to; but the Lord's day, called by this Jewish name: and this being opposed to the six working days, shews that it ought to be kept by abstinence from all civil, corporeal, and servile works, as well as from dead works or sins, and in the exercise of all religious duties, private and public; and particularly in attendance on the ministry of the word, the gate now opened; and which is sometimes expressed by opening the door of faith, and is called an open door; and may be said to be so when ministers have an opportunity without, and great freedom within themselves, to preach it; and when the doors of men's hearts are opened to attend to it, and many souls are gathered to Christ, and into his churches, by it; see Acts xiv. 27. 1 Cor. xvi. 9. 2 Cor. ii. 12: *and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened;* on stated monthly days, in which the churches of Christ meet together for religious service: the new moon, which is an emblem of new light, and an increase of it, is very suitable to express the Gospel dispensation; in which, as Cocceius observes, there are some particular seasons that may be called so; as the coming of Christ into the world; his resurrection from the dead; the pouring forth of the spirit on the day of Pentecost; the destruction of the temple, and temple-service; the peace and prosperity of the Christian churches in the times of Constantine; the morning-star of the reformation; and the call of God's people out of Babylon at the destruction of it; at all which times there has been, or will be, an opening of this eastern gate, or a free, public, and glorious ministration of the Gospel. Some think these six working-days design this life, which is the time of working, after which there will be none but an eternal sabbath or rest; and that, for the present, saints live and walk by faith, and not by sight; divine and heavenly things are greatly shut up, and out of sight; but then it will be new moon, as well as sabbath, and all things will be seen clearly; but the former sense I think is best, which yet I leave to the judgment of others. This Kimchi says is a new thing, that will be in time to come.

Ver. 2. *And the prince shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate without, &c.*] That is, by the way of the porch of the eastern gate, even the outermost gate of the porch; for, as every gate had a porch, so every porch had two gates, one at one end, and the other at the other; now this was the outermost gate of the porch, which looked to the outward court, and not that which led into the inner: *and shall stand by the post of the gate;* this denotes the presence of Christ, the Prince with his people waiting at Wisdom's gate, and watching at the posts of her door. The allusion seems to be to the king's pillar in the temple, where he used to stand, 2 Chron. xxiii. 13. Some understand this of Christ's incarnation, of his entrance into the world, and his standing before his father, and praying for his people, as he did in the garden, and a little before his death, recorded John xvii: *and the priests shall prepare his burnt-offerings, and his peace-offerings;* that is, shall offer them. The meaning is, that the ministers shall preach Christ and him crucified, who, by his sacrifice, has made atonement for sin, and peace for his people; though some interpret this of the concern the priests had in the crucifixion and death of Christ: *and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate;* of the other gate that led into the inner court, and where he could see all that was done in it: or bow[1]; which it is observed he did, when he fell prostrate in the garden, and when he expired on the cross, and was at the threshold of the gate of heaven launching into eternity: worship and adoration, or bowing, may be ascribed to Christ as man; see John iv. 22: *then shall he go forth;* out of this world to his father, and be seen no more, until the restitution of all things; though this and the preceding may be understood of Christ's mystical worshipping; or of his people, who are one with him; and of their departure from public worship, when it is over: *but the gate shall not be shut until the evening;* of the sabbath, or new moon; or the evening of the world, the second coming of Christ; the Gospel ministry and ordinances will continue till then, and no longer; and this is owing to his powerful and prevalent intercession in heaven, whither he is gone; then the door will be shut, and not before, Matt. xxv. 10.

Ver. 3. *Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate before the Lord, &c.*] Publicly, and in a spiritual manner; attending the ministration of the word and ordinances with constancy and fervency; praying to God, praising his name, and hearing his word with attention; and performing all the duties of religious worship. The allusion is to the people of Israel meeting at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, Exod. xxix. 42: *in the sabbaths, and in the new moons;* at their stated weekly and monthly meetings; see Isa. lxvi. 23.

Ver. 4. *And the burnt-offering the prince shall offer unto the Lord in the sabbath-day, &c.*] In the preceding chapter, ver. 17, it is said to be the prince's part to give and prepare sacrifices in the feasts, new moons, sabbaths, and all solemnities; and there follows an account of them, for New-year's Day, and for the feasts of passover and tabernacles; and here an account is given of those for the sabbaths and new moons; which is very properly reserved for this place, to follow the account of the opening of the eastern gate at those seasons: and the burnt-offering for the sabbath shall be *six lambs without blemish, and a ram without blemish;* according to the law of Moses, only two lambs were the burnt-offering for this day, besides the continual one, Numb. xxviii. 9, 10. here Jarchi confesses his ignorance; and Kimchi says it is a new thing; and indeed it is, and is a proof of the ceremonial law being now abolished. These seven denote the perfect sacrifice of Christ, by which he has perfected for ever them that are sanctified; and being without blemish, the purity and holiness of it; and as the people of God on the six working-days commit much sin, and contract much guilt, the sacrifice of Christ is signified by six

[1] השתחוה *incurvaverit se*, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; *incurvato se*, Piscator.

lambs, which it is necessary they should hear of, and it should be set before them in the ministry of the word on Lord's days, which is meant by the offering of it; that they may by faith apply it to themselves, to the removal of sin from their consciences, and take the comfort of it; as the one ram may denote the one sacrifice of Christ, though typified by many; and who, like the ram, is the leader and guide of the flock: now, more creatures being offered for this burnt-offering than under the law, denotes the clearer knowledge of the sacrifice of Christ under the Gospel, and the more extensive efficacy of it, to the removal of the guilt of sin from the Lord's people.

Ver. 5. *And the meat-offering shall be an ephah for a ram,* &c.] See the note on ch. xlv. 24: *and the meat-offering for the lambs as he shall be able to give;* or, and *the gift of his hand**; it was fixed and stinted under the law, Numb. xxviii. 9. but now should be free and voluntary, and according to the ability of the giver; that is, the preacher of the word, who officiates for the prince, and in his name, and sets before the people the meat, or rather bread offering, Christ the bread of life, freely, and according to the ability and measure of the gift of grace bestowed upon him: *and an hin of oil to an ephah;* which was also a larger quantity than under the law, denoting the larger measure of the gifts and graces of the spirit, signified by oil, given unto the ministers of the word, and the people also; see the note on ch. xlv. 24.

Ver. 6. *And in the day of the new moon* it shall be *a young bullock without blemish,* &c.] This is also different from the law of Moses, which required two young bullocks and a ram, and seven lambs, Numb. xxviii. 11. whereas here only one bullock: *and six lambs, and a ram; they shall be without blemish;* and here Kimchi acknowledges again that this is a new thing to be done in future time. Some have observed, that the seven lambs under the law shewed that perfection might be hoped for and expected; but, there being but six now, that this is not yet attained, nor will be till the saints get to heaven; though perfection is come by the priesthood of Christ, whose sacrifice is a perfect and complete one, and by which his people are perfected, and they are complete in him, yet they have no perfection in themselves.

Ver. 7. *And he shall prepare a meat-offering, an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram,* &c.] See the note on ch. xlv. 24: *and for the lambs according as his hand shall attain unto, and an hin of oil to an ephah;* see the note on ver. 5.

Ver. 8. *And when the prince shall enter, he shall go in by the way of the porch of* that gate, &c.] See the note on ver. 2: *and he shall go forth by the way thereof;* the same way he came in, he shall go out; not so the people; and, to introduce the manner of their going in and out, this is repeated concerning the prince.

Ver. 9. *But when the people of the land shall come before the Lord in the solemn feasts,* &c.] To worship the Lord, to pray and praise; to honour the Lord, and keep the solemn feast of love, the Lord's supper: *he that entereth in by the way of the north gate to worship shall go out by the way of the south gate; and he that entereth in by the way of the south gate shall go forth by the way of the north gate;* that so such as were coming in, and going out, might not meet, and stop and hinder one another in going out and coming in: no mention is made of entering in by the east gate, which was only for the prince, ch. xliv. 1, 2. and there was no entering in, or going out, on the west: *he shall not return by the way of the gate he came in, but shall go forth over-against it:* signifying, that those that come to the house of God to worship, and join in communion with the saints, should not return to their former ways and practices; to their former rites, customs, and ceremonies in religion, used by them; and to their former principles and errors in doctrines; and to their former sinful courses of life; but go straight on and thorough-stitch with it in their profession of Christ and his Gospel, and in the practice of spiritual and evangelic worship; see Luke ix. 62. Heb. x. 38, 39.

Ver. 10. *And the prince in the midst of them,* &c.] Christ in the midst of his people while worshipping; this situation of him agrees with all the descriptions of him; as the Angel in the midst of the bush on fire, and not consumed; as among the myrtle-trees in the bottom; as walking in the midst of his golden candlesticks; as the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God; and as King, Priest, and Prophet, in his house; and with all the declarations and promises of his grace; and which is true in fact: and the phrase is expressive of his presence, not merely of his essential, powerful, and providential presence, common to all, but of his gracious presence with his people; he is in the midst of them, to assist them in every service; to protect them from every enemy; to sympathize with them in all their troubles; to deliver out of them; to supply them with all needful grace; and to rule over them, and defend them: and his being here shews that he is to be seen of all, to be come at and enjoyed by them; than which nothing is more desirable, and nothing more encouraging in the worship of God: *when they go in, shall go in; and when they go forth, shall go forth:* when they go to the throne of grace, for grace and mercy to help in time of need, he goes with them; their access is through him; he introduces their persons, presents their petitions, is their advocate and intercessor for them, and for his sake they are heard and accepted: when they go into the house of God, and to the ordinances of it; when they go in and out to find pasture, he goes in with them, and before them, as the shepherd of the flock, and leads them into green pastures; he teaches them how to go in and out, and to behave themselves in the church of God; he is their guide, by way of instruction, both by his word and by his spirit: when they go out from public service to their own houses, he goes with them, and by his spirit brings to their remembrance what they have heard; and when they go forth into the world again, and the business of it, he goes forth with them, to preserve them from the evil of the world, and to keep them from falling; and when they go forth out of the world at death, he is with them through the

* ידו מתת donum manus ejus, Cocceius, Starckius.

dark valley; he sees them safe over Jordan's river, and introduces them into the heavenly Canaan, into his kingdom and glory, where they are for ever with him.

Ver. 11. *And in the feasts, and in the solemnities,* &c.] Or, *appointed times*[1]; for public worship, for the ministration of the word and ordinances, which are feasts and solemn seasons; see the note on ch. xlv. 15. Kimchi observes a difference between these two; and that though all feasts are called solemnities, or fixed seasons, Lev. xxiii. 4. yet there are some solemnities that are not feasts, Gen. i. 14. and xviii. 14: *the meat-offering shall be an ephah to a bullock, and to the lambs as he is able to give, and an hin of oil to an ephah*: the same to be done on all feasts and solemnities as on the sabbath-day; see the note on ver. 5.

Ver. 12. *Now when the prince shall prepare a voluntary burnt-offering, or peace-offerings voluntarily unto the Lord,* &c.] That is, on week-days, distinct from sabbath-days, new moons, feasts, and solemnities, of which before; and seems to have respect to week-day lectures, in distinction from the weekly and monthly stated times, for the ministry of the word and administration of the Lord's supper; in which lectures the principal thing insisted on must be the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and peace and reconciliation made by his blood; for the Gospel, which is to be preached in season and out of season, is the ministry of reconciliation, or the word preaching peace by Jesus Christ; and which should at all times be held forth to the faith of God's people; which is meant by the preparation of these offerings: and being voluntary ones shew not only that Christ's sacrifice was a willing one, and offered without any reluctance, with all readiness and cheerfulness; but also that week-day lectures are voluntary things, which men are not under necessary obligation to attend unto, either ministers or people, but is a matter of free choice, as their circumstances will admit; and yet are acceptable to God, and agreeable to the will of Christ, the Prince, said to prepare these free-will offerings: one *shall then open him the gate that looketh toward the east*: the place where he stood and worshipped on the sabbath-day; on the evening of which it was shut, and remained so the six days of the week, ver. 1, 2. only when it was the prince's pleasure to offer a sacrifice, or to have the word preached, it was opened by one of the porters of the gates; or there was an open exercise of the ministry of the word, by one of the preachers of it: *and he shall prepare his burnt-offerings, and his peace-offerings, as he did on the sabbath-day*; the same doctrine, respecting the sacrifice and satisfaction of Christ, must be delivered at such times, as on Lord's days: *then he shall go forth: and after his going forth one shall shut the gate*; on the sabbath-day, or the Lord's day, it was not to be shut till the evening, because that day is wholly to be devoted to the service of God; men are not to find their own ways, nor do their own work, nor seek their own pleasure; but on week-days, when the lecture is over, the gate is shut immediately, and persons may return to their worldly business directly.

Ver. 13. *Thou shalt daily prepare a burnt-offering unto the Lord,* &c.] Called the daily sacrifice, Dan. viii. 11, 12, 13. typical of Christ's sacrifice, which has a continual daily virtue in it, to take away the sins of his people; and which ought to be looked unto by faith, and pleaded by them for that purpose every day, John i. 29: *of a lamb of the first year without a blemish*; a type of Christ the Lamb of God, without spot and blemish, strong and able, and so fit and proper to be a sacrifice for the sins of others: *thou shalt prepare it every morning*; or, *morning by morning*[m]; this seems to be said not to the prince, but rather to the prophet, and indeed to every believer; who should, every morning he rises, look to Christ as the atoning sacrifice for sin, whose blood continually cleanses from it, and who is always in the midst of the throne as a lamb that had been slain, and ever lives to make intercession; and as the mercies of the Lord's people are renewed every morning, they should renew their thankfulness to God as often, and bring this lamb with them, through whose sacrifice their sacrifices of praise become acceptable. No mention is made of the evening-sacrifice; see Exod. xxix. 38, 39. which some think is included in the morning burnt-offering. Kimchi thinks that in future time this was not to be offered, only the morning-sacrifice; but the true reason is, Christ hath appeared once in the evening of the world, and offered up himself; yea, it was literally in the evening, or decline of the day, when he suffered, or between the two evenings, whereby he answered the type of the passover-lamb; hence no evening-sacrifice is mentioned, Christ's being offered up.

Ver. 14. *And thou shalt prepare a meat-offering for it every morning,* &c.] That is, for the daily burnt-offering, to go along with it; prayer and thanksgiving both for our temporal and spiritual food, which should be done every morning: *the sixth part of an ephah, and the third part of an hin of oil, to temper with the fine flour*; to mix with it, and moisten it: under the law, only a tenth part of an ephah of fine flour, and a fourth part of a hin of oil, were ordered to make this meat-offering of, Exod. xxix. 40. wherefore Kimchi observes, this is a new thing in time to come: the reason of it is this; to shew us, that as the blessings of grace abound under the Gospel dispensation, we should abound in our thanksgiving to God: *a meat-offering continually, by a perpetual ordinance unto the Lord*; these sorts of sacrifices are never to cease; and so the Jews[n] themselves say, "in future time, or in the days "of the Messiah, all sacrifices shall cease; but the sa- "crifice of praise shall not cease."

Ver. 15. *Thus shall they prepare,* &c.] This shews that not a single person is meant in the preceding verses, but all the Lord's people; who are all priests unto God, and who are to offer up daily spiritual sacrifices unto him: *the lamb, and the meat-offering, and the oil every morning, for a continual burnt-offering*; which is repeated for the confirmation of it, and to excite a careful and constant attention to it.

[1] ובמועדים et statis temporibus, Cocceius, Starckius.
[m] בבקר בבקר in mane, in mane, Montanus, Vatablus.

[n] Vajikra Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 153. 1.

Ver. 16. *Thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Having finished the account of the sacrifices of the prince and people, the monthly, weekly, and daily ones; here his gifts are treated of, which are two-fold; some given to his sons, others to his servants: *if the prince give a gift to any of his sons*; Christ, the Prince, has sons; he that is the Prince of peace is the everlasting Father; he has children given unto him, whom he preserves; a seed promised him in covenant, which shall always endure; a family he is master of, and cares for; for whose sake he became incarnate, suffered, and died: they are sons by adopting grace, and in their adoption he has a great concern; they are predestinated to it by him; they receive it through him; he gives them power to become the sons of God, and they are manifestatively so through faith in him; they appear to be his sons, or are evidenced as such by their regeneration, which also is of him: it is by his spirit they are regenerated; it is his grace that is implanted in them; it is he himself that is formed in them, and his image that is instamped upon them; it is owing to his word and Gospel as the means, and to his resurrection as the virtual cause of it; it is in his church they are born, yea, of her, to whom he stands in the relation of a husband, and so they are sons brought forth to him by her: and these are princes by birth, have a free and princely spirit, and are brought up and provided for [illegible]: now to these Christ gives gifts; gifts of special grace, all sorts of grace; sanctifying grace, faith, hope, love, repentance, &c.; justifying grace, the gift of righteousness; pardoning grace; adopting grace; all supplies of grace; spiritual strength, peace, joy, and comfort; and persevering grace, to hold out to the end: and he also gives glory or eternal life; this is with him, in his hands; he has a power to give it, and he does give it, to all his sons; all which, being once given, ever continue. *The inheritance thereof shall be his sons'*, it shall be *their possession by inheritance*; that is, it shall ever remain with them, shall never be taken away from them; these are gifts and calling without repentance, irreversible blessings, which are for ever: sanctifying grace is a well of living water, springing up unto eternal life; faith, hope, and love, always abide; Christ's justifying righteousness is an everlasting one; pardon of sin is of all sin, past, present, and to come, and is never made void or called in; once children of God, and always such; and the inheritance of heaven is incorruptible, never-fading, and eternal; and all this flows from the unchangeable love of God and Christ to these sons of the prince.

Ver. 17. *But if he give a gift of his inheritance to one of his servants*, &c.] Who are not his sons, but his hired servants, and who serve him in a mercenary way; such are unregenerate ministers of the word, who preach Christ in pretence, and not in reality, for by-ends, to serve themselves, and not him, or to advance his glory; and all carnal professors, who have only an outside of religion, a form of godliness without the power of it: to these Christ gives gifts, the gifts of nature, wealth, and riches, to some, to whom he gives not grace; these are his left-hand blessings, which are given to the men of the world, who have their portion in this life: to others external means, the word and ordinances, but not internal special grace; yea, to some, gifts for the ministry, so as to be able to prophesy or preach in his name, which are meant by the talents and pounds in the parable; some of which were given to slothful and unprofitable servants; see Matt. vii. 22, 23. and xxv. 14, 15, 30. *Then it shall be his to the year of liberty*: the servant's to whom it is given, as long as the prince pleases; who when they make no use, or an ill use of them, takes them away in life-time, and gives them to those that have more, and employ them to better purpose, Zech. xi. 17. Matt. xxv. 28, 29. or however at death, which is a time of liberty from civil bondage, the servant is free from his master; and when good men are freed from the oppression of others, and from sin, Satan, and the world, and are delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God; this is a year of liberty indeed to them; and then all external gifts to others, as riches, are held no longer; the word and ordinances no more enjoyed; prophesying, speaking with tongues, and all mere natural knowledge, cease, and vanish away, 1 Cor. xiii. 8. the allusion is to the year of jubilee, when liberty was proclaimed throughout the land, and every man returned to his possession, and to his family, Lev. xxv. 10. and so the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, interpret it of the year of jubilee; a type of the heavenly glory, and of the joy of the Lord, which Christ's faithful servants enter into; and when there will be a manifest difference between them and slothful servants, and the gifts of the one and of the other, and of their use of them, as well as between sons and servants: *after it shall return to the prince*; signifying that such gifts are not durable; they are revertible to the donor of them; who will call these servants to an account for them at death or judgment, if not in time of life: *but his inheritance shall be his sons' for them*; the prince's inheritance shall be theirs; for being sons they are heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ: or that which is given them for an inheritance shall always continue; it shall never be taken from them or returned; but it shall be their own, for themselves, and enjoy it for ever; which is a confirmation of what is said in the preceding verse.

Ver. 18. *Moreover the prince shall not take of the people's inheritance by oppression, to thrust them out of their possession*, &c.] Christ, the Prince, will never do this; he will never take any part of his people's inheritance from them, or thrust them out of the possession of any benefit or blessing of grace; they have chosen that good part which shall never be taken from them, Luke x. 42. this is said, not as a direction to the prince, as a law enjoined him, or a caution to him against oppression; but as expressing his clemency, grace, and goodness to his subjects, and their safety and security under him: but *he shall give his sons inheritance out of his own possession*: whatever Christ gives his sons, whether present grace, or future glory, it is out of his own possession; for all that the Father has are his; all the blessings of goodness are with him; all the fulness of grace is in him; the eternal inheritance is reserved with him in heaven; and it is all his own he gives, and not another's: *that my people be not scattered every man from his possession*: or, *that therefore my people may not be scattered every*

men from his possession[p]; because what is given them, and they are in possession of, was Christ's own, and not another's; and which he had a right to dispose of, and therefore they need not fear being dispossessed by another claimant.

Ver. 19. *After he brought me through the entry, which was at the side of the gate,* &c.] The north gate of the inner court, where the prophet was last, ch. xliv. 4. through an entry, by the side of that, he was brought by the man his guide: *into the holy chambers of the priests;* see ch. xlii. 13: *and, behold, there was a place in the two sides westward;* or, *on their sides westward*[q]; on the west side of the chambers; the Targum is, at the west end of them: the use of this place follows,

Ver. 20. *Then said he unto me,* &c.] Declaring what this place was, and what it was for: *this is the place where the priests shall boil the trespass-offering, and the sin-offering;* this was the priests' kitchen, in which they prepared the sacrifices that were to be eaten; and which were typical of Christ, who was made sin, and became a sacrifice for the sins of his people, whether presumptuous ones, or sins of ignorance; the doctrine of whose sacrifice and satisfaction is a principal part of the Gospel ministry; and which should be delivered, not in a raw, crude, and indigested manner; but the Scriptures should be diligently searched into, to get a clear and distinct understanding of it; and these should be constantly meditated on, and thoroughly studied: ministers should examine their doctrine by the word of God before they deliver it; and take heed unto it that it is right, according to the oracles of God, and the proportion of faith; and take care to deliver it in the best manner, not in a cold lukewarm way, but with fervency of spirit; all which may be meant by the boiling of these sacrifices; it seems to design the laborious and diligent employ of Gospel ministers in their studies, preparatory to their public work in the house of God; and suggests that they should not come thither unprepared, and deliver out unpremeditated matter; or set before the Lord's people indigested food; or offer that in the sanctuary of the Lord which cost them no pains or trouble: this place, and so the boiling-places in ver. 24, are to be understood of the closets, studies, and places of retirement, where the ministers of the word employ their time and thoughts in preparing for their public ministry: for these were without the sanctuary, on the side of the priests' chambers, and in the corners of the outward court: *where they shall bake the meat-offering;* or *bread-offering*[r]; made of fine flour and oil; typical of Christ the bread of God, the food of believers, who is set forth as such to them in the ministry of the Gospel: the baking of this signifies the same as the boiling of the other before; see Lev. ii. 1, 4, 5, 7: *that they bear them not out in the utter court, to sanctify the people:* that they might not be carried through the outer court, where the common people were; lest they should think it was lawful for them to eat of them, as Kimchi observes, when they belonged to the priests only; or lest they should touch them, and become holy thereby, and so for the future be employed in sacred service, and obliged to quit the duties of their calling, which would introduce confusion in the commonwealth; see Hagg. ii. 12. the Targum is, "lest they "be mixed with the people." The design seems to be to shew, that the doctrine of peace, pardon, atonement, and satisfaction for sin, is only to be preached as belonging to such that truly repent of sin, and believe in Christ; and particularly that the ordinance of the Lord's supper, in which the sacrifice of Christ is held forth and commemorated, is to be administered, not to men in common, but to holy and regenerate persons; to do otherwise would be to cast pearls before swine, and give that which is holy to dogs.

Ver. 21. *Then he brought me forth into the utter court,* &c.] From the holy chambers of the priests, and from viewing the place where they boiled the sacrifices, and baked the meat-offering: *and caused me to pass by the four corners of the court;* in each of the four corners of the outward court there was another court; signifying that there will be courts or churches in the several parts of the world in the latter day.

Ver. 22. *In the four corners of the court* there were *courts joined,* &c.] To the side-walls of the outward court, which met in right angles: or, were *made with chimneys*[s], as some render it; that the smoke of the fire of the kitchens in them, and the steam of the boiled flesh, might ascend through them. So the Jewish writers, as Jarchi and Kimchi, from the Misnah[t], generally interpret the word, that these courts were made so as to let out the smoke, and were not roofed or floored over[u]; and in which treatise, and also by Maimonides[w], the uses of them in the second temple are observed: for in answer to the question, what do they serve for? it is said, at the south-east was the chamber of the Nazarites, where they boiled their peace-offerings, and shaved their hair, and put them under the pot: at the north-east was the wood-chamber, where the priests that had blemishes wormed the wood; and any wood, in which a worm was found, was rejected from the altar: at the north-west was the chamber of the lepers: of that which was at the south-west, saith R. Eliezer Ben Jacob, I have forgot (some render it found) of what use it is; but Abba Saul says, there they put the wine and oil, wherefore it was called the oil-chamber. These four chambers, according to the same treatise, were in the four corners of the court of the women, and consisted of forty cubits long, but were not roofed; and so, they say, they will be in future time, according to this passage of Scripture. These places, as Dr. Lightfoot[x] observes, are called by the prophet *courts,* and in every one of them places to boil the sacrifices in; and yet they are allotted to other uses in the Misnah, and which seem to require that they should be roofed; all which may consist together, he says: for, grant every one of these spaces to be built within, with chambers

[p] למען אשר לא יפצו עמי ideo ne dispergantur populus meus, Starckius.
[q] בירכתם in lateribus ejus vel earum, in extremo, Starckius.
[r] המנחה, the minchah.
[s] חצרות קטרות atria caminata, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus, Cocceius; fumosa, Tigurine version, Castalio; fumigata, Starckius.

[t] Middot, c. 2. sect. 5.
[u] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.
[w] Hilchot Beth Habechira, c. 5. sect. 8.
[x] Prospect of the Temple, c. 18. p. 1092, 1093.

round about, there might be very fair chambers, and yet a good handsome open court in the middle; at either end chambers of ten cubits broad, and yet an open space of twenty cubits between; and on either side chambers of seven or eight cubits broad, and yet an open space of fourteen or sixteen cubits between: thus therefore, adds he, it seems to be, that there were fair chambers round about, which were roofed over as other buildings; and in the middle was an open court, round about which were boiling-ranges, whose chimneys went up in the inner walls of the chambers, or the walls to the open place: thus the inner court served for boiling-places, and the rooms round about for other uses; see the two following verses. The measure of the courts were, *of forty cubits long, and thirty broad*; an oblong quadrangle: *these four corners were of one measure*; the courts that were in these four corners were of the same measure, as to length and breadth; denoting the equality of Gospel churches, being of the same faith, order and discipline, power and authority.

Ver. 23. *And there was a row of building round about in them*, &c.] Within the courts, not on the outside of them: these were either chambers to eat the sacrifices in when boiled; or they were sheds which covered the cooks, and the meat they were boiling, from the rain, &c.: the Targum renders it, "and walls were "made to them round about;" to the court: and so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret this row of building of a stone wall: *round about them four*; the four courts at the four corners: *and it was made with boiling-places under the rows round about*: under these rows of building, chambers or sheds; or under these stone walls were furnaces, and coppers, and caldrons, set on them, for the boiling of the sacrifices.

Ver. 24. *Then said he unto me, these are the places of them that boil*, &c.] The kitchens, in which those whose business it was to boil the sacrifices did it; and who they were are next declared: *where the ministers of the house shall boil the sacrifice of the people*; these seem to be the Levites, as distinct from the priests before mentioned; though in this prophecy they are both used of the same persons; see ch. xliv. 15. the sacrifice of the people were the peace-offerings, which the people might eat of, but were first to be boiled; typical of peace and reconciliation made by Christ, held forth in the ministry of the word, called from thence the word of reconciliation: of the boiling of sacrifices, see the note on ver. 20. The Targum is, "the holy sacrifices "of the people;" see Rom. xii. 1. Heb. xiii. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 5.

CHAP. XLVII.

THIS chapter gives an account of the vision of the holy waters, and of the borders of the holy land, and the division of it to Israelites and strangers. The waters are described by the original and spring of them, ver. 1, 2. by the progress and increase of them, ver. 3, 4, 5. by the healing and quickening nature of them, and the places where they were so, and were not, ver. 8, 9, 10, 11. and by the trees which grew upon the banks of them, ver. 6, 7, 12. The borders of the holy land are fixed, ver. 13, 14. the northern border, ver. 15, 16, 17. the eastern border, ver. 18. the southern, ver. 19. and the western, ver. 20. which is to be divided by lot to the tribes of Israel, and the strangers that sojourn among them, ver. 21, 22, 23.

Ver. 1. *Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house*, &c.] The door of the temple, even of the holy of holies; hither the prophet is said to be brought again, or *brought back* [x]; for he was last in the corners of the outward court, viewing the kitchens or boiling-places of the ministers; but now he was brought back into the inner court, and to the door that led into the holiest of all: *and, behold!* for it was matter of admiration, as well as of observation and attention: *waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward*: this is a new thing, to which there was nothing like it, either in the first or second temple. Aristeas [y] indeed relates what he himself saw, "a "never-failing conflux of water, as of a large fountain, "naturally flowing underneath, and wonderful re- "ceptacles under ground; to each of which were "leaden pipes, through which the waters came in on "every side, for five furlongs about the temple, and "washed away the blood of the sacrifices;" and so the Talmudists [z] say, there was an aqueduct from the fountain of Etam, and pipes laid from thence to supply the temple with water, for the washing and boiling of the sacrifices, and keeping the temple clean: but these waters are quite different; they are such as came out of the temple, and not what were carried by pipes into it; nor were they a common sewer to carry off the filth of it, but formed a delightful and useful river. The fountain of them is not declared, only where they were first seen to issue out, *under the threshold of the house eastward*: the threshold of the door of the most holy place; so that they seem to take their rise from the holy of holies, the seat of the divine Majesty, and throne of God, with which agrees Rev. xxii. 1. and so the Talmudists [a] say, that this fountain came first from the house of the holy of holies, under the threshold of the door of it, which looked to the east: *for the fore front of the house* stood *toward the east*; the holy of holies was at the west end of the temple; but the front of it, and so the door into it, was to the east, and from hence these waters flowed: *and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house*: they are said to *come down*, because the temple was high built upon the top of a mountain; and *from under*, that is, the threshold of the door of it; or rather in subterraneous passages, till they appeared from under that; and this was *on the right side of the house*; that

[x] וישבני reduxit me, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Starckius.
[y] Hist. 72 Interpret. p. 32, 33. Ed. Oxon. 1692.

[z] T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 41. Cippi Hebr. p. 10.
[a] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 77. 2.

is on the south side: for, suppose a man standing with his face to the east, as the prophet did, when he turned himself to see which way the waters flowed, having his face to the west when he first saw them come out; the south then must be on his right hand, and so it follows: *at the south side of the altar*; of the altar of burnt-offerings, which stood before the house.

Ver. 2. *Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward*, &c.] Out of the inward court where he was, by the way of the north gate, the eastern gate being shut: *and led me about the way without unto the utter gate, by the way that looketh eastward*; and from thence he had him round to the outward eastern gate, where he was at first, ch. xl. 6. to meet the flow of waters that came through the inward and outward courts eastward: *and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side*; that is, on the south side of the gate, in a small quantity, and in a very still and easy way, like water out of the mouth of a vial, as the word [b] signifies. So Bartenora [c], who understands this gate of the water-gate, interprets the right side of the south; and observes, that the prophet first saw the waters come out very small, like the horns of a locust; but when they came to this gate, they became like water as it flows out of the mouth of a small pitcher: and from this whole account of the waters, it is plain they cannot be understood literally, but figuratively; and which confirm this to be the sense of the whole vision. They may be applied unto, and serve to illustrate, the love of God; the secret spring of which is in the heart and will of God; ran under ground from all eternity; channelled in Christ; broke up and issued forth in the mission of him into the world, under the threshold of him, the door of the church; and in and by him, the altar, sacrifice, and propitiation; wherein the love of God in an especial manner is manifested; and which has its heights and depths, immeasurable and unfathomable, Ephes. iii. 18, 19. Psal. xlvi. 4. Rev. xxii. 1. these waters also may be applied to the grace of the spirit of God in regeneration and conversion; which is compared to water, for its cleansing, fructifying, and refreshing nature; to *waters*, for the abundance of it; and this flows from the God of all grace through Christ, and out of his fulness is gradually increased, and becomes a well, yea, rivers of living water, John vii. 37, 38, 39. but it seems best to understand them of the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; which, like water, cools those who are inflamed with the heat of the fiery law; extinguishes the thirst of sensible sinners, and refreshes them; cleanses and purifies their souls, which is instrumentally done with the washing of water by the word; and makes them fruitful and flourishing: this is not of men, but God; comes from heaven, the holy of holies; and out of the house and church of God; from Zion and Jerusalem, by Christ the door, and points to him the way; and is chiefly concerning him, the altar, his sacrifice and satisfaction, peace, atonement, and propitiation by him; see Isa. ii. 3. Joel iii. 18. Zech. xiv. 8.

Ver. 3. *And when the man that had the line in his hand*, &c.] The same as in ch. xl. 3. and is no other than Christ, who appeared in a human form to the prophet; and who hitherto had only made use of the measuring-reed in taking the dimensions of the house, and what appertained to it; but now he uses the line of flax he had in his hand, in measuring the waters as they ran; by which line is meant the Scriptures, the word of God, by which all doctrines are to be measured: this is the rule that both preachers and hearers are to go by; and, as by the direction of this person the waters flowed where he would have them, so the doctrines of the Gospel are preached by the order of Christ where he pleases; see Luke xxiv. 47. Acts xiii. 46, 47, and xvi. 6, 7, 10. and these move in a direct line, as those waters did; error is crooked, and has its windings and turnings; but truth is straight and even; all the words of Wisdom are right, and there is nothing froward, perverse, or crooked in them, Prov. viii. 8, 9: *went forth eastward*; which was the course the waters took by his direction; the Gospel was first spread in the eastern part of the world, in Asia, where many churches were planted by it; it has been since in the south, in Africa, particularly in the times of Austin, when these waters, the doctrines of grace, flowed largely; and they have been since in the north and west, in Europe, in our northern climes; all which perhaps may be signified by the right side, or south side, by which these waters flowed, and by the prophet's going to the north gate, and about, to see them; but in the latter day they'll move eastward again, when the kings of the east and their kingdoms shall become Christ's; see Rev. xvi. 12. Zech. xiv. 8: *he measured a thousand cubits*; or, *a thousand by the cubit* [d]; the Targum is, "a thousand cubits by the "cubit;" with his line from the eastern gate of the house, at the right side of which the waters ran out; this was about half a mile: *and he brought me through the waters*; not the thousand cubits he had measured; but when he came to the end of them, he made the prophet to cross the waters, to go through them across, that he might observe the depth of them: *and the waters were to the ancles*; were ancle-deep, a few inches: or, *to the soles*; for, as R. Jonah thinks, א may be additional; and פס, in the Syriac language, signifies a part of the hand, Dan. v. 5. and, applied to the feet, designs the soles of them; and then the sense is, the waters were so shallow, that they only covered the soles of the feet: this may signify the ministry of John the Baptist, who, though greater than the prophets, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than he; and of the disciples of Christ, before the effusion of the spirit: or may design the more easy doctrines of the Gospel; those waters which Christ's lambs may wade in; that milk which new-born babes desire, and are fed with; those plain truths of the word, which those of the weakest capacity are able to take in, receive, and embrace; in the knowledge of which, though fools, they err not; such as salvation by Christ alone; justification by his righteousness; peace and pardon by his blood; which are so plain, as to be understood by every truly gracious soul,

[b] מפכים manabant tanquam e phiala, Junius & Tremellius; phialabant, Junius; destillabant, Cocceius, Starckius.

[c] In Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect. 4.

[d] אלף באמה mille in cubito, Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus.

though of ever so mean a capacity: or it may intimate the small spread of the Gospel at first in Judea, Samaria, and Galilee.

Ver. 4. *And again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters: the waters were to the knees*, &c.] The man with his line measured another thousand cubits straight on from the first; and then bid the prophet cross and ford them again, and then they were knee deep: *again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins*: a third time he measured a thousand cubits still onward, and ordered the prophet to wade through them, when they were risen so high as to reach his loins. The waters to the knees and loins may signify the greater knowledge of the Gospel, and the mysteries of it, the apostles had after the spirit was poured forth; and the greater spread of it in the world, among Jews and Gentiles: or else may design those doctrines of the Gospel, and mysteries of grace, which are more sublime, and more difficult to understand; which require some pains to search into, and get the knowledge of; as concerning predestination, election, the covenant of grace, and the eternal transactions between the Father and the Son, *&c.* which are meat for strong men, who have their senses exercised to discern between good and evil.

Ver. 5. *Afterward he measured a thousand*, &c.] A fourth time a thousand cubits. Some think these four measurings respect the preaching of the Gospel in the four parts of the world; but rather they refer to four remarkable seasons of the ministry of it; as in the times of John the Baptist, and the disciples of Christ before his death; in the primitive churches of the three first centuries; at the time of the Reformation; and in the latter-day glory, which is the fourth and last measuring: and it was *a river that I could not pass over*: the prophet could not set his foot on the bottom, and wade through it, and cross over it, as he had done before: *for the waters were risen, waters to swim in*; not to walk in: *a river that could not be passed over*; by any man, on his feet; only by swimming, and perhaps not by that, at least not without difficulty: this may signify the large spread of the Gospel in the latter day, when the earth shall be filled with it, as the waters cover the sea; and the great light into it, and knowledge of it, that men shall then have, Isa. xi. 9. and xxx. 26. and yet that there are some doctrines exceeding deep, out of the reach and penetration of men, called the deep things of God, which human reason cannot attain, and where it cannot fix its foot, 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10, 14. and which are only to be reached and embraced in the swimming arms of faith; and, though believed, can't be accounted for, as to the modus of them, and are not to be dived into; such as the trinity of Persons in the Godhead, and the distinct manner of their subsisting in it; the generation of the Son; the procession of the Spirit; the incarnation of Christ; the union of the two natures in his person; the resurrection of the dead, *&c.*

Ver. 6. *And he said unto me, son of man, hast thou seen this?" &c.* That is, the man that measured the waters said to the prophet, hast thou carefully observed all this? from whence the waters flowed? from what small beginnings they rose, and gradually increased? how they first issued forth, as out of a vial; and now, in the space of about two or three miles, are become a deep river, and impassable? it is right and profitable to observe the rise and progress of the Gospel; what a spread it has had in the world, and what it will have: *then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river*; there to stand and observe the nature of the waters, and the course of them; the multitude of fish in them; and the trees which grew upon the banks of them; of all which some account is given in the following verses.

Ver. 7. *Now when I had returned*, &c.] To the brink of the river: *behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side, and on the other*; here was a new wonder observed, which had not been before; and therefore this note of admiration, *behold!* is prefixed; on a sudden sprung up trees on each side of the river, of a perfect stature, and full of fruit; which the prophet had not seen when he went along with the man on the bank of it, as he measured the waters; but now being returned, sees this wonderful sight; an emblem of true Christians, believers, and regenerate persons, who are trees of righteousness, planted by the river of divine love; watered with the grace of God, and doctrines of the Gospel; whereby they become fruitful in good works, and are to be seen wherever the Gospel comes with power and efficacy; see Psal. i. 3. Isa. lxi. 3. or, *an exceeding large tree*[e]; so John saw but one tree, which was on each side of the river, which he calls the tree of life, Rev. xxii. 2. but here it seems to be put for many, as appears from ver. 12.

Ver. 8. *Then said he unto me*, &c.] The man that measured the waters spoke to the prophet again, and shewed him the course of the waters; the quickening and healing virtue of them, and the multitude of fish in them: *these waters issue out toward the east country*; the Gospel was first preached in the eastern parts of the world; see the note on ver. 3. or *towards the first*, or *east Galilee*[f]; in Galilee Christ began to preach, and wrought his first miracle; here he called his disciples, and chiefly conversed; and here he had the greatest followers, and some of the first Christian churches were formed here after his ascension, Matt. iv. 12, 18, 23. Acts ix. 31: *and go down into the desert*; or wilderness, the wilderness of the people, the Gentiles; to whom the Gospel was carried when rejected by the Jews, and who before were like a desert, but now became as a fruitful field, Isa. xxxv. 1, 2. and xlii. 1, 11. The Jews[g] interpret this of the plain, or the sea of Galilee or Tiberias, at which Christ called his disciples; near to this he delivered his discourses concerning himself, the bread of life, and eating his flesh, and drinking his blood; here he met with his disciples after his resurrection, and enjoined Peter to feed his sheep and lambs; see Matt. iv. 18. John vi. 1. and xxi. 1. 15: *and go into the sea*; the Dead sea, or sea of Sodom, the

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[e] עץ רב מאד arbor multa admodum, Cocceius, Starckius.

[f] אל הגלילה הקדמונה in Galilæam primam, Junius & Tremellius; ad Galilæam anteriorem, Cocceius, Piscator, Starckius; Galilæam orientalem, Munster; so some in Vatablus, Tigurine version; so the Targum.

[g] Tosephta Succa in Jarchi & Kimchi in loc.; so in Ben Melech.

lake Asphaltites, where nothing is said to live; an emblem of dead sinners; and may represent the worst of sinners, as the Sodomites were; and to such the Gospel was sent, and became effectual to salvation: or it may rather design the great ocean, and may signify the whole world, and all the nations of it, to which the Gospel, by the commission of Christ, was to be preached; see Dan. vii. 2. Mark xvi. 15. The Targum is, "and go through the sea into the great sea;" it may be rendered, *and go toward the west*[k]; the Mediterranean sea being to the west of Judea, it is often put for the west: and so the sense may be, that these waters should flow east and west, as the living waters in Zech. xiv. 8, the same with those, are said to do; and all the Jewish writers think there is such a division of the waters intended, and that they had two streams or rivers; which may receive some confirmation from the next verse, where the word for *rivers* is of the dual number, and signifies two rivers. The sense of the whole is, that the Gospel should be first preached in Judea and Galilee; then among the Gentiles throughout the Roman empire; and in the latter day especially throughout the world, when it shall be covered with it as the waters cover the sea, Isa. xi. 9: which *being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed*: that is, which waters of the river being directed and brought into, either the Dead sea, or the great ocean, the waters of the one, or of the other, were healed; and of bituminou sand bitter waters were made clear, sweet, and wholesome; and signify the change made in sinful men by means of the Gospel, who are thereby quickened, made partakers of the grace of God, and have their sins pardoned, which is often meant by healing in Scripture, Psal. ciii. 2. Mal. iv. 2. pardon of sin flows from the love and grace of God; is the great doctrine of the Gospel, and by which the Lord speaks peace and pardon, and communicates healing of all spiritual diseases to sinners sensible of them; see Psal. cvii. 20.

Ver. 9. *And it shall come to pass* that *every thing that liveth, which moveth*, &c.] That is, every living man; every one that lives naturally or corporeally, that lives, moves, and has his being in God, as all men have, Acts xvii. 28. *whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live*; or, *the two rivers*[l]; the waters divided as before, east and west; not the two Testaments, Old and New; nor the two ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper; but the Gospel, which, wherever it shall come with power, and to whomsoever it so comes, they shall live spiritually; not to whomsoever it is preached, for to some it is not profitable; see ver. 11. but is the savour of death unto death; but to all to whom it is accompanied by the spirit of God it is the savour of life unto life; the spirit that gives life, and is the means of it: indeed, the love of God is the river of water of life, Rev. xxi. 1. it is the spring of spiritual life to dead sinners, and what revives drooping saints, quickens their graces, faith, hope, and love; enlivens and cheers their spirits, and greatly influences true religion and godliness, and very much promotes the life and power of it: and so the grace of the spirit is living water, by which dead sinners are quickened; the work of grace in saints is revived, and which always continues and issues in eternal life, John iv. 10, 14. but the Gospel, and its doctrines, are rather intended; which are the means of quickening those who are dead in trespasses and sins; serve greatly to invigorate the graces of the spirit in the hearts of God's people; to influence their lives and conversations; to support them under afflictions, and to nourish them up to everlasting life; and point out the way to eternal life, and give a true account of it. *And there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither*; that is, a multitude of fish in the Dead sea, where none lived before, and owing to those waters coming thither: it signifies the great number of living Christians, true believers, who shall appear wherever the Gospel is truly, purely, and powerfully preached; of these see more in the next verse: *for they shall be healed*: see the note on ver. 8: *and every thing shall live whither the river cometh*; not only shall live as before, but continue to live, shall never die; their graces shall not die, nor shall they themselves die the second death, but shall have eternal life; because of the purpose of God, who has ordained them to it; and the promise of God, who is faithful to it; and because of the security of their life in Christ, to whom they are united; and because of the indwelling of the spirit of life in them. So the Targum, "they shall remain in every place where the "waters of the river come."

Ver. 10. *And it shall come to pass*, &c.] In Gospel times: what follows had a fulfilment in the first times of the Gospel, and will have a greater in the latter times of it: that *the fishers shall stand upon it*; upon the brink of the river, or the shore of the sea, whose waters will be healed by this river running into them. These *fishers* are the apostles of Christ, who, of fishermen, were made fishers of men by him; to whom he gave a call, and a commission, and gifts qualifying them to preach the Gospel; whereby they caught men, and brought them to Christ; and so were the instruments of saving them, even of great numbers, both in Judea, and in the Gentile world; of which some instances of their fishing, after their call to the ministry, were emblematical; see Matt. iv. 18, 19. Luke v. 4—10. John xxi. 3—11. likewise all other ministers of the Gospel are here meant, especially those that will be in the latter day; compared to fishers for the meanness and contemptibleness of their employment in the eyes of the world; for their laboriousness in it, and for their patient waiting for success therein; and for the bad weather, storms, and tempests, they are exposed unto, the reproach and persecution of men; and for their being the happy means of drawing souls out of the abyss of sin and misery unto Christ, for life and salvation: and their *standing* upon the brink of the waters to catch fish may denote their constancy in their work; their strict attachment to the doctrines of the Gospel, and their waiting for success in it. *From En-gedi even unto En-eglaim*; two places, which, according to Jerom, lay, the latter one at the entrance of the Dead sea, and the former at the end of it; but Re-

[k] ובאו הימה.

[l] נחלים duo torrentes, Pagninus, Montanus; geminus torrens, Tigurine version, Cocceius; fluvius geminus, Starckius.

land[k] observes that this could not be, if Josephus is to be credited, who makes En-gedi to be three hundred furlongs from Jerusalem[l]; therefore could not be far from the beginning of the Dead sea, and not where it ended; since the Dead sea, or the lake of Asphaltites, was in length five hundred and eighty furlongs, and, consequently, En-gedi must be more than six or seven hundred furlongs from Jerusalem; but that it was at the beginning of it is still further manifest from the same writer making the lake to be just such a number of furlongs from Jerusalem[m] as he does En-gedi; and whereas En-gedi was on the western shore of the lake, as appears from Pliny[n], it is probable there was another city on the eastern shore, opposite to it, called En-eglaim; and there was a city on that side, the name of which was Agallim, which, according to Eusebius, was eight miles from Areopolis: and so it may signify the extent of the Gospel ministry, which, in the latter day, will be from one end of the earth to the other; and which took a large circuit in the times of the apostles, and particularly by the Apostle Paul, Rom. xv. 19. *They shall be a place to spread forth nets*: that is, the abovesaid places shall be made use of for that purpose; which design the Gospel, and the ministry of it, compared to a net, for its meanness in the esteem of the world; and yet is a piece of curious artifice and wisdom, even the manifold wisdom of God, and is contrived for the gathering in of sinners to Christ; and, though it may be like a net *per accidens*, the means of troubling the world, and drawing out the corruptions of the men of it; yet its principal design, and the use that is made of it, is to draw souls out of the depths of sin unto the grace of Christ; see Matt. xiii. 47, 48. the *spreading* and *casting* of nets design the preaching of the Gospel, and the opening and explaining the doctrines of it, which are shut up and hidden to men; and to do which requires wisdom and skill, strength, diligence, and patience, and is done at a venture; and sometimes is cast where fish are, and sometimes not; but here, and at this time, with great success. *For their fish shall be according to their kind, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many*: that is, there shall be fish of all sorts, small and great, and in large numbers, as in the great ocean, or as in the Mediterranean sea. These signify regenerated persons, who are born of water and the spirit by the word of God, which is their element; they can't live but in these waters of the sanctuary, and where the doctrines of grace are preached. Now many of all nations, and men of all ranks, will be called; kings, princes, nobles, as well as peasants; men high and low, rich and poor, and multitudes of them, like the fishes of the sea; which will be the case when the Jews will be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in.

Ver. 11. *But the miry places thereof, and the marshes thereof, &c.*] That is, of the sea; the waters of which were healed, by the waters of the sanctuary coming into them: but the ditches and lakes, the miry and marsh ground, separate from the sea, which lay near it, and upon the borders of it, *shall not be healed*: these design the reprobate part of the world, obstinate and perverse sinners, that abandon themselves to their filthy lusts, and sensual pleasures; that wallow like swine in the mire and dirt of sin; are wholly immersed in the things of this world, mind nothing but earth and earthly things, and load themselves with thick clay; whose god is their belly, and who glory in their shame: also hypocrites and apostates may be here meant, who, despising the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, put it away from them, and judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life, and so receive no benefit by it; but, on the contrary, it is the savour of death unto death unto them; see Isa. vi. 9, 10: *they shall be given to salt*; left to the hardness of their hearts; given up to the lusts of them; devoted to ruin and destruction; and remain barren and unfruitful, as places demolished and sown with salt are; see Deut. xxix. 23. Judg. ix. 45. or made an example of, as Lot's wife was; that others may learn wisdom, and shun those things that have been the cause of their ruin. The Targum is, "its pools and lakes shall not be healed; they shall be "for salt-pits."

Ver. 12. *And by the river on the banks thereof, on this side and on that side, &c.*] On each side of the river, on the banks of it: *shall grow all trees for meat*: such as bear fruit, that may be eaten, and is good for food: by these *trees* are meant truly gracious souls, converted persons, real Christians, true believers in Christ: who like trees have a root, are rooted in the love of God, in the person and grace of Christ, and have the root of the matter in them, the grace of the blessed Spirit; and who also is their sap, of which they are full, and so grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ; grow up in him, and grow upwards and heavenwards in their affections and desires, and in the exercise of faith and hope: they are the trees of the Lord, trees of righteousness, good trees, that bring forth good fruit; and are often in Scripture compared to trees the most excellent, as palm-trees, cedars, olives, myrtles, &c.; and wherever the Gospel comes, these trees arise, and are watered and made fruitful by it; sometimes in lesser, and sometimes in greater numbers, as in the first times of the Gospel, and as they will in the latter day; see Psal. xcii. 12. Isa. lxi. 3: *whose leaf shall not fade*; as the leaves of trees in autumn do, and drop off and fall; to which some professors of religion are compared, who bear no fruit, only have the leaves of a profession, and this they drop when any trouble or difficulty arises, Jude, ver. 12. Matt. xiii. 21. but true believers, as they take up a profession on principles of grace, they hold it fast without wavering; their root, seed, and sap, remain, and so never wither and die in their profession; see Psal. i. 3. Jer. xvii. 8: *neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed*; which are the graces of the spirit, and good works flowing from them: the graces of the spirit are abiding ones, as faith, hope, and love; these never die, are an incorruptible seed, a well of water springing up unto everlasting life; and good works, which are fruits meet for repentance, and evidences of faith, and by which trees are known to be good, always continue to be wrought by believers, in

[k] Palestina Illustrata, l. 2. p. 449. & l. 3. p. 762.
[l] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 1. sect. 2.
[m] Antiqu. l. 15. c. 6. sect. 2.
[n] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 17.

the strength and grace of Christ, from whom they have all their fruits of every kind, Hos. xiv. 8. Phil. i. 11: *it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months*; or, *first-fruits* *; that is, every one of these trees, or every true believer, shall be continually in the exercise of grace, and the performance of duty; they shall be constant and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; they shall never cease from yielding fruit, or doing good; they shall still bring it forth, even in old age; see Psal. xcii. 14. Jer. xvii. 8: *because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary*; because the waters, which issued out of the sanctuary, ran by these trees, and watered them, and made them fruitful, and therefore called *their* waters: the fruitfulness of these trees, true believers, is not owing to themselves, to their free will and power; to their own industry, diligence, and cultivation; but to the supplies of grace they receive by means of the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; which bring forth, or cause to bring forth fruit, wherever they come with power, Col. i. 6: *and the fruit thereof shall be for meat*; not for saints themselves, who live not, neither on their graces, nor their works; though indeed they do eat the fruits of their doings, Isa. iii. 10. that is, enjoy good things, consequent on their works, through the free favour and good will of God; but for meat for others; for their fruit, which appears in their words and actions, are very beneficent to others; their fruit is a tree of life, Prov. xi. 30. and their lips feed many, Prov. x. 21. with knowledge and understanding; with the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; and with the comfortable experience they have of its truths and promises: yea, their fruit are meat and food for Christ himself; who comes into his garden, and eats his pleasant fruits, feeds and feasts, and delights himself with his own grace in his people, and the exercise of it, Cant. iv. 9, 10, 16. and v. 1: *and the leaf thereof for medicine*: or, *for bruises* *; for the healing of them, which is only done by the blood of Christ; who is the only physician, the sun of righteousness, that rises with healing on his wings; and the whole language of this passage is borrowed from hence by John, and applied to Christ the tree of life, Rev. xxii. 2. and the Gospel professed by true believers directs to him for healing, or for the remission of sin, and is the means of applying it, Psal. cvii. 20. and a cheerful constant profession of Christ and his Gospel, which is the Christian's leaf, does good like a medicine, both to the Christian himself, and to others; who are animated and encouraged thereby to go on with pleasure in the ways of God.

Ver. 13. *Thus saith the Lord God, this* shall be *the border, &c.*] Of the land of Israel, as described in the following verses; which being different from, and much larger, and more extensive, than it was in the times of Moses or Joshua, or than it was either before or after the captivity in Babylon, shews that this must be understood either of the land of Canaan, as it will be when possessed and inhabited by the Jews, upon their conversion in the latter day; or rather of the church of Christ, which is far greater than it was under the former dispensation: and especially it will be still more extensive hereafter, when Christ's kingdom will be from sea to sea, and his dominion from the river to the ends of the earth; and from the rising of the sun to the setting of the same, his name shall be great among the Gentiles. This subject is reassumed from ch. xlv. 1—8. after the insertion of various things of moment and importance there, a reserve upon the division of the land is made of a holy portion of it, for the sanctuary; for the priests, the ministers of it; for the Levites, the ministers of the house; and for a possession of the city, and of the prince; and the rest to be given to the house of Israel, the boundaries of which are here fixed: *whereby ye shall inherit the land, according to the twelve tribes of Israel*: by which are meant, not literal Israel, or according to the flesh, these being not all Israel, or the children of God, and so not heirs, and shall not inherit; but spiritual Israel, or the special people of God, that shall dwell in the church, and enjoy all the privileges of it; these are the sealed ones of all the tribes of Israel, an equal number out of each tribe; see Rev. vii. 4—8. Joseph shall have *two portions* for his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, and in virtue of the birth-right which fell to him on the forfeiture of it by Reuben; he was an eminent type of Christ, with whom the saints are joint heirs; and who has two portions, one for himself as Mediator, and another for them.

Ver. 14. *And ye shall inherit it, one as well as another, &c.*] That is, the twelve tribes shall equally inherit it; one tribe shall not have more, and another less, but each alike: this was not the case, at the division of the land, in the times of Moses and Joshua; for to such tribes as were very numerous a greater inheritance was given; and to those that were fewer in number a lesser inheritance, Numb. xxvi. 54. and xxxiii. 54. and upon the return from the Babylonish captivity, as the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were the largest, and indeed the only tribes that returned as such, they had the largest share of the land; but as this respects the Gospel dispensation, it signifies, that those who are true Israelites indeed shall share in the same Gospel church-state, the privileges and immunities of it alike, with all the blessings of grace and eternal glory; they being all one in Christ Jesus, Gal. iii. 28: *concerning the which I lifted up my hand to give it unto your fathers*; that is, swore that he would give unto them the land of Canaan; typical of the Gospel church-state and the heavenly glory; which are as sure to all the seed, by the word and oath of God, as that was: *and this land shall fall unto you for inheritance*: by lot, by the appointment of God, and a goodly one it is, Psal. xvi. 6. and xlvii. 4.

Ver. 15. *And this* shall be *the border of the land toward the north side, &c.*] The description of the borders of the land begins on the north side; because the Gospel, and the interest of Christ, would be, as they now are, chiefly in the northern part of the world, before the latter-day glory takes place, and from thence spread into the other parts of it: *from the great sea, the way of Hethlon, as men go to Zedad*; the line of this

* יבכר afferet primitiva, V. L. Vatablus; primogenita, Starckius. So Ben Melech.

* לתרופה ad contritionem, vel ad sanitatem contritionis, Vatablus; ad fractionem sanandam, Pagninus. So Ben Melech.

border shall begin at the Mediterranean sea, commonly called the great sea, and so proceed to Hethlon, a city in Syria Damascena, and from thence to Zedad; of which see Numb. xxxiv. 8. the description is taken all along from the places which were on the border of Canaan, or in countries adjacent to it, which plainly point out the enlargement of it.

Ver. 16. *Hamath, Berothah, Sibraim,* &c.] The line of the northern border should be drawn on by Hamath, the same with Antiochia in Syria, since called Epiphania, as Jerom observes, from Antiochus Epiphanes; and go on by Berothah, a city of Hadadezer king of Zobah, 2 Sam. viii. 8. the same with the Barothena of Ptolemy [s], placed by him in Syria; and from thence the line would be carried on to Sibraim, a city in Arabia Deserta: *which is between the border of Damascus;* the chief city in Syria: *and the border of Hamath;* before mentioned. Calmet [t] imagines it to be that which Ishmael Abulfeda calls Hovvarin; which he says is a village of the country of Ems or Hamath, to the south-east of the city. *Hazar-hatticon, which is by the coast of Hauran;* this seems to be explanative of Sibraim, which lay between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath; and therefore is called the middle town or village, as *Hazar-hatticon* signifies; and lay by the coast of Hauran, which Jerom calls a town of Damascus, with which it is mentioned, ver. 18. from whence the country adjacent is called Auranitis, as this place is here by the Septuagint. The Targum calls Hazar the fish-pool of the Agbeans; but for what reason, and what is meant by it, I know not.

Ver. 17. *And the border from the sea shall be Hazar-enan, the border of Damascus,* &c.] Which was the furthermost part and end of the northern border, as fixed by Moses, Numb. xxxiv. 9: *and the north northward, and the border of Hamath:* if this is carrying on the border further, it seems to be another Hamath, distinct from the former, ver. 16. *and* this is *the north side:* of the land, and the description of the northern border of it, from the Mediterranean sea to Hazar-enan.

Ver. 18. *And the east side ye shall measure from Hauran,* &c.] The line of the eastern border of the land shall begin at Hauran or Auranitis; see ver. 16. which lay to the south [u] of Damascus: and it follows, *and from the land of Israel* by *Jordan, from the border unto the east sea:* and so from Damascus, the metropolis of Syria; and likewise from Gilead, a mountain and country beyond Jordan; and also from that part of the land of Israel near to Jordan; and so from the northern border to the east sea, or sea of Galilee or Tiberias: *and* this is *the east side:* of the land, or the eastern border of it, reaching from Hauran to the lake of Genesaret, or to the Salt sea, the sea of Sodom; see Numb. xxxiv. 10, 11, 12.

Ver. 19. *And the south side southward from Tamar,* &c.] Not Jericho, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, called by this name from the palm-trees which grew near it; according to Jerom, this is Palmyra, so called for the same reason; but it is rather En-gedi, called Hazazon-tamar, 2 Chron. xx. 2. the line of the southern border began here, and went on, *even to the waters of strife in Kadesh:* to the waters of Meribah in Kadesh; so called, from the strivings of the children of Israel with the Lord there, Numb. xx. 1, 13: *the river to the great sea;* it proceeded by the river of Egypt, the river Sihor, the Nile, which is before Egypt, Josh. xiii. 3. and xv. 47. and so on to the Mediterranean sea: *and* this is *the south side southward;* the south side of the land, and the southern border of it.

Ver. 20. *The west side also* shall be *the great sea from the border,* &c.] From the border of Egypt, and the river of it, to the Mediterranean sea, is the west side of the land, and the western border of it; hence the western point is often expressed in Scripture by the sea: *till a man come over-against Hamath;* Antioch in Syria; see ver. 16: *this is the west side;* of the land, and of the western border of it.

Ver. 21. *So shall ye divide this land unto you,* &c.] As thus bounded, east, west, north, and south: *according to the tribes of Israel;* see the note on ver. 13.

Ver. 22. *And it shall come to pass,* &c.] In the last days, under the Gospel dispensation: that *ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you;* who were Israelites, both by natural descent, and by the spirit and grace of God: the Gospel was first preached to Israel after the flesh, and made effectual to the conversion of many of them; and the first churches were made up of them, and they shared all the blessings and privileges thereof; as they also will in the latter day, when converted: *and to the strangers that sojourn among them;* not such as were strangers to spiritual and divine things; for this would contradict the rule in ch. xliv. 9. but converted Gentiles, so called because of their natural descent and civil state, being, with respect to both, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; yet were to be, as they have been, and will be, taken into the same Gospel church-state with the believing Jews: *which shall beget children among you;* not only in a natural, but in a spiritual sense; be the means of begetting many souls again to the lively hope of a glorious inheritance: *and they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel;* that is, the children begotten by the Gentiles shall be considered all one as those of the children of Israel, being born again of the same spirit and grace; and so have an equal right to the same privileges, and to which they shall be admitted: *they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel;* this is a new thing, and what in a literal sense was never granted; for though in the times of Moses and onward, and by his direction from the Lord, such as have been called proselytes of the gate, and proselytes of righteousness, have been admitted to various privileges, by conforming to certain rules, rites, and ceremonies, yet never were allowed to have any inheritance in the land; and, after the captivity, Ezra and Nehemiah drove out the strangers, who by affinity with some had got among them: but this respects Gospel times, and the coalition of Jews and Gentiles in the same church-state; where there is no difference, but Christ is all in all; where they are admitted to the same ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper; partake

[s] Geograph. l. 5. c. 19.
[t] Dictionary, in the word Sibraim.
[u] Vid. Reland. Palestina Illustrata, l. 1. c. 22. p. 107.

of the same blessings of grace, and promises of the word, and have an equal right to the heavenly inheritance: Ephes. iii. 6, is the best commentary on this passage; which contains the same mystery the Apostle Paul was acquainted with, *that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel*: see the note there, and Ephes. ii. 12—20. Col. iii. 11. 1 Cor. xii. 13.

Ver. 23. *And it shall come to pass, that in what tribe the stranger sojourneth*, &c.] Whatsoever particular congregation or church these strangers and sojourners (as all the Lord's people are in this world, and even in their church-state), or those Gentiles before described, shall be nearest unto, and to which they shall propose themselves for communion, they shall be readily admitted: *there shall ye give him his inheritance, saith the Lord God*; allow him a name and a place; put him in the possession of all church-privileges and immunities; look upon him as a member, a brother, a fellow-citizen, as an heir together of the grace of life, and as equally entitled to the inheritance of the saints in light; and for this they have the authority and order of Jehovah himself.

CHAP. XLVIII.

In this chapter an account is given of the portions of the twelve tribes in the land of Israel; seven to the north of the sanctuary, Dan, Asher, Napthali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Reuben, and Judah, ver. 1—7. between which and Benjamin lay the holy portion of the land, for the sanctuary and the priests of it, and for the Levites, and for the city and its suburbs, and for the prince, ver. 8—22. then the portions of the other five tribes to the south of the sanctuary, Benjamin, Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun, and Gad, ver. 23—29. after which the city is described by its outlets, north, east, south, and west; by its twelve gates, three at each point; by its circumference and by its name, ver. 30—35.

Ver. 1. *Now these are the names of the tribes*, &c.] That shall inherit the land; and an account is given of the several portions of it they shall have for an inheritance; by which are meant, not the twelve tribes of Israel literally, among whom the land was never so divided as here, either in Joshua's time, or after the captivity of Babylon; but the Christian church, or the people of Christ under the Gospel dispensation, as in Rev. vii. 4. built upon the doctrine of the twelve apostles of Christ: the stranger-sojourners are not here mentioned, who, according to the preceding chapter, were equally to inherit with the children of Israel, but are included; they being Israelites indeed, and fellow-heirs, and all one in Christ, be they of whatsoever nation. *From the north end to the coast of the way of Hethlon, as one goeth to Hamath*; the division of the land, and the distribution of the portions, begin at the north, and so go on to the south, by the way of Hethlon and Hamath; of which see ch. xlvii. 15, 16. and along by *Hazar-enan, the border of Damascus, northward to the coast of Hamath*; see ch. xlvii. 17: *for these are his sides east and west*; the sides of the tribe of Dan next mentioned, and so of every other tribe; which was measured from east to west, and consisted of 25,000 reeds four-square, as appears from ver. 8, 20: *a portion for Dan*; or, *Dan one*[t]; either one tribe, or one portion. This tribe has its portion first assigned it, though it was provided for last in Joshua's time, and not sufficiently neither, Josh. xix. 40—47. and is left out in Rev. vii. having fallen into idolatry; but here being provided for first, confirms what our Lord says, that the first shall be last, and the last first, Matt. xix. 30. and xx. 16. and shews that the chief of sinners are received by Christ, and provided for by him, with grace here, and glory hereafter, who come to him, and believe in him; and that their inheritance is of grace, and not of works.

Ver. 2. *And by the border of Dan*, &c.] Next to it, just by it, closely adjoining to it; for it should be observed, that these tribes, and their inheritances, are contiguous to each other; which denotes the union of true Christians, or believers in Christ, with each other; they are members one of another, one body, one bread, and all one in Christ; and their harmony, unity, and concord, their comfortable communion and fellowship with each other; especially as it will be in the latter day, when they shall no more grieve and vex each other, nor separate from one another; but the two sticks shall be one in the hand of the Lord, Isa. xi. 13. Ezek. xxxvii. 19: *from the east side unto the west side*; being just in the same position as the former tribe, and of the same measure and extent: *a portion for Asher*; an inheritance for the tribe of Asher, the *blessed* of the Lord with all blessings, spiritual and eternal: and it should be known, once for all, that the portions of the several tribes are exactly alike: true believers have the same covenant God and Father for their portion; the same Lord, Redeemer, and Saviour, Head and Husband, Jesus Christ; they are members of the same body; partake of the same spirit, and his graces; obtain like-precious faith; are called in one hope of their calling; have a right to the same privileges and ordinances, and will share in the same heavenly inheritance, Ephes. iv. 4, 5, 6.

Ver. 3. *And by the border of Asher, from the east side even unto the west side, a portion for Naphtali.*] Close to the tribe of Asher and his inheritance, in the same direction from east to west, lay the part assigned to the tribe of Naphtali: such Christians who are *wrestlers* with God in prayer, and against their spiritual enemies, and strive and contend for the doctrines of the Gospel, may be designed.

Ver. 4. *And by the border of Naphtali, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Manasseh.*] Just

[t] דן אחד Dan una, Cocceius, Starckius; Danis tribus una, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; pro Dane portio una, Munster, Tigurine version, Piscator.

in like manner, next to Naphtali lay the tribe of Manasseh, and the portion of land appointed for that tribe; even such Christians who *forget* the things that are behind, and reach to those that are before; forget their former companions, their own people, and father's house, their carnal lusts and pleasures, and their own works of righteousness, and follow after Christ and his righteousness.

Ver. 5. *And by the border of Manasseh, from the east side unto the west side, a* portion *for Ephraim.*] Close to the tribe of Manasseh, and the inheritance of it, which is no more reckoned a half, but a whole tribe, and has an inheritance equal to the rest, lay the tribe of Ephraim, and the inheritance assigned to that; even to such believers as are *fruitful* in grace and good works. Joseph is not mentioned, as in ch. xlvii. 13. the two portions there given him being here allotted to his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

Ver. 6. *And by the border of Ephraim, from the east side unto the west side, a* portion *for Reuben.*] Who, through his sin, lost his birth-right; but now, his sin being forgiven and forgotten, has a portion assigned him upon the border of Ephraim, and next to the tribe of Judah; when in Moses and Joshua's time it lay on the other side Jordan: this points to such persons that shall have their lot and portion in spiritual things; that *see the Son*, that look to Christ alone for righteousness, peace, pardon, and eternal life.

Ver. 7. *And by the border of Reuben, from the east side unto the west side, a* portion *for Judah.*] Such who *confess* the Lord before men, and *praise* his name for all blessings, temporal and spiritual, they receive from him: these seven tribes already mentioned, as they lay contiguous to each other, and had portions and inheritances alike assigned to them; so they were all of them to the north of the sanctuary and city after mentioned.

Ver. 8. *And by the border of Judah, from the east side unto the west side, shall be the offering,* &c.] Or the oblation of a holy portion of the land unto the Lord before made mention of, ch. xlv. 1. this was close by the tribe of Judah, and in the same direction with that and the rest of the tribes, proceeding in length from east to west: this takes in the whole allotted to the sanctuary, the priests, the Levites, the city, and the prince; each of which are taken notice of in the following verses: *which they shall offer of five-and-twenty thousand* reeds *in breadth;* from north to south; which makes, as the Jews* say, seventy-five miles; some make it seventy-seven, and others more: *and in length as one of the* other *parts, from the east side unto the west side:* that is, equal to one of the portions allotted to any one of the tribes, which were alike: what this measure was is not said, but was the same with the breadth; since the whole oblation was five-and-twenty thousand by five-and-twenty thousand, ver. 20: *and the sanctuary shall be in the midst thereof;* of the holy portion of land; see ch. xlv. 3. not in the tribe of Judah or Benjamin; nor in the city of Jerusalem, as before: but many miles from thence.

Ver. 9. *The oblation that ye shall offer to the Lord,* &c.] That which belonged to the sanctuary, and to the priests, which was taken and separated for that use; which here, and in the following verses, is particularly and separately considered: shall be *of five-and-twenty thousand in length;* that is, five-and-twenty thousand reeds from east to west: *and of ten thousand in breadth;* from north to south; see ch. xlv. 3.

Ver. 10. *And for them, even the priests, shall be this holy oblation,* &c.] This holy portion of land, excepting that which is for the sanctuary, is to be for the use of the priests to build houses on to dwell in; signifying, that the ministers of the Gospel are to be taken care of, and sufficient provision made for their maintenance; see ch. xlv. 4: *toward the north five-and-twenty thousand* in length, *and toward the west ten thousand in breadth, and toward the east ten thousand in breadth, and toward the south five-and-twenty thousand in length;* to the north and south five-and-twenty thousand reeds each; and to the east and west ten thousand each; all this belongs to the priests, excepting the place for the sanctuary, that stood in the middle of it, as repeated in the following clause: *and the sanctuary of the Lord shall be in the midst thereof;* as in ver. 8.

Ver. 11. It shall be *for the priests that are sanctified,* &c.] That are set apart by the Lord; called by him to this office, and sanctified with the gifts and graces of his spirit; and so fitted and qualified for the work: *of the sons of Zadok, which have kept my charge, which went not astray when the children of Israel went astray, as the Levites went astray:* ministers faithful to the Lord in the worst of times; and who are and will be taken notice of by him, both now and hereafter, Matt. xxv. 21. Rev. iii. 10. see the notes on ch. xliv. 15, 16.

Ver. 12. *And this oblation of the land that is offered shall be unto them a thing most holy,* &c.] Be peculiarly theirs, and not converted to any other use; but be accounted most sacred, and not alienable, or made use of by other persons, or to other purposes: *by the border of the Levites:* it should be continued, and reach unto their border; or where that should begin, and their part assigned them, which is next considered.

Ver. 13. *And over-against the border of the priests,* &c.] Next to their border, close to it, running parallel with it: *the Levites* shall have *five-and-twenty thousand in length, and ten thousand in breadth:* for accommodations for them; for chambers to lodge in, and other uses: all concerned in the house and worship of God shall be provided for with every thing necessary and convenient for them; see the note on ch. xlv. 5: *all the length* shall be *five-and-twenty thousand, and the breadth ten thousand;* all the length of the land, both for the priests and Levites, should be five-and-twenty thousand reeds, and the breadth of the land for both ten thousand reeds: this is repeated for the certainty of it, and to prevent any mistake about it.

Ver. 14. *And they shall not sell of it,* &c.] Any part of it that is allotted to them, neither the priests nor the Levites; simony is not to be practised: *neither exchange:* for any other land in lieu of it: *nor alienate the first-fruits of the land;* or appropriate them to any

* Jarchi & Kimchi in loc. e Siphri; so Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, fol. 1. 1.

other use than that of the priests and Levites: whatever is appointed for ecclesiastic uses ought not to be converted to any other; nor should church-privileges be parted with on any account: ministers and other officers, nay, even private Christians, should not part with their Christian liberty, nor with any of the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel: *for it is holy unto the Lord;* what is separated and devoted to religious uses is sacred to the Lord.

Ver. 15. *And the five thousand that are left in the breadth over-against the five-and-twenty thousand,* &c.] Which belonged to the Levites, which was a square of twenty-five thousand reeds by twenty-five thousand; by the side of, or parallel to, the twenty-five thousand in length, ran twenty-five thousand in breadth, two ten thousands, as in the portion of the priests, ver. 10. so in theirs, ver. 13. the residue whereof, five thousand, *shall be a profane place for the city, for dwelling, and for suburbs;* to build a city upon for the Israelites to dwell in, and suburbs to be inhabited by those that were not of the city; or for fields and gardens, to supply the city with things necessary and convenient; though the Jewish commentators, Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, say the suburbs were an open place, where were neither houses, nor fields, nor gardens: when this spot for the city and suburbs is said to be a *profane place,* it is to be understood comparatively, with respect to the portion for the priests and Levites; otherwise it was a part of the holy oblation; or rather, that it was common to all the people of Israel, who might all dwell in it; and therefore Symmachus and Theodotion render it λαικον. This *city* signifies the Gospel church, often compared to a city in Scripture, being compact together; consisting of Christians knit together in love, of the same sentiment, and joining in religious worship: a city seated on an eminence; well founded; built on the rock Christ Jesus; its buildings large and beautiful, and of lively stones; its inhabitants many, the fellow-citizens of the saints; these divers, of all nations, of every rank, age, and sex; and very healthful, none of them sick and diseased; healed of all maladies; living in a wholesome air, by a river, the streams whereof make glad this city, and the inhabitants of it; who have many privileges, being Christ's freemen; governed by good laws, under proper officers appointed to explain them, and see them executed: a city well fortified with the bulwarks of salvation; the city of solemnities, and of the great King. The suburbs of it are for such who are not yet of it, but are waiting at Wisdom's gates, and at the posts of her door, hoping for admittance ere long: *and the city shall be in the midst thereof;* of the area of five thousand reeds.

Ver. 16. *And this* shall be *the measures thereof,* &c.] Of the city; *the north side four thousand and five hundred;* that is, measures of reeds: *the south side four thousand and five hundred, and on the east side four thousand and five hundred, and the west side four thousand and five hundred;* in all eighteen hundred measures or reeds, as in ver. 35. which denotes the largeness of the Gospel church, especially in the latter day; when Jews and Gentiles will be converted, and multitudes, east, west, north and south, will be gathered to it; and as it is an equilateral square, this shews the perfection, firmness, stability, and duration of the church of Christ; so the holy city, the New Jerusalem, is for the same reasons said to be four-square, Rev. xxi. 16.

Ver. 17. *And the suburbs of the city shall be toward the north two hundred and fifty,* &c.] That is, so many reeds: *and toward the south two hundred and fifty;* which make five hundred; and these being added to four thousand five hundred, north and south, make five thousand: *and toward the east two hundred and fifty, and toward the west two hundred and fifty;* which being added to four thousand five hundred, east and west, make five thousand; and so an equilateral square on each side, length and breadth.

Ver. 18. *And the residue in length over-against the oblation of the holy* portion shall be *ten thousand eastward, and ten thousand westward,* &c.] What remained in length, which ran parallel with the holy portion of the land, after five thousand reeds were taken out for the city and suburbs, were twenty thousand; ten thousand to the east, and ten thousand to the west: *and it shall be over-against the oblation of the holy* portion; that is, that space as yet undisposed of, the twenty thousand reeds, ten on the east, and ten on the west of the city, were close to, and ran even with, the oblation of the holy portion assigned to the priests and Levites: *and the increase thereof;* or what these twenty thousand reeds of land should produce, or could be made of them: *shall be for food for them that serve the city;* not the Gibeonites given to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, as Jarchi interprets it; which sense is justly rejected by Kimchi; since, as he observes, the Gibeonites shall not dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, nor minister in time to come: but either civil magistrates, who serve the church of Christ, when they secure the peace of it, protect and defend it; as they will, especially in the latter day, when these officers will be peace, and these exactors righteousness, do all things justly and equitably; and when kings shall be nursing fathers and queens nursing mothers to the church; and it is but right they shall be provided for suitably to their rank, dignity, and office, and tribute be given to whom tribute is due: or ministers of the word, who are the church's servants, and serve it in preaching the Gospel, and administering the ordinances of it; and go by various names, as husbandmen concerned in ploughing, sowing, reaping, and gathering in the harvest; as labourers in the vineyard, and employed in planting, watering, pruning, and propping the vines; and as stewards of the mysteries and manifold grace of God, to give to every one in the city and family his portion of meat in due season; and as guides and governors, engaged in taking care of the good order and discipline of it; as watchmen, that go about it, or are set on the walls of it: and it is the will of God they should be comfortably provided for, and eat of the fruit of the field and vineyard they labour in; and of the milk of the flock they take care of; and reap carnal things where they have sowed spiritual things: or else private believers, who serve the interest of Christ and one another by love; praying with and for one another; bearing one another's

burdens, and building up each other on their most holy faith: and for whom *food*, or *bread* [u], as in the original, both temporal and spiritual, is provided; both being to be had of the Lord, with whom there is enough, and to spare; Christ is the bread of life, and his word and ordinances are the provisions of Zion; which all that serve the city or church of God may partake of.

Ver. 19. *And they that serve the city shall serve it out of all the tribes of Israel.*] Whether they be civil magistrates, or ministers of the word, they shall be of Israel, and be Israelites indeed; and shall be taken out of the several tribes: some out of one tribe, and some out of another; all shall have the honour, as well as the labour, of serving the church and interest of Christ; yea, all true Israelites shall contribute as much as in them lies to the service of it.

Ver. 20. *All the oblation* shall be *five-and-twenty thousand by five-and-twenty thousand*, &c.] Or, *every oblation* [w]; every one of the oblations; that for the priests and the sanctuary; that for the Levites, and that for the city, its suburbs, and the maintenance of those that served the city; each were a square of five-and-twenty thousand reeds: *ye shall offer the holy oblation four-square, with the possession of the city*; taking in the possession of the city, or what that possessed, the oblation of land for that, and its suburbs, and for produce to support those that served it, should be a four-square of the above dimensions.

Ver. 21. *And the residue* shall be *for the prince*, &c.] Not the civil magistrate, but the Prince Messiah, the King, Governor, and Protector of his church and people: *on the one side and on the other of the holy oblation, and of the possession of the city*; his portion shall lie on each side of the portion for the sanctuary, the priests and Levites, and for the city and its appurtenances; so that he will be the guardian and preserver of them all; see the note on ch. xlv. 7: *over-against the five-and-twenty thousand of the oblation toward the east border, and westward over-against the five-and-twenty thousand toward the west border*; or, *before the face* [x] *of the five-and-twenty thousand of the oblation*, &c.; that is, next to the tribe of Judah, close by that, and just before the holy oblation of five-and-twenty thousand reeds, both eastward and westward, should be the portion of the prince on one side: *over-against the portions for the prince*; or, *over-against* these shall be that *for the prince* [y]; parallel with the portions of the several tribes before described shall be that of the prince, which belongs to him: *and it shall be the holy oblation; and the sanctuary of the house* shall be *in the midst thereof*; that is, the holy oblation of the land for the priests and Levites, and the sanctuary should be between that part of the prince's portion which lay next to Judah, and that which lay next to Benjamin; of which in the next verse.

Ver. 22. *Moreover, from the possession of the Levites, and from the possession of the city*, &c.] Or, *beyond* these, as it may be rendered, on the other side of them; or, *except* [z] these: being *in the midst of that which is the prince's*; between his two portions; or, as it is next explained, *between the border of Judah, and the border of Benjamin, shall be for the prince*; that is, all beyond and excepting that which belonged to the priests and Levites, the sanctuary and the city, were the prince's, which lay between Judah and Benjamin; or thus it was; before the holy oblation one part of the prince's portion ran, parallel with the tribe of Judah, east and west; after the holy oblation on the other side, another part of his portion touched the tribe of Benjamin, and ran parallel with the east and west; and so were between them both, as well as on each side of the holy oblation: all this denotes the nearness of Christ to his church and people; his protection of them on all sides; and the largeness of his interest and kingdom; see ch. xlv. 7.

Ver. 23. *As for the rest of the tribes*, &c.] Not yet mentioned, which lay to the south of the sanctuary, and are as follow: *from the east side to the west side*, Benjamin shall have *a* portion; the *sons* of God's *right hand*, who are as near and dear to him as a man's right hand is to him. Judah and Benjamin are nearest to the holy oblation, sanctuary, city, and prince; the one to the north of them, the other to the south; these tribes being faithful to God, and with his saints, when others departed from him; the Lord takes great notice of his faithful ones, and honours them, Hos. xi. 12.

Ver. 24. *And by the border of Benjamin, from the east side unto the west side, Simeon* shall have *a* portion.] Close by the border of Benjamin, running east and west, Simeon's part and inheritance in the land shall be; even such true Israelites as *hear*, understand, and believe the Gospel, and practise what they hear. This tribe is not now to be divided and scattered in Israel, or to have its inheritance in Judah, as formerly, Gen. xlix. 5—7. Josh. xix. 1—9. but to be distinct, and have a portion by itself.

Ver. 25. *And by the border of Simeon, from the east side unto the west side, Issachar a* portion.] Next, closely adjoining to Simeon's inheritance, and in the same direction, shall be Issachar's; such Christians as shall have the *rewards* of grace for their services and sufferings in times of tribulation.

Ver. 26. *And by the border of Issachar, from the east side unto the west side, Zebulun a* portion.] In like manner, next to Issachar's inheritance, and bordering on it, shall be Zebulun's; who shall be no more a haven for ships, having a different situation and allotment; and may describe such Christians as *dwell* in Christ, and he in them.

Ver. 27. *And by the border of Zebulun, from the east side unto the west side, Gad a* portion.] The last of the tribes; a *troop* of overcomers, who are more than conquerors over all their enemies through Christ: all Christians shall have their part and portion in the church below, and in all the privileges and immunities of it; and in the church above, in all the glories and blessedness thereof.

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[u] ללחם in panem, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator.
[w] כל התרומה omnis oblatio, Pagninus, Montanus.
[x] אל פני ante facies, Pagninus; ante faciem, Starckius.
[y] לעמת חלקים לנשיא ex adverso portionum, id vero principi erit, Tigurine version; juxta portiones, principi erit, Cocceius, Starckius.
[z] מאחות.

Ver. 28. *And by the border of Gad, at the south side southward,* &c.] Of the sanctuary of the Lord, of the portion of the priests and Levites, of the city, and what belonged to that, and of the prince's portion. The description begins at the northern part of the land, and ends in the southern: *the border shall be even from Tamar unto the waters of strife* in *Kadesh; and to the river toward the great sea;* see the note on ch. xlvii. 19.

Ver. 29. *This is the land which ye shall divide by lot unto the tribes of Israel for inheritance,* &c.] This is the land, as thus described; and these the tribes of Israel, or the Israelites indeed, who shall have their respective shares in it, as thus allotted to them for their inheritance; which is not of a worldly, but spiritual nature; and a goodly heritage it is, a place and a name better than sons and daughters; namely, a place in the house and church of God; and a right to enjoy all the ordinances of it: *and these are their portions, saith the Lord God;* which he has appointed to them, of his grace bestows on them, and of which they may be assured, since he has said it: no mention is made of any cities of refuge in this division of the land, as in Joshua's time, because now the antitype of them is come, the Messiah, to whom all sensible sinners are directed to flee; and there is no other asylum for them, nor salvation in any other but in him; and besides, in this period there will be no manslayers, nor any that will hurt and destroy in all the holy mountain; and so no need of cities of refuge, Isa. xi. 9.

Ver. 30. *And these are the goings out of the city,* &c.] The gates of it, as Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it, by which they went out of it, and into it; and also the sides of it. The Lord here returns to the city again, to give an account of its circumference and name: *on the north side four thousand and five hundred measures:* the north side of the city measured so many measures; that is, reeds, as Jarchi explains it.

Ver. 31. *And the gates of the city* shall be *after the names of the tribes of Israel,* &c.] According to the number of them, twelve, and called by their names; the names of the several tribes being written on them; see Rev. xxi. 12. this shews that all true Israelites indeed, Israel not after the flesh, but after the spirit, have a right of entrance into, and communion with, the church of God; even the whole Israel of God, whom he has chosen for himself; Christ has redeemed by his blood, and the Spirit calls by his grace, and sanctifies; these are all, be they Jews or Gentiles, fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God: these gates, though twelve, with respect to the twelve tribes that enter in at them, and the twelve apostles of the Lamb that direct unto them, and whose doctrine they embrace and profess that go in by them; yet are but one in the main, which is Christ, faith in him, and a profession of it, and a professed subjection to his Gospel and ordinances, John x. 1, 9: *three gates northward;* for those that lay on that side to enter in at: *one gate of Reuben, one gate of Judah, and one gate of Levi;* these tribes, and so the rest, were not placed according to their encampment about the tabernacle in the wilderness, or as they were placed by Joshua in the land of Canaan; which shews that the tribes literally considered are not intended. Levi had a gate, though it had not a portion in the manner the other tribes had.

Ver. 32. *And at the east side four thousand and five hundred,* &c.] Measures or reeds: this side was equal to the north, as the rest were to this; the whole city in its circumference making an equilateral square: *and three gates;* which were as follow: *one gate of Joseph, one gate of Benjamin, one gate of Dan;* Joseph is here as having a gate, though he is not mentioned as having a portion; but his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who are here omitted; which made room for Levi's name to be inserted; and Dan, who had his portion first, is here placed in the middle, no order being observed; the whole being mystical and spiritual.

Ver. 33. *And at the south side four thousand and five hundred measures,* &c.] The south side of the city measured just the same as the north and east sides did: *and three gates;* were on that side, as on the others: *one gate of Simeon, one gate of Issachar, one gate of Zebulun;* at which these tribes entered, or those they represent.

Ver. 34. *At the west side four thousand and five hundred,* &c.] Measures or reeds; so many were the length of this side; the same with north, south, and east, and made a four-square; and such the city was, as the New Jerusalem is said to be, Rev. xxi. 16: with *their three gates: one gate of Gad, one gate of Asher, one gate of Naphtali;* the situation of these gates on all sides, east, west, north, and south, shew that in the latter day people will flock from all quarters to the church of Christ, and that there will be an open and free access of all persons into it; see Isa. ii. 2. and xliii. 5, 6. and xlix. 12, 18. and lx. 4, 5.

Ver. 35. It was *round about eighteen thousand* measures, &c.] Putting the numbers together which each side made, the circumference of the city was eighteen thousand measures; which, according to Cornelius à Lapide, were thirty-two thousand miles; which shews that no city literally taken can be here meant, but mystically and spiritually the church of Christ, which will be of great extent in the latter day; and a large one it had need to be, to hold all nations that will flow into it; it will be spread all over the world; the world will become the church; the kingdoms of it will become Christ's; the little stone will become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth; the kingdom and interest of Christ, which is his church, will be from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth; even from the rising of the sun to the setting of the same. Some Jewish writers [a], not knowing what to make of these large measures, say that they have respect to the eighteen thousand worlds God is said [b] to make, which these were a similitude, figure, or exemplar of; but those Jews are nearer the true sense of them, who say [c] that this is to be understood of Jerusalem above, or as it will be in future time, in the world to come, the dispensation of the Messiah, Gal. iv. 26: *and the name of the city from that day* shall be, *the Lord is there;* the Gospel church has other names, as Jeru-

[a] Lipman. Tzurath Beth Hamikdash, sect. 79.
[b] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 2.

[c] Gloss. in T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 2. & Succah, fol. 45. 2.

salem, Mount Zion, the Lord our righteousness, Hephzibah and Beulah, a city not forsaken, Heb. xii. 22. Jer. xxxiii. 16. Isa. lxii. 4, 12. but here it is called *Jehovah Shammah*, the Lord is there, or dwells there; which is to be understood of his presence in it; not in a general way, as he is in all places, and with all his creatures, continually, constantly, and everywhere working in a providential manner; but of his gracious presence in a special way and manner: in this sense Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, are in the Gospel church, and will be more manifestly in the latter day; Jehovah the Father, as the Father of Christ, blessing them with all spiritual blessings in him; granting them his presence in him, and communion with him, through him; as their Father providing all good things for them, and as the God of all grace unto them: Jehovah the Son, as the master of the family taking care of it, as a son in his own house, and the first-born among his brethren; as the prophet in the midst of his church, teaching and instructing; as the high-priest in the midst of the golden candlesticks, lighting and trimming them; as the King in Zion, to rule and govern, protect and defend it; shewing himself in all the glories of his person, and the riches of his grace, according to his promise, Matt. xxviii. 20. Jehovah the Spirit is here to qualify men with gifts for the ministry, to apply the word, and make it useful; as a Spirit of grace and supplication, and to help the Lord's people in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty; and to be their comforter and remembrancer. Jehovah here does and will display his glorious perfections; his power in the preservation of his saints; his wisdom in the guidance and direction of them; his truth and faithfulness in the performance of promises to them; his purity and holiness in the sanctification of them; his love, grace, and mercy, in the large discoveries made unto them; in short, he'll appear all glorious to them, and will be the glory in the midst of them, Psal. xlvi. 5, 6. Zeph. iii. 17. Zech. ii. 5. the date from whence this will commence is *that day*; either from the beginning of the Gospel dispensation, that famous day made by the rising of the sun of righteousness; or from the day and date of Christ's promise of his presence, Matt. xxviii. 20. or from the time the Gospel church-state was set up; or from the day this city will be rebuilt and restored, the Lord will more visibly and manifestly grant his presence to the inhabitants of it, and never more depart from them; see Isa. lxii. 12. The Targum is, "the name of the city which is separated from the "day, the Lord will cause his Shechinah to dwell "there." The Jews[d] produce this place to shew that Jerusalem is called Jehovah, and say, don't read Shammah, *there*, but Shemah, *its name*; and the Socinians from hence would disprove the incommunicableness of the name Jehovah to a creature, but without effect; since this city is not called simply Jehovah, but with an additional epithet; and this is to be understood, not in a divided, but compound sense, as the altar in Exod. xvii. 15. and the mount in Gen. xxii. 14.

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

THIS book is called, in the Vulgate Latin version, *the Prophecy of Daniel*; and in the Syriac and Arabic versions *the Prophecy of Daniel the Prophet*. This Daniel was of the children of Judah, that were carried captive into Babylon with Jehoiakim; and was of princely blood, if not of the royal seed, as appears from ch. i. 3, 5. Josephus[a] is express for it, that he was of the kindred and family of Zedekiah: and Saadiah Gaon[b] says he was of the seed of Hezekiah, and so fulfilled the prophecy in 2 Kings xx. 18. As to what the author of the Lives of the Prophets, ascribed to Epiphanius, says[c], that he was born in upper Bethabara, not far from Jerusalem, it is not to be depended on; or that his father's name was Sabaam, according to a tradition mentioned by the true Epiphanius[d]. The Jews[e] would have it that this book was not written by Daniel himself, but by the men of the great synagogue; though it is evident, from the book itself, that Daniel is the writer of it, as from ch. vii. 1, 2, 28. and viii. 1, 15, 27. and ix. 2. and x. 2. and xii. 5. That he wrote books, which were received, read, and believed by the Jews as of God, is affirmed by Josephus[f]; and the Jews in general acknowledge that this book was written by the influence of the Holy Spirit, but not by prophecy; they, without any foundation, distinguishing between the Holy Spirit and prophecy. And so Maimonides says[g], it is the general consent of their nation, that this book is among the holy writings, but not among the Prophets; nor will they allow Daniel to be a prophet: the reasons they give are frivolous; what seems to have induced them to degrade him is the manifest prophecy of the time of the Messiah's coming in this book, which sometimes they are obliged to own is fixed in it. They tell us a story of Jonathan ben Uzziel, that having finished his paraphrase of the Prophets, thought to have wrote one on the Hagiographa, or holy writings, among which they place the book

[d] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 75. 2.
[a] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 10. sect. 1.
[b] Comment. in Dan. i. 5.
[c] Pseudo-Epiphan. de Vit. Prophet. c. 10.
[d] Contra Hæres. hæres. 55.
[e] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 15. 1.
[f] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 10. sect. 7.
[g] Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. c. 45.

of Daniel; but was forbid by *Bath-Kol*, or a voice from heaven, giving this as a reason, because that in it is contained the end of the Messiah [h], the precise time of his coming; and the gloss on the passage adds, by way of explanation, "in the book of Daniel;" though elsewhere they would have it, that after it was made known to Daniel, it was taken away from him. For so, they say [i], there are two men to whom the end was revealed, and afterwards it was hidden from them; and these are they, Jacob and Daniel: from Daniel, according to ch. xii. 4. *but thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book*, &c. from Jacob, Gen. xlix. 1. *that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days*. Yet the prophecy of Daniel was so clear, with respect to the time of the Messiah's coming, that one of their Rabbins, who lived about fifty years before the coming of Christ, asserted that the time of the Messiah, as signified by Daniel, could not be deferred longer than those fifty years [k]; and a most glaring prophecy it is, and sufficient to denominate Daniel a prophet, as well as many more contained in this book. And, after all, Maimonides himself owns, that he, and the other writers of the Hagiographa, or holy writings, may be called prophets in general. And Aben Ezra observes of Daniel, in his preface, that he delivered out prophecies of things now past, and of things to come; yea, he expressly calls him a prophet on ver. 17. And Jacchiades, another of their commentators on this book, says that he attained to the highest degree of prophecy. To which may be added the testimony of Josephus [l], who says he was one of the greatest prophets, and to be preferred to others; since he not only predicted things future, but fixed the time when they should come to pass. And, above all, and what should satisfy us Christians, he is expressly called a prophet by our Lord, Matt. xxiv. 15. There are no other authentic writings of Daniel, which bear his name; the stories of Susannah, and of Bel and the Dragon, which make the *thirteenth* and *fourteenth* chapters in the Greek of Theodotion, and in the Vulgate Latin version, are apocryphal and spurious. The Oriental writers make Daniel the author of a volume, entitled, *Principles relating to the Explanation of Dreams.* And there is another book in the king of France's library, with this title, *Odmath-al-mantoulân Daniel al-nabi*; which contains predictions of the Prophet Daniel, received by tradition from him. This is a book which abounds with falsities, forged by the Mahometans, and founded on the real prophecies of Daniel [m]. This book, written by him, is partly historical, relating facts in which he was concerned; and partly prophetical, of things that should happen from his time to the end of the world, and especially of the Messiah and his kingdom; and it is written partly in Hebrew, and partly in Chaldee. This great man, as he was both in nature and grace, in religion and politics, lived throughout the captivity, but does not seem ever to have returned into Judea; but continued in the courts of the kings of the Medes and Persians, to take care of the affairs of his people the Jews. Where he died, and was buried, is not certain. Some say in Babylon; and others, which is more likely, at Susa on the Tigris, where he was in the third year of Cyrus, Dan. x. 1, 4. So says Abulfeda [n]; with which agrees the account of Benjamin of Tudela [o].

CHAP. I.

THIS chapter begins with an account of the first captivity of the Jews, in the times of Jehoiakim; of which captivity Daniel was one, and it is mentioned on his account, ver. 1, 2. who, with others, were selected by the order of the king of Babylon, to be educated in the learning of the Chaldeans, and to be maintained at his expense, in order to be his ministers, ver. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. but Daniel and his three companions refused the king's meat and wine, lest they should be defiled; in which they were indulged by their governor, after trial being made, that they were fairer and fatter for it, ver. 8—16. and, at the end of the time appointed, they appeared to have a large share of knowledge, wisdom, and learning; upon which they were taken into the king's court and service, ver. 17—20. and the chapter is concluded with observing the long continuation of Daniel here, even to the first year of Cyrus, ver. 21.

Ver. 1. *In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah*, &c.] At the close of it, and at the beginning of the fourth, which was the first of Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. xxv. 1. Jerusalem seems to have been taken twice in his time, and two captivities in it: the first was in the third or fourth year of his reign; when humbling himself, he was restored to his kingdom, though he became a tributary to the king of Babylon; Daniel and his companions, who were carried captive with him, were retained as hostages; but after three years he rebelled, but it was not until his eleventh year that Nebuchadnezzar came against him again, took him, and bound him, in order to carry him to Babylon, but he died by the way: see 2 Kings xxiv. 1, 2. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 5, 6. some, as Jarchi and Saadiah Gaon, make this to be the third year of his rebellion, and the last of his reign; they suppose that he was conquered by the king of Babylon, and became subject to him in the fifth year of his reign; that he served him three years, and rebelled against him three years: at the end of which *came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it*; with his army, and took it; and the same way it is accounted for in the Jewish chronicle [p]: according to Bishop Usher [q], this was in the year of the world 3398, and

[h] T. Bab. Megillah, fol. 3. 1.
[i] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 98. fol. 84. 4.
[k] R. Nehumiah apud Grotium, de Ver. Relig. Christ. l. 5. sect. 14.
[l] Ibid. ut supra.
[m] Calmet's Dictionary, in the word *Daniel*.
[n] Apud Schickard. Not. in Purim.
[o] Itinerar. p. 86.
[p] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 25. in principio.
[q] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3398.

of the Julian period 4108, and before Christ 607 or 606; according to Mr. Bedford[r], 605.

Ver. 2. *The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand*, &c.] And the city of Jerusalem too, or he could not have took the king, and so the Syriac version renders it, *and the Lord delivered it into his hands, and Jehoiakim*, &c.: this was from the Lord, because of his sins, and the sins of his ancestors, and of his people; or otherwise the king of Babylon could not have taken the city, nor him, because of the great power of the Jews, as Jacchiades observes: *with part of the vessels of the house of God;* not all of them; for some, as Saadiah says, were hid by Josiah and Jeremiah, which is not to be depended on; however, certain it is that all were not carried away, because we read of some of the vessels of the temple being carried away afterwards, in Jeconiah's time, 2 Kings xxiv. 13. and still there were some left, as the pillars, sea, bases, and other vessels, which were to be carried away, and were carried away by the king of Babylon, in Zedekiah's time, Jer. xxvii. 19—22. and lii. 17—20: *which he carried into the land of Shinar, to the house of his god;* which Jarchi understands both of the men that were carried captive, and the vessels that were taken out of the temple; but the latter seem only to be intended, since of men Jehoiakim is only spoken of before; and it does not appear he was ever carried into Babylon; but it is certain the vessels of the temple were carried thither; which is meant by the land of Shinar, where Babylon stood, and where the tower of Babel was built, Gen. x. 2. the same, as Grotius thinks, with the Singara of Pliny[s] and Ptolemy[t]. So the Targum of Onkelos, on Gen. x. 10, and xi. 2, interprets the land of Shinar the land of Babylon; likewise the Jerusalem Targum on Gen. x. 10. and the Targum of Jonathan on Gen. xi. 2. Isa. xi. 11. and Zech. v. 11. only on Gen. x. 10, he paraphrases it the land of Pontus. So Hestiæus[u], an ancient Phœnician writer, calls Shinar Sennaar of Babylonia. It seems to have its name from נער, which signifies to *shake out;* because from hence the men of the flood, as Saadiah says, or the builders of Babel, were shook out by the Lord, and were scattered over the face of the earth. And as the tower of Babel itself, very probably, was built for idolatrous worship, for which reason the Lord was so displeased with the builders of it; so in this same place, or near it, now stood an idol's temple, where the king of Babylon, and the inhabitants thereof, worshipped, here called *the house of his gods*[w], as it may be rendered; for the Babylonians worshipped more gods than one; there were Rach, Shach, and Nego, from whom Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, are supposed to have their names given them by the Chaldeans, ver. 7. Rach is thought to be the sun, whose priests were called Rachiophantæ, observers of the sun; Shach, to which Sheshach is referred by some, Jer. li. 41. for which a feast was kept once a year for five days, when servants had the rule and government of their masters; and Nego either was worshipped for the sun, or some star, so called from its brightness. Venus was also had in veneration with the Babylonians, whom they called Mylitta; in whose temple many acts of uncleanness and filthiness were committed, as Herodotus[x] relates. And, besides these, there were Merodach, Nebo, and Bel; of which see Isa. xlvi. 1. Jer. l. 2. the latter seems to have been their chief deity, and who was called Jupiter Belus; and with whom were the goddesses Juno and Rhea. And in the city of Babylon stood the temple of Bel, or Jupiter Belus, which was extant in the times of Herodotus, and of which he gives an account[y], and is this: "the temple of Jupiter Belus had gates of brass; it was "two furlongs on every side, and was four-square. "In the midst of the temple was a solid tower, a "furlong in length and breadth; upon which another "temple was placed, and so on to eight. The going "up them was without, in a winding about each "tower; as you went up, in the middle, there was "a room, and seats to rest on. In the last tower "was a large temple, in which was a large bed "splendidly furnished, and a table of gold set by it; "but there was no statue there; nor did any man lie "there in the night; only one woman, a native of "the place, whom the god chose from among them "all, as the Chaldean priests of this deity say." Diodorus Siculus says[z] it was of an extraordinary height, where the Chaldeans made observations on the stars, and could take an exact view of the rise and setting of them; it was all made of brick and bitumen, at great cost and expense. Here the vessels of the sanctuary were brought by Nebuchadnezzar, to the praise and glory of his idols, as Jarchi and Jacchiades observe; to whom he imputed the victory he had obtained over the Jews. Even these *he brought into the treasure-house of his god;* very probably this was the chapel Herodotus[a] speaks of, where was a large golden statue of Jupiter sitting, and a large golden table by it, and a golden throne and steps, reckoned by the Chaldeans at eight hundred talents of gold. And Diodorus Siculus[b] relates that there were three golden statues, of Jupiter, Juno, and Rhea. That of Jupiter was as one standing on his feet, and, as it were, walking, was forty feet in length, and weighed a thousand Babylonian talents (computed three millions and a half of our money). That of Rhea was of the same weight, sitting upon a throne of gold, and two lions standing at her knees; and near to them serpents of a prodigious bigness, made of silver, which weighed thirty talents. That of Juno was a standing statue, weighing eight hundred talents; in her right hand she held the head of a serpent, and in her left a sceptre set with precious stones: and there was a golden table, common to them all, forty feet long, fifteen broad, and of the weight of fifty talents. Moreover, there were two bowls of thirty talents, and as many censers of three hundred talents, and three cups of gold: that which was dedicated to Jupiter weighed a thousand two hundred Babylonian talents, and the other six hundred. Here all the rich things

[r] Scripture Chronology, p. 676.
[s] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 24.
[t] Geograph. l. 5. c. 18.
[u] Apud Joseph. Antiqu. l. 1. c. 4, sect. 3.
[w] בית אלהיו domum deorum suorum, Cocceius, Michaelis.

[x] Clio, sive l. 1. c. 199.
[y] Ibid. c. 181.
[z] Biblioth. l. 2. p. 98. Ed. Rhodoman.
[a] Clio, sive l. 1. c. 183.
[b] Biblioth. l. 2. p. 98.

dedicated to their god were laid up, and here the king of Babylon brought the treasures and rich vessels he took out of the temple of Jerusalem; and to this agrees the testimony of Berosus[c], who says, that with the spoils of war Nebuchadnezzar took from the Jews and neighbouring nations, he adorned the temple of Belus. The riches of this temple, according to historians, are supposed to be above one-and-twenty millions sterling[d], even of those only which Diodorus Siculus gives an account of, as above.

Ver. 3. *And the king spake unto Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, &c.*] That is, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon spake to this officer of his, whose name was Ashpenaz; which, according to Saadiah, signifies a man of an angry countenance; but Hillerus[e] derives it from the Arabic word شفن *schaphan*, as designing one that excels in wit and understanding; for which reason he might have the command of the eunuchs, many of which the eastern princes had about them, particularly to wait upon their women, or to educate youth, as the Turks have now; though, as R. Jeshuah in Aben Ezra observes, the word signifies ministers, and may intend the king's nobles and courtiers, his ministers of state; and so this Ashpenaz may be considered as his prime-minister, to whom he gave orders, *that he should bring* certain *of the children of Israel*; whom he had taken and brought captive to Babylon, and were disposed of in some part or another of the city and country; and out of these it was his will that some should be selected and brought to his court: *and of the king's seed, and of the princes*; or, *even*[f] *of the king's seed, and of the princes*; not any of the children of Israel, but such as were of the blood-royal, or of the king of Judah's family, or some way related to it; or, however, that were of princely birth, the children of persons of the first rank, as the word[g] may signify; or of nobles and dukes, as Jarchi interprets it.

Ver. 4. *Children in whom was no blemish, &c.*] Not mere children, but young men of fifteen or twenty years of age; about which age Daniel is by Aben Ezra supposed to be when he was carried captive; and less than this he can't well be thought to be, since, in a few years after, he was put into posts of the greatest eminence and importance: such were ordered to be selected that had no deformity or defect in any parts of their body, or wanted any, as an eye, or a hand, &c.; or, *in whom was not any thing*[h]; vicious or immoral, or scandalous in their character: *but well-favoured*; of a good complexion, a ruddy countenance, and a healthful look. So Curtius[i] says, that, in all barbarous or uncivilized countries, the stateliness and bigness of the body is had in great veneration; nor do they think any capable of great services or actions, to whom nature has not vouchsafed to give a beautiful form and aspect. And Aristotle[k] says it was reported, that, in Ethiopia, civil offices of government or magistracy were distributed according to the bulk or beauty of men, the largeness and talness of their bodies, or the comeliness of them; and not only among them, but this has always been the custom of the eastern nations, to choose such for their principal officers, or to wait on princes and great personages, and continues to this day. Sir Paul Ricaut[l] observes, "that the youths that are designed for the great offices "of the Turkish empire must be of admirable fea-"tures and pleasing looks, well-shaped in their bodies, "and without any defects of nature; for it is con-"ceived that a corrupt and sordid soul can scarce "inhabit in a serene and ingenious aspect; and (says "he) I have observed not only in the seraglio, but "also in the courts of great men, their personal "attendants have been of comely lusty youths well "habited, deporting themselves with singular modesty "and respect in the presence of their masters: so "that when a pascha, aga, spahee, travels, he is always "attended with a comely equipage, followed by flou-"rishing youths, well clothed, and mounted in great "numbers; that one may guess at the greatness of "this empire by the retinue, pomp, and number of "servants, which accompany persons of quality in "their journeys." And no doubt Nebuchadnezzar had some of these ends in view, in ordering such persons to be selected and brought up at his expense; that they might be both for service and usefulness, and for his grandeur and glory. *And skilful in all wisdom*; in the wisdom of the Jews, or had a liberal education according to the custom of their country; or were young men of good capacities, capable of being instructed, and of improving themselves in all kind of wisdom: *and cunning in knowledge*; or *knowing knowledge*[m]; having a large share of the knowledge of their own country, customs, and laws, civil and religious: *and understanding science*: the liberal arts and sciences; or however were persons of a good genius, and of retentive memories; young men of capacity, diligence, industry, and application, and of great docility, and so very promising to make great and useful men: *and such as* had *ability in them to stand in the king's palace*; not only strength of body, which was requisite to a long waiting there, as sometimes they were obliged to do; but strength of mind, courage, and undauntedness, to stand before the king and his nobles, without shewing a rustic fear, and timidity of mind: *and whom they might teach the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans*; or, *the book and language of the Chaldeans*[o]; book for books; such as contained their literature, history, and philosophy, mathematics, the knowledge of the stars, in which they excelled, as well as architecture and military skill; and it was necessary they should learn the Chaldean language, which differed from the Hebrew chiefly in dialect and pronunciation, that they might be able to read those books of science, and to speak with a good accent, and

[c] Apud Joseph. Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 1.
[d] Vid. Rollin's Ancient History, vol. 2. p. 70. and Universal History, vol. 4. p. 409.
[e] Onomast. Sacr. p. 752, 753.
[f] ומזרע המלוכה, so ו is sometimes rendered; see Noldius. p. 276.
[g] פרתמים ex Græca voce πρωτος, Grotius, Junius.
[h] מאום quidquam quod obstet, Gussetius.
[i] Histor. l. 6. c. 5.
[k] Politic. l. 4. c. 4. tom. 9. p. 824.
[l] Present State of the Ottoman Empire, B. 1. c. 5. p. 13.
[m] וידעי דעת & scientes scientiam, Pagninus, Montanus; intelligentes scientiam, Calvin.
[o] ספר ולשון librum & linguam, Jo. Henr. Michaelis.

readily, before the king and his nobles; or rather the sense is, that they might understand the Chaldean language, the manner of reading, writing, and pronouncing it. ספר, translated *learning*, may signify the letters of the language, the Scripture or manner of writing, as Saadiah and Aben Ezra interpret it; which must be first learned in any language, in order to attain the knowledge of it; so it seems to be used in Isa. xxix. 12. *I am not learned*, or *know not a book* or *letters*; see John vii. 15. and לשון, translated *tongue*, may signify the rules, idioms, and properties of the language; the nature, genius, and dialect of it, and signification of the words and phrases used in it to be learned, so as to be thorough masters of it, understand it, speak it, and pronounce it well. But here a difficulty arises, since the form and character of the letters of the Chaldee and Hebrew languages now in use are the same; it may seem unnecessary that Hebrew youths should be put to school to learn the Chaldean letters and language, though the dialect and idioms of the two languages might in some things differ; but let it be observed, that it might be, and it is not improbable, that the letters of the Chaldean language were not the same then as they are now; and Hottinger[s] expressly says, that the ancient Chaldee character is not known; not to say any thing of the difference of the Hebrew letters then from what they are now, which some have surmised: besides, it is a clear case that the Chaldee and Syriac languages are the same, as appears from ch. ii. 4. where the Chaldeans are said to speak to the king in Syriac; and yet, what follows is no other than Chaldee, their mother-tongue, in which it was most proper and agreeable to speak to the king: and as it is the opinion of many learned men now that these languages are the same, so it was the sense of the ancient Jews. Says R. Samuel Bar Nachman[t], let not the Syriac language be mean in thine eyes, or lightly esteemed by thee; for in the law, in the prophets, and in the Hagiographa, the holy blessed God has imparted honour to it; in the law, Gen. xxxi. 47. in the prophets, Jer. x. 11. in the Hagiographa, Dan. ii. 4, to ch. viii. in all which places it is the Chaldee language that is used; and that which was spoken in Babylon, the head of the Chaldean empire, is called the Syriac; for Cyrus, when he took that city, ordered a proclamation to be made, by men skilled, συριστι, in the Syriac language, that the inhabitants should keep within doors, and that those that were found without should be slain[u]; which orders were published in that language, that they might be universally understood, being the language of the common people. So Herodotus, speaking of the Assyrians, says[w], these by the Greeks are called Syrians, and by the barbarians Assyrians, among whom were the Chaldeans: and, as Strabo observes[x], the same language or dialect was used by those without Euphrates, and by those within: that is, by the Syrians, strictly so called, and by the Babylonians or Chaldeans: and elsewhere[y], the name of Syrians reached from Babylon to Sinus Issicus; and, formerly, from thence to the Euxine sea. Now it is certain that the form and character of the letters in the Syriac language are very different from the Hebrew, and difficult to be learnt, and might be those which these Hebrew youths were to be taught at school, as well as the rudiments of it; and it is as evident that the language of the Jews, and that of the Syrians, Chaldeans, and Babylonians, were so different, that the common people of the former did not understand the language of the latter when spoke, as appears from 2 Kings xviii. 26, and Isa. xxxvi. 11. so that there was an apparent necessity for the one to be taught the language of the other, in order to understand it.

Ver. 5. *And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat*, &c.] Every day a portion was ordered them, from the king's table, of the richest dainties he himself ate of; which was done not only as an act of royal munificence and generosity, and in respect of their birth and breeding; but also as a bait and snare to allure and entice them, to make them in love with the country and condition in which they were, and to forget their own; as well also in order to preserve their well-favoured look and good complexion, and fit them for their study of language and literature; which might be hindered for want of the necessaries of life, or by living on gross and coarse food: *and of the wine which he drank*; which, as it was of various sorts, so of the best and most excellent; and which, moderately drank, conduces to the health of the body, and cheerfulness of the mind; and which are both useful to forward learned studies: *so nourishing them three years*; this was the time fixed for their acquiring the learning and language of the Chaldeans; during which they were to be provided for from the king's table, and at his expense, as above; which term of time was judged sufficient for their learning every thing necessary to qualify them for the king's service; and in which time it might be thought they would forget their own country, customs, religion, and language, and be inured to the place and persons where they were, and be satisfied and easy with their condition and circumstances: *that at the end thereof they might stand before the king*; that is, at the end of three years they might be presented to the king for his examination and approbation, and be appointed to what service he should think fit; and particularly that they might be in his court, and minister to him in what post it should be his pleasure to place them. Some in Aben Ezra, and which he himself inclines to, read and interpret it, *that some of them might stand before the king*: such as he should choose out of them, that were most accomplished and most fit for his service; so Jacchiades.

Ver. 6. *Now among these were of the children of Judah*, &c.] Among those youths that were selected from the rest, and brought up in the above manner, and for the above purposes, who were of the tribe of Judah, and very likely of the house of David, and of royal descent, were the four following persons: *Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah*: who are particularly mentioned, because they were the most famous and

[s] Smegma Oriental. l. 1. c. 3. p. 35.
[t] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 74. fol. 65. 4.
[u] Xenophon. Cyropædia, l. 7. c. 23.

[w] Polymnia, sive l. 7. c. 63.
[x] Geograph. l. 2. p. 58.
[y] Ibid. l. 16. p. 507.

renowned of them, and are concerned in the subsequent history and account of facts: their names are expressive and significant: Daniel signifies *God is my Judge*: Hananiah may be interpreted *God is gracious to me*: Mishael is by some thought to be the same as Michael, *he who is God*, or *as God*: and by others, *asked of God*, by his mother, as Samuel was by Hannah, so Saadiah interprets it; and Azariah may be explained, *God is my help*, or *helps me*.

Ver. 7. *Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names*, &c.] Other names, Chaldee names, according to the names of the gods of that country, for honour and glory, as Saadiah observes; which was done either to make them more acceptable to the court and courtiers of the king of Babylon; and to shew that they were his servants, and naturalized subjects; and chiefly to cause them to forget the names their fathers gave them, and out of hatred to them, having all of them in them the names of the true God, El or Jah; and, most of all, that they might forget the God of their fathers, whose names they bore. This prince of the eunuchs seems to be the same with the master of the eunuchs, Ashpenaz, before mentioned, so Jacchiades; but some take him to be another person: what he did in changing the names of these four Hebrew youths were not of his own head, and by his own authority, but by the order of the king; see ch. v. 12: *for he gave unto Daniel* the name *of Belteshazzar*; which signifies *Bel hath hid and treasured*; or Bel's treasurer, or the keeper of his treasures; see ver. 2. Bel was the chief idol of the Chaldeans, Isa. xlvi. 1. and Daniel was named according to him, as Nebuchadnezzar himself says, ch. iv. 8. and differs but in one letter from the name of a successor of his, Belshazzar, ch. v. 1. hence Daniel is thought by Broughton, and others, to be the Belesis of Diodorus Siculus: or it may be he had this name given him from *beltis* or *baaltis**, a queen and goddess of the Babylonians, and may be compounded of that and *azer*: *and to Hananiah of Shadrach*: which some interpret *a tender pap*, or *breast*: others, *the king's messenger*, or *the messenger of the sun*. The word *rach* signifies a *king* with the Chaldeans, as it did with the Egyptians, as may be observed in the word *abrec*, the king's father, in Gen. xli. 43. and is used by them of the sun, the prince of planets, whom they worshipped: others, *the inspiration of the sun*, their idol. Hillerus* explains it of *fire*, the object of their adoration: *and to Mishael of Meshach*; or, *of Shach*, which was a name of a god or goddess of the Chaldeans, they worshipped; at the celebration of whose feast they were when Babylon was taken by Cyrus: *and to Azariah of Abed-nego*: or *a servant*, or *worshipper of Nego*. The word signifies *shining brightness*; which some understand of fire worshipped by them; others of the bright planet Venus; and others of Lucifer, or the morning-star. Saadiah takes it to be the same with Nebo, by a change of a letter, which was a god of the Chaldeans; see Isa. xlvi. 1.

Ver. 8. *But Daniel purposed in his heart*, &c.] It being proposed to him to be brought up in the manner before described, he revolved it in his mind; he well weighed it, and considered it with himself, and came to a resolution about it. This is to be understood of him, not to the exclusion of his three companions, who were of the same mind with him, as appears by what follows; but perhaps it was first thought of by him; at least he first moved it to them, to which they consented; and because he was the principal in this affair, it is ascribed to him as his purpose and resolution: *that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat*: by eating of it; partly because it might consist of what was forbidden by the law of Moses, as the flesh of unclean creatures, particularly swine, and fat and blood, and so defile himself in a ceremonial sense; and partly because, though it might be food in itself lawful to be eaten, yet part of it being first offered to their idol *Bel*, as was usual, and the whole blessed in his name, it would have been against his conscience, and a defiling of that, to eat of things offered to, or blessed in the name of, an idol; *nor with the wine which he drank*; which was as unlawful as his food; being a libation to his gods, as Aben Ezra observes; otherwise wine was not forbidden; nor was it disused by Daniel, when he could partake of it in his own way, ch. x. 3: *therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself*: he did not, in a surly, stiff, and obstinate manner, refuse the meat and drink brought; but prudently made it a request, and modestly proposed it to the prince of the eunuchs, that had the care and charge of him and his companions; and who also joined with him in this humble suit, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 9. *Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs*.] Even before this request was made; as he gave to Joseph favour in the sight of Potiphar, and of the keeper of the prison; for whatever favour is shewn to good men by bad men is from the Lord; for though Daniel's ingenuity, the goodness of his temper, and his modest behaviour, his excellent natural parts, and other accomplishments, might be a means of ingratiating him into the favour of this officer; yet all would have been insufficient to recommend him to him, or to overcome his prejudices on account of religion, if the Lord had not wrought upon his heart to shew kindness and tenderness to him; which appeared not only by his past usage of him; but, when he presented his supplication to him, he did not put on a stern countenance, and answer him roughly, and threaten him if he did not comply with the king's orders; but in a mild and gentle manner, as follows:

Ver. 10. *And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king*, &c.] This he said, not as refusing and denying the request of Daniel; but as hesitating about it, divided in his own mind, between love and tenderness to Daniel, and fear of the king: it is as if he should say, I could freely out of respect to you grant you your request; were it not for duty to my lord the king, reverence of him, and especially fear of his wrath and displeasure: *who hath appointed your meat and your drink*: has ordered it himself, both the quality and quantity, both what and how much; whose will is his law, and cannot be re-

* Vid. Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. l. 1. p. 38. & l. 9. c. 41. p. 456.

* Onomast. Sacr. p. 924.

sisted, but must be obeyed: and though I should indulge you in this matter, and it may be concealed for a while, yet it cannot be always a secret, your countenance will betray it: *for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort?* than the other Jewish youths that were selected at the same time, and brought up in the same manner, and for the same ends. Some[x] render it, *than the children of your captivity;* who were taken and brought captive to Babylon when they were; but the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it, *than those of the same age*[y]; their cotemporaries, that were born about the same time, and brought up together in the same way: or, *than those of your own nation?* as some[z] translate it: and now, when they should be presented together to the king, the difference would be observable; Daniel and his companions would appear of a pale complexion, of thin and meagre looks, and dark dismal countenances, like persons angry, fretful, and troubled, as the word signifies[a]; when their cotemporaries would appear fat and plump, cheerful and pleasant; which would naturally lead into an inquiry of the reason of this difference: *then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king:* I shall commit a trespass, of which I shall be found guilty, and be condemned to die, and lose my head for it; and now, as if he should say, I leave it with you; can you desire me to expose myself to so much danger? I would willingly grant your favour, but my life is at stake.

Ver. 11. *Then said Daniel to Melzar,* &c.] The prince of the eunuchs, having put off Daniel with the above answer, seems to have left him; or, however, Daniel, finding he could not obtain of him what he sought for, applies to Melzar, an under officer, whom he hoped to find more pliable; and it may be that Ashpenaz might suggest it to him to apply to this person, and signify that if he could prevail upon him to give him other food instead of the king's; who might be under a temptation from profit, being a meaner officer; he for his part would wink at it, so be it he came not into any danger himself; however, be it as it will, Daniel did apply to this man, whose name was Melzar, for so most take it to be the proper name of a man; which, according to Hillerus[b], signifies one *in full splendour.* Josephus calls[c] him Aschanes; though some think it is the name of an office, as a steward, or the like; but whether it is expressive of his name, or his office, he is described as one *whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah;* to give them their food at proper time.

Ver. 12. *Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days,* &c.] Here Daniel manifestly includes his companions, and makes his request for himself and them; desiring that they might be tried ten days with different sort of food and drink, and see whether any alteration would be made in them for the worse; which was a proper time for such a trial; for in that time it might be reasonably supposed that their food, if it had any bad effect on them, would appear. Saadiah makes these ten days to be the days between the first day of the year and the day of atonement; but without any foundation: *and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink;* instead of the king's meat, pulse, beans, pease, vetches, lentiles, rice, millet, and the like. The word[d] used signifies any thing sown, all kinds of roots, herbs, and fruits; and, instead of wine, water; meat and drink, it may be thought, that persons of such birth and education had not been used to; and yet they preferred these to the king's dainties, by eating and drinking of which their consciences would be in danger of being defiled.

Ver. 13. *Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee,* &c.] And be thoroughly examined, whether any alteration is made therein for the worse: *and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat;* who were either Chaldean youths brought up in this manner; or rather young men of the Jews, who were not so scrupulous as Daniel and his companions, and made no objection to eating the king's food: let their countenances and ours be compared together: *and as thou seest deal with thy servants:* if there is no difference, or we are not the worse for abstaining from the king's meat, then grant us our request, and continue to indulge us in this manner; but, if otherwise, do as thou wilt. Daniel, no doubt, in putting the matter on this issue, as it should turn out at the end of ten days, had a revelation or assurance from God how it would be, or he would never have ventured to put it to such a trial.

Ver. 14. *So he consented to them in all this matter,* &c.] Or, *hearkened to them*[e]; being convinced that it was a very reasonable request, and the matter was fairly put; and especially as he saw, if it succeeded to their wish, it would be to his profit; since the meat and drink of these four persons would be his perquisite, and fetch him money; pulse and water being to be obtained at an easy rate: *and proved them ten days;* tried the experiment, by giving them pulse and water only during this time, in order to see how it would agree with them; and whether any visible alteration could be discerned in their countenances, so as to bring him or his master into suspicion and danger.

Ver. 15. *And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer, and fatter in flesh,* &c.] At the time fixed for the trial of them, when they came to be examined, they appeared to be of a better complexion, and a more healthful look, and even plumper and fatter, with good solid flesh, and not swelled up as persons in

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[x] כגילכם secundum captivitatem vestram, Gejerus; in captivitate vestra; sic quidam legunt cum ב, Vatablus.

[y] The word is only used in this place; but in the Arabic language جيل *gil* is an age or generation, as in the Arabic version of Gen. vi. 9. Matt. i. 17. and xxiii. 36. Luke xi. 50, 51. So, in the Talmudic language, בן גילו is one that is born in the same hour, and under the same planet, as the gloss explains it in T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 27. 2.

[z] So Hettinger, who says the word in the Arabic language signifies a nation or country; and renders the words, qui secundum nationem & gentem vestram, Smegma Orientale, l. 1. c. 7. p. 134.

[a] זעפים, see Gen. xl. 6. 2 Chron. xxvi. 19. 1 Kings xx. 43. and xxi. 4. Prov. xix. 3. 12. so Ben Melech.

[b] Onomast. Sacr. p. 660.

[c] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 10. sect. 2.

[d] מן הזרעים ἀπὸ τῶν σπερμάτων, Sept.; de seminibus, Montanus; de sativis, Cocceius.

[e] וישמע להם auscultans eis, Junius & Tremellius, Broughtonus; auscultavit eis, Piscator, Cocceius.

a dropsy: *than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat:* who appeared at the same time, and were compared with them, being under the care of the same persons: now this was owing to the blessing of divine Providence, as Jacchiades observes; for, how healthful soever pulse may be, or the several things designed by it, particularly rice, of which Aben Ezra on the place gives great encomiums, as very salutary and nourishing, and a purifier of the blood; yet neither that, nor any of the things before mentioned, tend to make persons fat in flesh, as these were.

Ver. 16. *Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat,* &c.] To himself, as the Syriac version adds; he took and carried it to his own family, and made use of it himself; and the portion of four such young gentlemen, maintained at the king's expense, and who had their provision from his table, must be, especially in the course of three years, of great advantage to this man and his family; for this was continued, as the word signifies, and may be rendered, *and Melzar was taking away*[f], &c.; so he did from time to time; and thus, by serving the Lord's people, he served himself: *and the wine that they should drink:* which he also took for his own use: *and gave them pulse;* to eat, and water to drink, as the Syriac version adds, and which they desired; when he found this agreed so well with them, and he could safely do it without exposing himself to danger, and being to his profit and advantage.

Ver. 17. *As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom,* &c.] As they prospered in their bodies, they succeeded in their studies, and improved in their minds, and became great proficients in all kind of lawful and useful knowledge; not owing so much to their own sagacity and diligence, and the goodness and ability of their teachers, as to the blessing of God on their instructions and studies; for, as all natural, so all acquired parts are to be ascribed to God; and which these were favoured with by him in a very great manner, to answer some purposes of his. This is to be understood, not of magic art, vain philosophy, judicial astrology, to which the Chaldeans were addicted; but of learning and wisdom, laudable and useful, both in things natural and political; for these men, who scrupled eating and drinking what came from the king's table, would never indulge themselves in the study of vain, curious, and unlawful knowledge; much less would God have blessed the study of such things, and still less be said to give them knowledge and skill therein: *and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams:* besides knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom, in languages and sciences, in common with the other young men; he had the honour of seeing very remarkable visions of future things, and of interpreting dreams; and this not by rules of art, such as the Oneirocritics use, but by the gift of God; of which many notorious instances follow in this book.

Ver. 18. *Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in,* &c.] That is, at the end of three years; which was the time appointed for their education, and when they were to be brought before the king for his examination and approbation: *then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar:* even all the young men that were taken from among the children of Israel and Judah, as well as the four children before and after mentioned, as appears by what follows. This was done by Ashpenaz, and not Melzar.

Ver. 19. *And the king communed with them,* &c.] He asked them several questions upon the several articles of literature in which they had been educated, to try and see what proficiency they had made; he discoursed with them on various topics of learning, that he might be able to form a judgment of them, and of their capacities, and what employments under him they would be most fit for, and capable of. This shews that the king was a man of learning and good sense, as well as prudence, to be capable of taking such a step as this: *and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah;* for their learning and knowledge: after the king had gone through the examination of all the youths, these four appeared to be the greatest proficients, and were accordingly taken notice of and distinguished: *therefore stood they before the king;* ministered unto him, became his servants, and even came to be of his privy council, especially Daniel; see Prov. xxii. 29.

Ver. 20. *And in all matters of wisdom and understanding that the king inquired of them,* &c.] At the time of their examination before him, when he put questions to them, which they gave a ready, pertinent, and solid answer to: and afterwards, when he had occasion to consult them on any affair, *he found them ten times,* or ten hands[g] *better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm;* than all the magi and sophies, the enchanters, diviners, soothsayers, and such who pretended to judicial astrology, and to judge of and foretel things by the position of the stars; these young men were able to give more pertinent answers to questions put to them, and better advice and counsel when asked of them, than all the persons before described, throughout the king's dominions.

Ver. 21. *And Daniel continued,* &c.] In Babylon, and at court there, and in the favour of Nebuchadnezzar and his successors: *even unto the first year of King Cyrus;* by whom Babylon was taken, and when the seventy-years' captivity of the Jews were at an end; during which time Daniel was there, for the sake of observing which this is mentioned: not that Daniel died in the first year of Cyrus; or went from Babylon with the rest of the Jews to Jerusalem upon the proclamation of Cyrus, as Jacchiades thinks; for we hear of him at the river Hiddekel, in the third year of Cyrus, ch. x. 1, 4. but he was till this time in the court of the kings of Babylon; and afterwards in the courts of the kings of Media and Persia; for when it is said he was there, it does not so much intend his being there as the state and condition in which he was there; namely, as a favourite and prime minister; for he is said to prosper in the reign of Darius and Cyrus, ch. vi. 28. This is that Cyrus who was prophesied of by name, near two hundred years before he was born, by the

[f] נשא fuit ferens, Montanus; auferens, Piscator, Gejerus; perseveravit auferre cibum, Cocceius; erat capiens, Michaelis.

[g] עשר ידות decem manibus, Montanus.

Prophet Isaiah, ch. xliv. 28. and xlv. 1. which were sure prophecies, and to be depended upon: and had their exact accomplishment in him. Heathen writers report many things, as presages and predictions of his future greatness; they tell us some dreams, which his grandfather Astyages had concerning his daughter Mandane, the mother of Cyrus; which the interpreters of dreams in those days explained of a future son of hers, that was to be lord of all Asia [h]: and Megasthenes [i] relates a prophecy of Nebuchadnezzar, who before his death foretold to the Babylonians that a calamity should befall them, which neither his progenitor Belus nor Queen Beltis could avert; which was, that a Persian mule should bring them under subjection, assisted by a Mede; which is understood of Cyrus, who was a Medo-Persian; his father was Cambyses king of Persia, and his mother Mandane was daughter of Astyages king of Media; and he, with Darius the Mede, or however with his army, conquered Babylon: and he is also supposed to be the mule in the Pythian oracle that should be king of the Medes; by which Crœsus was deceived, who concluded a mule would never be a king; and therefore, as his kingdom was safe till there was such an one, it must be for ever so [k]. The birth, parentage, and education of this prince, together with his victories, and particularly his taking of Babylon, are recorded by Xenophon in his history, in great agreement with this book of Daniel. Plutarch says [l] that Cyrus, or Coresh, as his name is in Hebrew, in the Persian tongue signifies the sun; and the name of the sun, Cheres, is pretty near in sound to it in the Hebrew tongue; and of the same signification and derivation with Cyrus, or Coresh, seems to be Carshena, one of the seven princes of Persia. Cyrus is remarkably famous for the edict he published in favour of the Jews, giving them liberty to go to their own land, and rebuild their temple, Ezra i. 1, 2, 3. according to Cicero [m], out of Dionysius the Persian, he lived to be seventy years of age; and died after a reign of seven years, according to Xenophon [n]; and of nine years, acording to Ptolemy's canon; the one reckoning from the time he became sole monarch of the empire; the other from his reigning in partnership with his uncle Cyaxares, or Darius the Mede.

CHAP. II.

THE subject of this chapter is a dream which Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed, but had forgot: upon which he calls his magicians and astrologers together, to tell him it, and the interpretation of it; threatening them with death if they did not, and promising them great rewards and honour if they did, ver. 1—6. they urge the unreasonableness of the demand, and the impossibility of the thing; which so highly incensed the king, that he ordered their immediate destruction, ver. 7—13. Daniel and his companions being in danger, he goes in to the king, and desires time, and he would shew him what he had dreamed; which being granted, he spent it in prayer to God, ver. 14—18. and the thing being revealed to him, he gave thanks to God, ver. 19—23. and being introduced to the king, he both told him his dream, and the interpretation of it; which concerned the four monarchies of the world, and the everlasting kingdom of the Messiah, ver. 24—45. upon which he was highly honoured, and greatly promoted by the king, ver. 46—49.

Ver. 1. *And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar,* &c.] It was in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign that Daniel was carried captive, Jer. xxv. 1. three years Daniel had been under tutors; at the end of which he was presented to the king, as is related in the preceding chapter; and yet the following dream was in the second of his reign: this creates a difficulty, which is solved by some thus: in the second year after the destruction of the temple, so the Jewish chronicle [o], with which Jarchi agrees; others, as Aben Ezra, in the second year of his monarchy, after he had subdued all the nations round about; and so Josephus says [p], it was in the second year after the destruction of the Egyptians. R. Moses the priest, in Aben Ezra, would have it to be the second year to his reign, to the end of it, when there were only two years wanting to it; a very unusual way of reckoning indeed! and therefore justly rejected by Aben Ezra: but all these dates are too late, since Daniel long before these times was well known, and in great fame for his wisdom; whereas, at this time, it does not appear that he was much known, or in great request: it is better either to render it, *in the second year*, that is, after Daniel and his companions had been presented to the king, and promoted; even *in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar*, as opposed to the reign of Darius or Cyrus, in which he flourished also: or rather this was the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reigning alone; for he had been taken into partnership in the throne with his father before his death, as Berosus [q] observes, which is said to be two years; so that this second year was the fourth year of his reign, reckoning from the time he reigned conjunctly with his father, though the second of his reigning alone: yet it seems best of all to render the words, with Noldius [r], *but in the second year, in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar;* that is, in the second year of Daniel's ministry in or under the reign of Nebuchadnezzar; who continued at court under different reigns, till the first of Cyrus: this was, according to Bishop Usher [s], and Mr. Whiston [t], in the year of the Julian period 4111, and

[h] Herodoti Clio, sive l. 1. c. 107, 108. Justin. e Trogo, l. 1. c. 4.
[i] Apud Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 41. p. 456, 457.
[k] Herodotus, Clio, sive l. 1. c. 55.
[l] In Vita Artaxerxis.
[m] De Divinatione, l. 1.
[n] Cyropædia, l. 2. c. 45.

[o] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 28. p. 80.
[p] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 10. sect. 3.
[q] Apud Joseph. contr. Apion. l. 1. c. 19.
[r] Concord. Ebr. Part. p. 452. No. 1405.
[s] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3401.
[t] Chronological Tables, cent. 9.

before Christ 603. Mr. Bedford [u] places it in 604: *Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams*: which, though but one, yet, relating to various things, the several parts of the human body, and the different metals the form he saw was made of, as well as the four monarchies it signified, is called *dreams*. Jacchiades says, he first dreamed the dream, and then the interpretation of it; which is the reason of the plural number: *wherewith his spirit was troubled*; it gave his mind a great deal of trouble while he was dreaming it; and when he awaked, though he could not recover it, yet he had some confused broken ideas of it; it had left some impressions upon him, which gave him great uneasiness, and the more as he could not recollect any part of it; his mind was agitated, and tossed to and fro, and under the greatest perplexity: *and his sleep brake from him*; went away from him, through the strangeness of the dream, and the effect it had upon him.

Ver. 2. *Then the king commanded to call the magicians*, &c.] He ordered his servants in waiting to send immediately for the wise men, the philosophers of that age and kingdom, that studied the things of nature, and the natural causes of things: *and the astrologers*; that cast nativities, and pretended by the position and influence of the stars to know what would befall men: *and the sorcerers*; or wizards, that made use of familiar spirits, and the help of the devil; necromancers that consulted the dead, in order to get knowledge of future things: *and the Chaldeans*; so called, not from their country; for probably all the preceding were Chaldeans by nation; but inasmuch as the study of judiciary astrology, and other unlawful arts, greatly obtained in Chaldea; hence those that were addicted to them had this name [w]: *for to shew the king his dreams*; both what it was he dreamed, and what the interpretation or meaning of it was: *so they came, and stood before the king*; they came immediately, with great readiness and willingness, esteeming it a great honour done them to be sent for by the king, and admitted into his chamber; and hoping it would turn much both to their credit and profit; and being come, they stood waiting his will and pleasure.

Ver. 3. *And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream*, &c.] What before is called *dreams* is here expressed in the singular, *a dream*; for it was but one dream, though it contained in it various things; this the king could remember, that he had a dream; for it had left some impression on his mind, though he could not call to mind what it was about. Aben Ezra makes mention of one of their Gaons or Rabbins, that affirmed that Nebuchadnezzar knew his dream, but was willing to try the wise men; but, as he observes, he could not surely believe the words of Daniel: *and my spirit was troubled to know the dream*; both that, and the meaning of it; he says nothing as yet about the interpretation of it; concluding that, if they could tell him the dream, they could explain it to him; or then it would be time enough to inquire after that.

Ver. 4. *Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriac*, &c.] These spake, either because the interpretation of dreams particularly belonged to them; or else as being the chief of the wise men, and of greatest authority; or as chosen by the rest, and spake in their name; and indeed this appellation may include them all, being all of the same country, though they might differ in their profession: they spake in the Syriac or Babylonish language, the same with the Chaldee, being their mother-tongue, and that of the king too; and therefore could more easily speak it themselves, and be more easily understood by him, than if they had spoke in another; see the note on ch. i. 14. and from hence, to the end of the *seventh* chapter, Daniel writes in Chaldee; the things he treats of chiefly relating to the Chaldeans: *O king, live for ever*: which is a wish of long life, health, and prosperity; and does not intend an everlasting continuance in this world, or an eternal life in another, to the knowledge of which they might be strangers: this was an usual form of salution of kings in these eastern nations; like to this is that of Sinatus, a Persian, to Artaxerxes Mnemon [x], "O King Artaxerxes, reign for ever;" so said [y] Artabazus, a faithful friend of Darius, to Alexander the great, when he met him with the friends and relations of Darius, "O king, may you flourish in perpetual happiness:" *tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation*; this was not the thing that was asked of them, but the dream itself; and if that had been told them, they promise more than there is reason to believe they would have fulfilled, had that been done; it is more than the Egyptian magicians could do, even when Pharaoh had told them his dream: this they said partly to get time, and partly to make a shew of their skill and knowledge; though in a very vain and arrogant manner.

Ver. 5. *The king answered and said to the Chaldeans*, &c.] In the same language they spoke to him: *the thing is gone from me*; either the dream was gone from him; it was out of his mind, he had forgot it, and could not call it to remembrance; he had been dreaming of monarchies and kingdoms, which are themselves but dreams and tales, and empty things that pass away, and which he might have learned from hence: or, as it may be rendered, *the word is confirmed by me* [z]. Saadiah says, that some observe that the word here used has the signification of strength or firmness; and so Aben Ezra interprets the word, is stable and firm; to which agrees the Syriac version, "most sure is the word which I pronounce;" referring not to the dream, but to what follows the king's declaration, both with respect to threatenings and promises: *if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof*; the king speaks as if he thought it was in their power, but they were unwilling to do it; though no doubt, had they been able, they would have readily done it, both for their credit and advantage: *ye shall be cut in pieces*; not only cut in two, but into various pieces, limb by limb, as Agag by Samuel, and the Ammonites by David; and which was a punishment often inflicted in the eastern nations; as Orpheus was cut to pieces by the Thracian women, and Bessus by order of Alexander the great [a]; much

[u] Scripture Chronology, p. 677.
[w] Vid. Juvenal. Satyr. 6. A. Gellii Noct. Attic. l. 1. c. 9. Cicero de Divinatione, l. 1.
[x] Ælian. Var. Hist. l. 1. c. 32.

[y] Curtius, l. 6. c. 5.
[z] מלתא מני אזדא verbum a me firmum, vel firmatum, Michaelis; à me decretum & statutum, L'Empereur.
[a] Vid. Curtium, l. 7. c. 5. p. 206.

the same punishment as, with us, to be hanged, drawn, and quartered: *and your houses shall be made a dunghill;* be destroyed, and never rebuilt more, but put to the most contemptible uses: and this was common among the Romans; when any were found plotting against the government, or guilty of treason, they were not only capitally punished, but their houses were pulled down, or the names of them changed: or, however, were not used for dwelling-houses; so the house of Caius Cassius was pulled down and demolished for his affectation of government, and for treason; and that of M. Manlius Capitolinus, who was suspected of seizing the government, after he was thrown from the rock, was made a mint of; and that of Spurius Melius for the same crime, after he had suffered, was by reproach called Æquimelium; and of the like kind many instances are given [b]: and so among the Grecians; Pausanias [c] relates of Astylus Crotoniata, that by way of punishment, and as a mark of infamy upon him for a crime he had done, his house was appointed for a public prison. Herodotus [d] reports of Leutychides, general of the Lacedemonians in the Thessalian expedition, that having received money by way of bribery, for which he was tried and condemned, though he made his escape, his house was demolished; and the same usage and custom remains to this day in France: thus the unhappy Damien, a madman, who of late stabbed the French king; one part of his sentence was, that the house in which he was born should be pulled down, as he himself also was pulled and cut to pieces; see 2 Kings x. 27.

Ver. 6. *But if ye shew the dream, and the interpretation thereof,* &c.] Which he was extremely intent upon to know; and therefore makes use of every way to obtain it, first by threatenings, to terrify, and next by promises, to allure: *ye shall receive of me gifts, and rewards, and great honour;* gold, silver, jewels, rich apparel, houses, lands, and great promotion to some of the highest places of honour, trust, and profit, in the kingdom, as Daniel afterwards had: *therefore shew me the dream, and the interpretation thereof;* at once, directly, without any more ado; for the king was impatient of it.

Ver. 7. *They answered again, and said,* &c.] Or, a *second* [e] time; repeating the same words, having nothing more to say: *let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation thereof;* the first part was but right and reasonable, though the latter was mere boasting and arrogancy.

Ver. 8. *The king answered and said, I know of certainty,* &c.] I see plainly and clearly what you are at, and am fully assured you mean nothing, but *that ye would gain the time:* or *buy* [f], or redeem time, as in Ephes. v. 16. prolong time, put off the answer to longer time; spin out time, as people do in buying and selling; or have it in their possession and power when to answer; and so by gaining time, or being master of it, might hope something would turn up to their advantage, and extricate them out of their present difficulties: *because ye see the thing is gone from me;* the dream he could not remember; or because the decree was certain which he had determined concerning them; see the note on ver. 5.

Ver. 9. *But if ye will not make known unto me the dream,* &c.] For the present he does not insist upon the interpretation, only the dream itself, at least this is now only mentioned; concluding that if they could do the one, they could do the other, as is after observed: there is but *one decree for you;* for them all; and that was the decree of death; which should never be revoked or mitigated, or the sentence be changed for another; but should certainly be executed, and in which they were all involved, not one should escape: *for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me;* framed a deceitful answer to impose upon me, and screen yourselves: *till the time be changed;* either that he could remember his dream, and tell them it himself; or all the images and impressions of it were wore off his mind, so that they could tell him any thing, and he not be able to disprove them; or he would grow indifferent to it, and his passionate desire after it cool, and he be careless whether he knew it or no; or he or they should die; or he might be engaged in other affairs, and be called abroad to war, as he had been; or some thing or other turn up, whereby they might escape the ruin threatened. Saadiah fixes the time to noon, when the conversation of kings ceased, and they were otherwise engaged: *therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can shew me the interpretation thereof;* for by being able to tell a dream that was past, it might be concluded they were able to tell what was to come, signified by that dream; and if they could not declare what was past, how should it be thought that they could foretel things to come?

Ver. 10. *The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said,* &c.] As follows, in order to appease his wrath, and cool his resentment, and bring him to reason: *there is not a man upon the earth can shew the king's matter;* or, *upon the dry land* [g]: upon the continent, throughout the whole world, in any country whatever; not one single man can be found, be he ever so wise and learned, that can shew the king what he requires; and yet Daniel afterwards did; and so it appears, by this confession, that he was greater than they, or any other of the same profession with them: this is one argument they use to convince the king of the unreasonableness of his demand; it being such that no man on earth was equal to; another follows: *therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler;* there neither is, nor never was, any potentate or prince, be who he will; whether, as Jacchiades distinguishes them, a *king* over many provinces, whose empire is very large; or *lord* over many cities; or *ruler* over many villages belonging to one city; in short, no man of power and authority, whether supreme or subordinate: *that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean;* never was such a thing required of any before; no instance, they suggest, could be produced in ancient history, or in the present age, in any kingdom or court under the heavens, of such a request being made; or

[b] Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 3. c. 23.
[c] Eliac. 2. sive l. 6. p. 366.
[d] Erato, sive l. 6. p. 72.
[e] תנינות δεύτερον, Sept; secundò, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Ar.

[f] די עדנא אנתון זבנין quod tempus vos emitis, Pagninus, Munster; ementes, Montanus; vos tempus redimere, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[g] על יבשתא super aridam, Pagninus, Montanus; super arida, Cocceius; super arido, Michaelis.

that any thing of this kind was ever insisted upon; and therefore hoped the king would not insist upon it; and which no doubt was true: Pharaoh required of his wise men to tell him the interpretation of his dream, but not the dream itself.

Ver. 11. *And it is a rare thing the king requireth,* &c.] Meaning not scarce, or seldom heard of; for they had before asserted it never had been required; but that it was hard and difficult, yea, with them, and as they supposed with any other, impossible to be done: *and there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh;* these men own there was a God, though, they held, more than one; and the omniscience of God, though they seem to have no notion of his omnipresence; and to suggest as if he had no concern with mortals; had no regard to men on earth, nor communicated the knowledge of things unto them. Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Saadiah, interpret this of angels, who are incorporeal; but the superior deities of the Gentiles are rather designed; who were supposed to dwell in heaven, and to have no conversation with men on earth; these, 'tis owned, could declare to the king what he desired, and no other; and therefore should not persist in his demand on them.

Ver. 12. *For this cause the king was angry, and very furious,* &c.] Not only because they could not tell his dream, and the interpretation of it; but because they represented him as requiring a thing unreasonable and impossible, which had never been done by any potentate but himself, and could never be answered but by the gods: this threw him into an excess of wrath and fury; which in those tyrannical and despotic princes was exceeding great and terrible: *and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon;* not only those that were now in his presence, but all others; concluding from this instance that they were an useless set of men, yea, deceivers and impostors.

Ver. 13. *And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain,* &c.] Or, *and the wise men were slain* [h], as the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions render it; and so Saadiah: orders were given by the king to his proper officers, and his edict was published, and his will made known in the usual manner; upon which the wise men, at least some of them, were slain; very probably those who were in the king's presence, and at court; and the officers were gone out to slay the rest: *and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain:* who had the character of wise men, and might be envied at court, and so the officers took this opportunity, having these orders, to slay them: there was, no doubt, a particular providence, that Daniel and his friends should not be at court at this time; both that the vanity of the Chaldean wisdom and arts might be the more manifest and made known, and the divine and superior wisdom and knowledge of Daniel might be more conspicuous, and his fame be spread in Babylon, and in other provinces.

Ver. 14. *Then Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom,* &c.] In a discreet manner, using soft words and gentle language, humbly and modestly inquiring what should be the meaning of all this. The Vulgate Latin version is, he *inquired of the law and decree* [i]; what was the reason of the king's orders, which this officer had in commission to execute; with which others agree: or, he *made to return the counsel and decree* [k], as some choose to render it; he stopped the execution of it for the present, by his inquiries and prudent behaviour; but neither seem to agree with what follows; the first sense is best: *to Arioch the captain of the king's guards;* there was a king of this name, Gen. xiv. 1. this man, according to the Septuagint version, and others that follow it, was the chief of the king's cooks; and Aben Ezra says the word in the Arabic language so signifies: or, as it may be rendered, *the chief of the slaughterers* [l]; the executioners of malefactors, so Jarchi; he was the king's chief executioner, with which agrees the business he was now charged with: the Vulgate Latin version calls him the prince of the militia; and others the king's provost-marshal: *which was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon;* who by the king's order went forth from the court into the city, to slay all in Babylon who went under the character of wise men; though they were not among those that could not answer the king's demand, since they declared none could do it; and therefore he ordered them all to be slain, as a set of useless men in his kingdom.

Ver. 15. *And he answered and said to Arioch the king's captain,* &c.] Or *governor* [m]; over the persons before mentioned; either the king's guard or militia, or cooks or executioners: before, the manner in which Daniel answered is observed; here, the matter of it, as follows: *why is the decree so hasty from the king?* or, *why this rash,* hasty, or cruel (as the Vulgate Latin version) decree from the king? for so it was: what is the cause and reason of it? *then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel;* who before was ignorant of it; he was not with the wise men before the king; either they did not care he should go with them, and therefore called him not; or he did not choose to go himself, being under no temptation by the rewards offered, and especially having no summons from the king himself: this being his case, Arioch informs him of the whole affair; how that the king had dreamed a dream, and forgot it; and had sent for the wise men to tell him both it and the interpretation; but they not being able to do it, and declaring also that it was impossible to be done, the king had given orders to slay all of that character.

Ver. 16. *Then Daniel went in,* &c.] Or *went up* [n]; to the king's palace, which might be built on an eminence; or into his chamber, where he probably was; or in some upper room, very likely introduced by Arioch; and which was a bold and daring action in them both: in Arioch, to cease from doing his orders, and entering into the king's presence before he had; and in Daniel, to appear before him, having the name of a wise man, when the king was in such a fury; all

[h] וחכימיא מתקטלין & sapientes interficiebantur, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Piscator, Michaelis.

[i] התיב עטא וטעם interrogavit de lege & decreto, V. L.; super consilio, Munster, Calvin; de eo consilio, Castalio.

[k] Redire fecit consilium & statutum, Pagninus, Montanus; reverti fecit, Michaelis.

[l] רב טבחיא principem carnificum, Montanus, Grotius.

[m] שליטא dominatori, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Broughtonus.

[n] סלק ascendit, Gejerus.

which was owing to the providence of God, that wrought upon the heart of Arioch, to listen to what Daniel said, and inspired them both with courage to go in to the king: *and desired of the king that he would give him time*: not two or three days, but only that night, till morning, as Saadiah observes; and this with a view not to read books, or study any art; or, by reasoning with himself, or conversation with others, to get knowledge; but to pray to God: *and that he would shew the king the interpretation*: that is, of his dream, and the dream itself; being persuaded in his own mind that God would hear his prayers, and make it known to him. The king granted him his request, though he upbraided the wise men of their design to gain time; but perhaps, upon the sight of Daniel, he remembered him again, and how superior in wisdom he was to all his magicians and wise men; and besides, Daniel gave him hope, yea, assurance, of shewing his dream, and the interpretation of it, which his mind was very eager after; but chiefly this subsiding of his wrath, and his indulging Daniel in his request, were owing to the overruling providence of God.

Ver. 17. *Then Daniel went to his house*, &c.] Which Sanctius thinks was in the king's palace; very probably it might be near it, somewhere in the city of Babylon; for that it should be twenty miles from that city, as Benjamin of Tudela relates*, is not likely; since Arioch's orders reached to none but the wise men of Babylon, and where he sought for and found Daniel; hither he went, to be alone, and to seek the Lord in secret: *and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions*; who either dwelt in the same house with him, or not far off; whom he sent for and acquainted with all that had passed, both between the king and the wise men, and the consequence of that; and between him and the king, and what promise he had made, relying on his God and theirs.

Ver. 18. *That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret*, &c.] His view in sending for them, and informing them of this whole affair, was to engage them in prayer to God with him; even to that God that made the heaven, and dwells there, and is above all, and sees and knows what is done in earth, and rules both in heaven and in earth according to his will; to entreat his mercy, whose mercies are manifold, and not plead any merits of their own; and that he would, in compassion to them, and the lives of others that were in danger, make known this secret of the king's dream, and the interpretation of it; which could never be found out by the sagacity of men, or by any art they are masters of: this Daniel requested of them, as knowing that it was their duty and interest, as well as his, to unite in prayer unto God on this account, and that the joint and fervent prayer of righteous men avails much with him: *that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon*; which they were in danger of: this was the mercy they were to implore, being in distress, and this the interest they had in this affair; a strong argument to induce them to it.

Ver. 19. *Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night-vision*, &c.] That is, after Daniel and his companions had importunately sought the Lord by prayer, the secret of the king's dream, and the interpretation of it, were made known to Daniel, and to him only; he being the person designed in Providence to be raised to great honour and dignity by means of it; this was done either the same night, or the night following, and, as some think, in a dream, and that he dreamed the same dream Nebuchadnezzar did, which he remembered, though the king forgot it; or, however, the same image was represented to him, whether sleeping or waking, and the meaning of it given him: *then Daniel blessed the God of heaven*; gave thanks to him, that he had heard his prayer, and indulged him in his request; which thanksgiving, blessing, or praise, is expressed in the following words:

Ver. 20. *Daniel answered and said*, &c.] That is, he began his prayer, as Jacchiades observes, or his thanksgiving, and expressed it in the following manner; *blessed be the name of God for ever and ever*; a form of blessing God, or a wish that he may be blessed by men for evermore; for there is that in his name, in his nature, in his perfections, and in his works, which require that praise be given him now, and to all eternity: *for wisdom and might are his*; *wisdom* in forming the scheme of things, and *might* or power in the execution of them; *wisdom* in revealing the secret of the dream to Daniel, and *might* to accomplish the various events predicted in it: for what Daniel here and afterwards observes has a very peculiar regard to the present affair, for which his heart was warm with gratitude and thankfulness.

Ver. 21. *And he changeth the times and the seasons*, &c.] Not only of day and night, summer and winter, and times and seasons of prosperity and adversity; but all the changes and revolutions in states and kingdoms, in all times and ages, are from him; and particularly those pointed at in the following dream, in the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman monarchies: *he removeth kings, and setteth up kings*: he is King of kings, and Lord of lords; by him they reign, and continue on their thrones, as long as he pleases; and then he removes them by death or otherwise, and places others in their stead; and who are sometimes raised from a low estate; and this he does in the ordinary course of Providence; see Psal. lxxv. 6, 7. and particularly Daniel might have in view the removal of the Babylonian monarchs, and setting up kings of the race of the Medes and Persians; and then the degrading them, and advancing the Grecians to the height of monarchy; and then reducing of them, and raising the Romans to a greater degree of power and authority; and at last crushing them all in their turns, to make way for the kingdom of his son: *he giveth wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding*; an increase of wisdom and knowledge, to wise politicians and counsellors of state, to form wise schemes of peace or war, to make wise laws, and govern kingdoms in a prudent manner; and to wise master-builders or ministers of the word, to speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, to diffuse the knowledge of Christ everywhere, and make known the mysteries of grace to the sons of

* Itinerarium, p. 76.

men; particularly to Daniel and his companions, who were wise and knowing men, the interpretation of the king's dream.

Ver. 22. *He revealeth the deep and secret things, &c.*] The purposes of his own heart, which are the deep things of God, and the secrets that belong to him, and which are opened in providence by the execution of them; the *arcana imperii*, or secrets of state, committed to men designed for government; the secrets or mysteries of grace, the deep things of the Gospel, made known to Gospel ministers; and particularly the deep and impenetrable secret of the king's dream, and the interpretation of it, revealed to Daniel: *he knoweth what is in the darkness;* the actions of men committed in darkness; the schemes that are drawn in the privy councils and cabinets of princes; yea, the thoughts of men's hearts, which lie in the utmost recesses of them, as well as their dreams in the night-season; and particularly this of the king's, and which must have been buried in darkness, had he not revealed it: *and the light dwelleth with him:* he is light itself, and the Father of lights; the light of nature, grace, and glory, is with him, and from him; the light of the word, the light of prophecy, and the light of the glorious Gospel; and also the Light of the world, the sun of righteousness, the Messiah: and of him some of the ancient Jews interpret this passage. R. Aba Serungia [p], mentioning this passage, *and the light dwelleth with him*, adds, this is the King Messiah, as it is said, *arise, shine*, &c.; and his commentator [q] observes, that the sense of it is, he (God) retains the Messiah with himself, and does not send him forth unto us; see Psal. xliii. 3. and elsewhere [r], in answer to the question, what is the name of the Messiah? among others, this is said, his name is Light, as it is said, *and the light dwelleth with him:* and this is a name that is often given to Christ, and he takes to himself in the New Testament; see John i. 7, 8, 9. and iii. 19. and viii. 12. and ix. 5. and xii. 35, 46. where he is called the *Light*, that Light, the true Light, and the Light of the world; as he is both of Jews and Gentiles, even of all his people throughout the world: indeed, the light of nature, which every man has, is from him, as the Creator of all; and the light of grace, and the increase of it, which any are favoured with, is given by him; and all the light of knowledge in divine things, and of spiritual joy and comfort, beams from him the sun of righteousness: the light of the latter day, which will be so very great, as to be as the light of seven days, and to make the sun and moon unnecessary in a figurative sense, will be owing to him; as well as all that light of life and glory, the saints shall possess to all eternity, will be communicated through him: and Christ, who is this light, *dwells* with God; he who is the same with the divine Word, was with God, and dwells with him to all eternity; in the fulness of time this Word or Light was made flesh, or was clothed with it, and dwelt with men; when it was, that he came a light into the world, of which he often speaks; and having done his work, ascended to heaven, and now dwells with God in human nature; and will come again, and dwell with men on earth a thousand years, when he will be the light of the New-Jerusalem state; and, after that, will take his people with him to heaven, and dwell with God, and they with him, for evermore. This shews that this Light, or the divine *Logos*, is a person distinct from God the Father, with whom he dwells; that he is an eternal one, God never being without this Light and Word; and that he is an abiding light to his saints, and will be for evermore.

Ver. 23. *I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers*, &c.] His remote ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and more near progenitors, to whom God had made promises, and revealed his secrets in time past, and still continued his favours to Daniel; for which he was abundantly thankful, and owned and confessed the goodness of God to him, and praised him on account of it: *who hast given me wisdom and might;* or *strength* [s]; courage and fortitude of mind, to go in to the king when in his fury, to promise to shew his dream, and the interpretation of it; and strength of faith in prayer to God to obtain it, and who gave him *wisdom* to know it: Jacchiades interprets this *might* of power to save his own life, and the life of others: *and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee;* for though it was only made known to Daniel, yet it was in consequence of the united prayers of him and his companions, to which he ascribes it; which shews his great modesty and humility, not to attribute it to his own prayer, and the interest he had in God, as a God hearing prayer: *for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter;* or *word* [t]; which he required of the wise men, namely, his dream, and the interpretation of it; this being made known to Daniel, he communicated it to his friends.

Ver. 24. *Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch*, &c.] Into his apartments at court, or wherever he was in quest of the wise men, of which Daniel had knowledge; this he did as soon as the secret was revealed to him, though not before he had given thanks to God: *whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise men of Babylon:* this is a description of Arioch, from the office assigned him by King Nebuchadnezzar, who had appointed him to see this his will and pleasure accomplished: *he went and said thus unto him, destroy not the wise men of Babylon:* that is, do not go on to destroy them, for some he had destroyed; this Daniel said, not from any special love he bore them, though some of them might have been his preceptors in the language and literature of the Chaldeans, and so he might have a natural affection for them, and indeed might say this out of common humanity; but this did not arise from any love he had to their wicked arts, which he abhorred, but from love of justice; for, however wicked these men might be, or however deserving of death on other accounts, yet not on this account, for not doing what was impossible for them to do: *bring me in before the king, and I will shew unto the king the interpretation:* that is, of the dream, and that itself: by this it seems that Daniel, as yet, was not so well known at court, nor of so much

[p] In Bereshit Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 1, 2.
[q] Auctor. Yade Mosch in ib.
[r] Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2.

[s] גבורתא fortitudinem, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; robur, Piscator.
[t] מלתא verbum, Junius & Tremellius, Broughtonus, Michaelis; sermonem, Pagninus, Montanus; quod dicit rex, Cocceius.

esteem and authority there, as to go in to the king of himself, but needed one to introduce him; and which confirms what has been supposed on ver. 16.

Ver. 25. *Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste,* &c.] As knowing how impatient the king was to have his dream, and the interpretation of it, told him; and how pleasing this would be to him, and be a means of ingratiating and establishing him in his affections, as well as for the sake of saving the lives of the wise men: *and said thus unto him, I have found a man of the captives of Judah:* as if he had made it his business to inquire after a man capable of answering the king's demands; whereas he sought after Daniel at first, not for this purpose, but to destroy him; and now Daniel made his application to him for introduction to the king, and was not looked after by Arioch: but he here did as courtiers do, make the most of every thing to their own advantage, to insinuate themselves into the favour of princes: it looks by this as if Arioch did not know of Daniel's having been with the king before, and of the promise he had made him; that granting him time, he would satisfy him in the matter requested, which he was now ready to do, as he had told Arioch; and therefore he adds, *that will make known unto the king the interpretation;* that is, of his dream.

Ver. 26. *The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar,* &c.] The name given him by the prince of the eunuchs, ch. i. 7. and by which he was known to Nebuchadnezzar; and very likely he called him now by this name, which is the reason of its being mentioned: *art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?* this he said, either as doubting and questioning, or as admiring that one so young should be able to do that, which his seniors, the wise men in Babylon, could not do; or he put this question, as impatient to hear what he must expect from him, whether the performance of his promise, or such an answer as the wise men had given him.

Ver. 27. *Daniel answered in the presence of the king,* &c.] Boldly, and without fear: *and said, the secret which the king hath demanded;* so he calls it, to shew that it was something divine, which came from God, and could only be revealed by him, and was not to be found out by any art of man: *cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers shew unto the king;* this he premises to the revelation of the secret, not only to observe the unreasonableness of the king's demand upon them, and the injustice of putting men to death for it; but that the discovery of the whole might appear to be truly divine, and God might have all the glory; it being what no class of men whatever could ever have made known unto him. The last word, rendered *soothsayers**, is not used before; the Septuagint version leaves it untranslated, and calls them Gazarenes; and so Saadiah says, it is the name of a nation or people so called; but Jarchi takes them to be a sort of men that had confederacy with devils: the word signifies such that *cut* into parts, as the soothsayers, who cut up creatures, and looked into their entrails, and by them made their judgment of events; or as the astrologers, who cut and divide the heavens into parts, and by them divide future things; or determine, as Jacchiades says, what shall befall men; for the word is used also in the sense of determining or decreeing; hence, Saadiah says, some interpret it of princes, who by their words determine the affairs of kingdoms: by some it is rendered *fatalists**, who declare to men what their fate will be; but neither of these could shew this secret to the king.

Ver. 28. *But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets,* &c.] By this Daniel meant to inform the king that there was but one God, in opposition to the notion of polytheism, that obtained among the Heathens; that this one God is in heaven, and presides over all persons and things on earth; and that to him alone belongs the revelation of secrets, and not to Heathen gods, or to any magician, astrologer, *&c.*: and of this kind was the king's dream, a secret impenetrable by men: *and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days;* in the latter days of his monarchy, which should be subverted, and succeeded by another; and in ages after that, during the Persian, Grecian, and Roman monarchies; and in the days of the Messiah, even in the latter of his days: *thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these;* which were of God, and of great importance; and, that the king might observe it, Daniel introduces these words with what goes before, and says what follows:

Ver. 29. *As for thee, O king,* &c.] So far as thou hast any concern in this matter, or with respect to thee, the following was thy case; these the circumstances and situation in which thou wert: *thy thoughts came into* thy mind *upon thy bed, which should come to pass hereafter;* as he lay on his bed, either sleeping or waking, very probably the latter, his thoughts were employed about this great monarchy he had erected, and what would be the issue of it; and was very desirous of knowing what successors he should have in it, and how long it would continue, and what would be the fate of it; when he fell asleep upon this, and had a dream agreeable to his waking thoughts: *and he that revealeth secrets;* a periphrasis of the God of heaven, as in the preceding verse: *maketh known unto thee what shall come to pass;* this he did by the dream he gave him, though he had forgot it; and now by restoring that, and the interpretation of it, by Daniel.

Ver. 30. *But as for me,* &c.] As to the part I have in this affair, I can ascribe nothing to myself; it is all owing to the God of heaven, the recovery of the dream, and its interpretation: *this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living;* not that he thought or affirmed that he had more wisdom than any man living, as the Vulgate Latin version and others suggest; but as the king might think he had, by revealing this secret to him, and that it was owing to that; but that he had not such wisdom, and, whatever he had, which was the gift of God, it was not through that, or any sagacity and penetration into things he was master of, superior to others, that it was

* גזרין sectores, Cocceius, Gejerus.

* Fatidici, Munster, Tigurine version; qui de homine determinant hoc, vel illo modo ipsi eventurum esse, Jacchiades.

revealed to him; and therefore would not have it placed to any such account; this he said in great modesty, and in order to set the king right, and that God might have all the glory: *but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king*: meaning not only himself, and his companions concerned with him, that they might be promoted to honour and dignity, but the whole body of the Jews in captivity, with which they were in connexion; that they might meet with more civil and kind treatment, for the sake of the God they worshipped, who revealed this secret to the king: or, *but that they might make known*, &c[x].: the three Persons in the Godhead, as some; the angels, as others; the ministers of God, as Aben Ezra: or rather it may be rendered impersonally, *but that the interpretation might be made known to the king*[y], as by the Vulgate Latin, as it follows: *and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart;* both what they were, which were forgotten, and the meaning of them.

Ver. 31. *Thou, O king, sawest*, &c.] Or, *wast seeing*[z]; not with the eyes of his body, but in his fancy and imagination; as he was dreaming, he thought he saw such an appearance, so it seemed to him, as follows: *and behold a great image*; or, *one great image*[a]; not painted, but a massy statue made of various metals, as is afterwards declared: such, though not so large as this, as the king had been used to see, which he had in his garden and palace, and which he worshipped; but this was of a monstrous size, a perfect colossus, and but one, though it consisted of various parts; it was in the form of a great man, as Saadiah and Jacchiades observe; and represented the several monarchies of this world governed by men; and these being expressed by an image, shew how vain and delusory, how frail and transitory, are the kingdoms of the earth, and the glory of them: *this great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee*; right over-against him, and near him, as he thought; so that he had a full view of it, and saw it at its full length and bigness, and its dazzling lustre, arising from the various metals of gold, silver, brass, and iron, it was made of; which was exceeding bright, and made it look very majestic: *and the form thereof was terrible*; either there was something in the countenance menacing and horrid; or the whole form, being so gigantic, struck the king with admiration, and was even terrible to him; and it may denote the terror that kings, especially arbitrary and despotic ones, strike their subjects with.

Ver. 32. *This image's head was of fine gold*, &c.] The prophet begins with the superior part of this image, and descends to the lower, because of the order and condition of the monarchies it represents: this signifies the Babylonian monarchy, as afterwards explained; called the *head*, being the first and chief of the monarchies; and compared to *fine gold*, because of the glory, excellency, and duration of it: *his breast and his arms of silver*; its two arms, including its hands and its breast, to which they were joined, were of silver, a metal of less value than gold; designing the monarchy of the Medes and Persians, which are the two arms, and which centred in Cyrus, who was by his father a Persian, by his mother a Mede; and upon whom, after his uncle's death, the whole monarchy devolved: *his belly and his thighs of brass*; a baser metal still; this points at the Macedonian or Grecian monarchy, set up by Alexander, signified by the *belly*, for intemperance and luxury; as the two *thighs* denote his principal successors, the Seleucidæ and Lagidæ, the Syrian and Egyptian kings; and these of brass, because of the sounding fame of them, as Jerom.

Ver. 33. *His legs of iron*, &c.] A coarser metal than the former, but very strong; and designs the strong and potent monarchy of the Romans, the last of the four monarchies, governed chiefly by two consuls: and was divided, in the times of Theodosius, into the eastern and western empire, which may be signified by the two legs: *his feet part of iron and part of clay*; or, some *of them of iron*, and some *of them of clay*[b]; that is, the ten toes of the feet, which represent the ten kingdoms the western empire was divided into, some of which were potent, others weak; for this cannot be understood of the same feet and toes being a mixture, composed partly of one, and partly of the other; since iron and clay will not mix together, ver. 43. and will not agree with the form of expression. Jerom interprets this part of the vision of the image to the same sense, who lived about the time when it was fulfilling; for in his days was the irruption of the barbarous nations into the empire; who often speaks of them in his writings[c], and of the Roman empire being in a weak and ruinous condition on the account of them. His comment on this text is this, "the fourth "kingdom, which clearly belongs to the Romans, is "the iron that breaks and subdues all things; but his "feet and toes are parly iron, and partly clay, which "is most manifestly verified at this time; for as in the "beginning nothing was stronger and harder than the "Roman empire, so in the end of things nothing "weaker; when both in civil wars, and against divers "nations, we stand in need of the help of other barbarous people." And whereas he had been blamed for giving this sense of the passage, he vindicates himself elsewhere by saying[d], "if, in the exposition of "the image, and the difference of its feet and toes, I "interpret the iron and clay of the Roman kingdom, "which the Scripture foreshews should be first strong, "and then weak, let them not impute it to me, but "to the prophet; for so we must not flatter princes, "as that the truth of the holy Scriptures should be "neglected; nor is the general disputation of one "person an injury;" that is, of any great moment to the government.

Ver. 34. *Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out with-*

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[x] לְהֵן־יְהוֹדְעוּן sed ut notificarent, Pagninus, Montanus; indicent, Vatablus.

[y] Sed ut interpretatio regi manifesta fieret, V. L.; eo fine ut indicetur, De Dieu.

[z] חָזֵה הֲוַיְתָ videns fuisti, Montanus, Michaelis; videns eras, Vatablus.

[a] צְלֵם חַד שַׂגִּיא imago una grandis, Pagninus, Montanus; imago una magna, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius; simulachrum unum magnum, Michaelis.

[b] מִנְּהֵן דִּי פַרְזֶל וּמִנְּהֵן דִּי חֲסַף ex illis quidam ex ferro, & ex illis quidam ex luto, Gejerus.

[c] Opera, tom. 1. in Epitaph. Nepotian. fol. 9. I. ad Geruntiam, fol. 22. E. & in Epitaph. Fabiolæ, fol. 66. H.

[d] Proœm. in Comment. in Esaiam. l. 11. fol. 65.

out hands, &c.] Or, *wast seeing*[e]: the king continued looking upon the image that stood before him, as he thought, as long as he could see it, till he saw a *stone*; an emblem of the Messiah, as it often is in Scripture, Gen. xlix. 24. Psal. cxviii. 22. Isa. viii. 14, and xxviii. 16. Zech. iii. 8. because of his strength, firmness, and duration; and so it is interpreted here by many Jewish writers, ancient and modern, as well as by Christians; and also of his kingdom, or of him in his kingly office; see ver. 44. In an ancient book[f] of theirs, written by R. Simeon Ben Jochai, the author interprets this stone, cut out of the mountain without hands, to be the same with him who in Gen. xlix. 24, is called the Shepherd and Stone of Israel; as it is by Saadiah Gaon, a later writer; and in another of their writings[g], reckoned by them very ancient, it is said, that the ninth king (for they speak of ten) shall be the King Messiah, who shall reign from one end of the world to the other, according to that passage, *the stone which smote the image*, &c. ver. 35. and in one of their ancient Midrashes[h], or expositions, it is interpreted of the King Messiah: and so R. Abraham Seba[i], on those words, *from thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel*, Gen. xlix. 24, observes, the King Messiah does not come but by the worthiness of Jacob, as it is said, *thou sawest, till that stone cut out without hands*, because *of Jacob*. This is said to be *cut out without hands*; that is, the hands of men, as Saadiah and Jacchiades explain it; not cut out by workmen, as stones usually are out of quarries; but was taken out by an unseen hand, and by invisible power, even purely divine: this may point at the wondrous incarnation of Christ, who was made of a woman, of a virgin, without the help of a man, by the power of God; see Heb. viii. 2, and ix. 11. and at his kingdom, which was like a single stone at first, very small, and was cut out and separated from the world, and set up and maintained, not by human, but divine power, and being of a spiritual nature, 2 Cor. v. 1. Col. ii. 11: *which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces*; this seems to represent this image as in a plain, when, from a mountain hanging over it, a stone is taken by an invisible hand, and rolled upon it; which falling on its feet, breaks them to pieces, and in course the whole statue falls, and is broken to shivers; this respects what is yet to be done in the latter day, when Christ will take to himself his great power, and reign, and subdue, and destroy the ten kings or kingdoms that are given to antichrist, and him himself, and the remainder of the several monarchies, and in which they will all end.

Ver. 35. *Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together*, &c.] The feet, the basis of the image, being broken, the whole body of it fell, and with its own weight was broken to pieces; an emblem this of the utter dissolution of all the monarchies and kingdoms of the earth, signified by these several metals; *and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors*; which is exceeding small and light: *and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them*: for the several metals; and the monarchies signified by them, which were no more; the allusion is to the manner of winnowing corn in the eastern countries upon mountains, when the chaff was carried away by the wind, and seen no more: *and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the earth*: Christ's kingdom, from small beginnings, has increased, and will more and more, until the whole earth is subject to it: this began to have its accomplishment in the first times of the Gospel, especially when the Roman empire, as Pagan, was destroyed by Constantine, and the kingdom of Christ was set up in it; and it received a further accomplishment at the time of the Reformation, when Rome Papal had a deadly blow given it, and the Gospel of Christ was spread in several nations and kingdoms; but it will receive its full accomplishment when both the eastern and western antichrists shall be destroyed, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the Lord's and his Christ's, Rev. xi. 15.

Ver. 36. *This is the dream*, &c.] Which Nebuchadnezzar dreamed, but had forgot, and was now punctually and exactly made known to him; for the truth of which he is appealed unto; for, no doubt, by this account, the whole of his dream, and every circumstance of it, were brought to his mind: *and we will tell the interpretation* thereof *before the king*: for though both the dream, and the interpretation of it, were only revealed to Daniel; yet he joins his companions with him, partly because they were now present, and chiefly because they were assisting to him in prayer for it.

Ver. 37. *Thou, O king*, art *a king of kings*, &c.] Having many kings subject and tributary to him, or would have; as the kings of Judah, Ammon, Moab, and others, and who were even his captives and prisoners; see Jer. lii. 32. Jarchi and Saadiah join this with the next clause, *the God of heaven*, and interpret it of him thus, thou, O King Nebuchadnezzar, *the King of kings, who is the God of heaven, hath given unto thee*, &c.; so some in the Talmud understand it of God[k]; but this is contrary to the accents: *for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory*; that is, a very powerful, strong, and glorious kingdom, famous for its mighty armies, strong fortresses, and great riches, from all which the king had great honour and glory; and this he had not by his ancestors, or his own military skill and prowess, but by the favour and gift of God.

Ver. 38. *And wheresoever the children of men dwell*, &c.] Not in every part of the habitable world, but in every part of his large dominion inhabited by men: *the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the heaven, hath he given into thine hand*; all parks, chases, and forests (so that none might hunt or hawk without his permission), as well as the persons and habitations of men, were at his dispose; shewing the despotic power and sovereign sway he had over his subjects: *and hath made thee ruler over all*; men, beasts, and fowl: he not only conquered the Egyptians, Tyrians, and Jews, and

[e] חזה הוית *videns eras*, Montanus, Michaelis.
[f] Zohar in Gen. fol. 86. 2.
[g] Pirke Eliezer, c. 11. fol. 12. 2.
[h] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 13. fol. 209. 4.
[i] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 63. 2.
[k] T. Bab. Shebuot, fol. 35. 2.

other nations about them; but, according to Megasthenes[l], he exceeded Hercules in strength, and conquered Lybia and Iberia, and carried colonies of them into Pontus; and, as Strabo[m] says, carried his arms as far as the pillars of Hercules: *thou art this head of gold*; or who was represented by the golden head of the image he had seen in his dream; not he personally only, but his successors Evil-merodach and Belshazzar, and the Babylonish monarchy, as possessed by them; for this refers not back to the Assyrian monarchy, from the time of Nimrod, but to its more flourishing condition in Nebuchadnezzar and his sons; called a *head*, because the first of the monarchies; and *golden*, in comparison of other kingdoms then in being, and because of the riches of it, which the Babylonians were covetous of; hence Babylon is called the golden city, Isa. xiv. 4. and it may be, because not so wicked and cruel to the Jews as the after-monarchies were: from hence the poets have been thought by some to have taken their notion of the golden, silver, and iron ages, as growing worse and worse; but this distinction is observed by Hesiod, who lived many years before this vision was seen.

Ver. 39. *And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee*, &c.] This is the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, signified by the breasts and arms of silver, an inferior metal to gold; this rose up, not immediately after the death of Nebuchadnezzar, but after his successors, when Belshazzar his grandson was slain, and Babylon taken by Cyrus; now though this monarchy was as large at the first as the Babylonish monarchy, nay, larger, as it had Media and Persia added to it, new conquests made by Cyrus, and was as rich and as opulent in his times; yet in after-reigns it sunk much, in its peace and prosperity, grandeur and glory, as in the times of Cambyses and the Magi; and especially in the reigns of Cyrus the younger, and of Artaxerxes Mnemon; and at last ceased in Darius Codomannus, conquered by Alexander; and was worse than the former monarchy, being more cruel under some of its princes to the people of the Jews: *and another third kingdom of brass*: this is the Grecian monarchy, which succeeded the Persian, and therefore called the third kingdom, and is signified by the belly and thighs of brass of the image: see the note on ver. 32: *which shall bear rule over all the earth*: not the land of Israel, as Saadiah restrains it, but the whole world, as Alexander did, at least in his own opinion; who thought he had conquered the whole world, and wept because there was not another to conquer; and it is certain he did subdue a great part of it. Justin[n] says, "that when he was returning to Babylon from "the uttermost shores of the sea, it was told him that "the embassies of the Carthaginians and other cities "of Africa, and also of Spain, Sicily, France, Sardinia, "and some out of Italy, were waiting for his coming; "the terror of his name so struck the whole world, "that all nations complimented him as their king "destined for them." And Pliny reports[o] of Macedonia, that "it formerly (that is, in the times of Alexander) governed the world; this (says he) passed "over Asia, Armenia, Iberia, Albania, Cappadocia, "Syria, Egypt, Taurus, and Caucasus; this ruled over "the Bactrians, Medes, and Persians, possessing the "whole east; this also was conqueror of India."

Ver. 40. *And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron*, &c.] This is not the kingdom of the Lagidæ and Seleucidæ, the successors of Alexander, as some have thought; for these are designed by the thighs in the third kingdom; and, besides, the kingdom of Christ was to arise in the time of this fourth kingdom, which it did not in that; nor the kingdom of Gog, or the empire of the Turks, as Saadiah, Aben Ezra, and Jarchi; but the Roman empire, which is compared to iron for its strength, firmness, and duration in itself; and for its power over other nations; and also for its cruelty to the Jews above all others, in utterly destroying their city, temple, and nation: *forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things*; so this kingdom has subdued and conquered all others; not the Jews only, but the Persians, Egyptians, Syrians, Africans, French, Germans, yea, all the world: *and as iron that breaketh*, or *even as iron breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces, and bruise*; all nations and kingdoms; hence Rome has been called the mistress of the world, and its empire in Scripture is called the whole world, Luke ii. 1. see Rev. xvii. 18.

Ver. 41. *And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron*, &c.] That is, some of the toes of the feet were of iron, and others of them of clay: these *toes*, which are ten, as the toes of men are, design the ten kings or kingdoms, into which the western Roman empire was divided, by the coming in of the Goths, and Hunns, and Vandals, into it; and are the same with the ten horns of the beast, and the ten kings which gave their kingdoms to it, Rev. xiii. 1. and xvii. 12, 13, 17. see the notes there, and on Dan. vii. 24. some of which were strong like iron, and continued long; others were like clay, and of a less duration: *the kingdom shall be divided*; which some understand of the division of it into the eastern and western empires; but rather it means the division of the latter into the ten kingdoms, set up in it by the barbarous nations. Abarbinel and Jacchiades interpret it of the Roman empire being divided into Mahometans and Christians, very wrongly: *but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay*: notwithstanding this irruption and inundation of the northern nations into the empire; yet it still retained something of the strength and power of the old Romans, which were mingled among those barbarous nations, comparable to miry clay.

Ver. 42. *And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay*, &c.] Or some of them of iron, and so were strong and powerful, as some of these kingdoms were; and some of clay, and so were weak and easily crushed, and did not stand long: *so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken*: this is not unfitly interpreted by some of the two-fold power which has prevailed in these ten kingdoms, through the policy of the pope of Rome, the secular and ecclesiastic power; the latter often encroaching upon and

[l] Apud Euseb. Prepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 41. p. 456.
[m] Geograph. l. 15. p. 472.
[n] Ex Trogo, l. 12. c. 13.
[o] Nat. Hist. l. 4. c. 10.

prevailing over the other, which has tended to the weakening of these states.

Ver. 43. *And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay,* &c.] That is, iron among the clay; otherwise iron and clay will not mix and cement together, as is affirmed in the latter part of the verse; but as some of these toes were of iron, and others of clay, or some part of them were iron, and some part of them of clay, *they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men;* the Romans shall mix with people of other and many nations that shall come in among them, and unite in setting up kingdoms; or these kingdoms set up shall intermarry with each other, in order to strengthen their alliances, and support their interests: thus France, Spain, Portugal, and other nations; those of the royal families marry with each other, with such views: *but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay:* and yet these ties of marriage and of blood shall not cause them to cleave to and abide by one another; but ambition and worldly interests will engage them to take part with each other's enemies, or to go to war with one another, to the weakening and hurting each other; and thus the potsherds of the earth will dash one another to pieces; and those who are more powerful, like the iron, will trample the weaker like miry clay under their feet.

Ver. 44. *And in the days of these kings,* &c. Not of the Babylonian, Persian, and Grecian kings; nor, indeed, of the old Roman kings, or emperors; but in the days of these ten kings, or kingdoms, into which the Roman empire is divided, signified by the ten toes, of different power and strength. Indeed the kingdom of Christ began to be set up in the times of Augustus Cæsar, under whom Christ was born; and of Tiberius, under whom he was crucified; and was continued and increased in the reigns of others, until it obtained very much in the times of Constantine; and, after it suffered a diminution under the Papacy, was revived at the Reformation; but will not be set up in its glory until Christ has overcome the ten kings, or kingdoms, and put it into their hearts to hate and burn the antichristian whore; and when she and all the antichristian states will be destroyed by the pouring out of the vials: and then in their days *shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed:* this is the kingdom of the Messiah, as is owned by both ancient and modern Jews: so it is said in an ancient book[p] of theirs, " in the time of the King Messiah, " Israel shall be one nation in the earth, and one peo- " ple to the holy blessed God: as it is written, *in the* " *days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a* " *kingdom,*" &c.; and in another of their writings[q], esteemed very ancient, it is said, " the Ishmaelites " shall do fifteen things in the earth in the last days: " the last of which mentioned is, they shall erect an " edifice in the temple; at length two brothers shall " rise up against them, and in their days shall spring " up the branch of the son of David; as it is said, *in* " *the days of these kings,*" &c.; and both Jarchi and Aben Ezra interpret this kingdom of the kingdom of the Messiah; and so Jacchiades, a much later writer, says the last kingdom is that of the Messiah and another modern Jewish writer says[r], in the time of the King Messiah there shall be but one kingdom, and but one King; and this the King, the true Messiah; but the rest of the kingdoms and their kings shall not subsist in his time; as it is written, *in the days of these kings,* &c.; which kingdom is no other than his church on earth, where he reigns; has his throne; holds forth his sceptre; gives out his laws, and is obeyed: and, though this is already in the world, yet it is not so visible, stable, and glorious, as it will be at the close of the fourth monarchy, which is meant by its being set up, confirmed, and established; and this will be done by the God of heaven, the Maker and possessor of it, and who dwells in it, and rules there, and over all the earth; and therefore Christ's church, or kingdom, is often called the kingdom of heaven; and when it is thus established, it will ever remain visible; its glory will be no more eclipsed; and much less subverted and overthrown, by all the powers of earth and hell. Christ was set up as King from everlasting, and the elect of God were appointed and given him as a kingdom as early; and in and over these he reigns by his spirit and grace in time, when they are effectually called, and brought into subjection to him; these are governed by laws of his making: he is owned by them as their Lord and King, and they yield a ready and cheerful obedience to his commands, and he protects and defends them from their enemies; and such a kingdom Christ has always had from the beginning of the world: but there was a particular time in which it was to be set up in a more visible and glorious manner: it was set up in the days of his flesh on earth, though it came not with observation, or was attended with outward pomp and grandeur, it being spiritual, and not of this world; upon his ascension to heaven it appeared greater; he was made or declared Lord and Christ, and his Gospel was spread everywhere: in the times of Constantine it was still more glorious, being further extended, and enjoying great peace, liberty, and prosperity: in the times of Popish darkness, a stop was put to the progress of it, and it was reduced into a narrow compass; at the Reformation there was a fresh breaking of it out again, and it got ground in the world: in the spiritual reign it will be restored, and much more increased, through the Gospel being preached, and churches set up everywhere; and Christ's kingdom will then be more extensive; it will be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth; it will be more peaceable and prosperous; there will be none to annoy and do hurt to the subjects of it; it will be no more subject to changes and revolutions, but will be in a firm and stable condition; it will be established upon the top of the mountains, and be more visible and glorious, which is here meant by its being *set up:* especially this will be the case in the Millennium-state, when Christ shall reign before his ancients gloriously, and they shall reign with him; and this will never be destroyed, but shall issue in the ultimate glory; for now all enemies will be put under the feet of Christ and his church; the beast and false prophet will be no more; and Satan will be bound during this time, and after that cast into the lake of fire and

[p] Zohar in Gen. fol. lxxxv. 4.
[q] Pirke Eliezer, c. 30. fol. 31. 2.
[r] R. Isaac, Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 45.

brimstone, with all the wicked angels and men: *and the kingdom shall not be left to another people*: as the Babylonian monarchy to the Medes and Persians; the Persian monarchy to the Greeks; and the Grecian monarchy to the Romans; but this shall not be left to a strange people, but shall be given to the saints of the most High; see ch. vii. 27: *but it shall break in pieces and subdue all these kingdoms*: the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman; the three former in the latter, which has swallowed them up; besides, the rest of these monarchies, which are all signified by beasts in an after-prophecy, are said still to live, though their dominion is taken away, ch. vii. 12. the same nations are in being, though not as monarchies, and have not the same denomination, and are in other hands; now these, and whatsoever kingdoms shall exist, when this shall be set up, shall be either broke to pieces, and utterly destroyed, or become subject to it; see 1 Cor. xv. 24: *and it shall stand for ever*: throughout time in this world, and to all eternity in another; it will be an everlasting kingdom; which is interpreted by Irenæus[a], an ancient Christian writer in the second century, of the resurrection of the just; his words are, "the great God hath signified by Daniel things to "come, and he hath confirmed them by the Son; "and Christ is the stone which is cut out without "hands, who shall destroy temporal kingdoms, and "bring in an everlasting one, which is the resurrection "of the just; for he saith, the God of heaven shall "raise up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed;" this is the first resurrection, which brings on the personal reign, in which the righteous shall reign with him a thousand years; see Rev. xx. 5, 6.

Ver. 45. *Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands*, &c.] See the note on ver. 34: *and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold*: of which the image was made he had seen in his dream; and which represented the several monarchies of the world in succession, and described their nature, condition, and circumstances, and the ruin of them; see the note on ver. 35: *the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter*: after his own death, and in his own monarchy; and what will be the fate of succeeding ones; what will come to pass in the several ages of time, and what will be done in the last days; what an everlasting kingdom there will be, when the kingdoms of this world shall be no more; and this the *great God*, who is great in knowledge as well as power, made known to him, which none else could; and by which he appears to be great, and above all gods, as Nebuchadnezzar afterwards owns; and which Daniel here suggests to him; see Isa. xlv. 21. and xlvi. 9, 10: *and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure*; this is certainly the dream the king had dreamed, for the truth of which he appeals to him; and the interpretation of it given would be most surely and faithfully accomplished, on which he might depend; for since the dream had been so distinctly related to him, he had no room to doubt of the true interpretation of it.

Ver. 46. *Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel*, &c.] Imagining there was something of divinity in him, that he could so exactly tell him his dream, which was past and gone; and give him the interpretation of it, respecting things to come, which he concluded none but God could do; and therefore, after the manner of the eastern people, threw himself prostrate to the earth, with his face to it, and gave religious adoration to Daniel; for that this cannot be understood of mere civil respect appears by his following orders; and had he not thought that Daniel was something more than a man, he, a proud monarch, would never have behaved in this manner to him; but, being struck with amazement at the relation of the dream, and the interpretation of it, he forgot what both he and Daniel were; the one a mighty king, the other a mere man, a servant, yea, a captive: this shews that he was not exasperated at the account of the fall of his monarchy, as might have been expected, but was filled with wonder at the revelation made: *and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him*: rising from the ground, he gave orders to his servants about him, some of whom might be the priests of Bel, that they would bring a meat-offering, and incense with it, and offer them to him as to a god; but, though this was ordered, we don't read it was done; for it cannot be thought that Daniel, who had scrupled eating the king's food, and drinking his wine, lest he should be defiled, and afterwards chose rather to be cast into a den of lions than to omit prayer to God, would ever suffer such a piece of idolatrous worship to be paid to him; and though he could not hinder the king's prostration and adoration, which were very sudden; yet it is highly probable he reasoned with the king upon it, and earnestly desired that no such undue honours should be paid to him; declaring that this knowledge was not of himself, but of God, to whom the glory ought to be given.

Ver. 47. *The king answered unto Daniel*, &c.] By which it appears that Daniel interposed and expostulated with the king, and prevented the oblation to him as a god, and instructed him in the knowledge of the true God he ought to worship; as the following confession of the king more clearly shews: *and said, of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods*: the God of Daniel and his companions, and of the people of the Jews, to whom they belonged, is above all gods that are named and worshipped by men: this appeared at this time for the present, though it did not last long, as the following chapter shews, a most glaring truth; that the God of Israel was above all his gods, and whom his magicians and people worshipped, and above all others: *and a Lord of kings*; that rules over them, and disposes of them; sets them up and pulls them down at his pleasure; and transfers their kingdoms from one to another, as he learned by the interpretation of his dream, to which he may in this refer: *and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret*: of the dream, and the interpretation of it; which he could never have done, had not his God been a revealer of secrets, and revealed it to him.

Ver. 48. *Then the king made Daniel a great man*, &c.] Advanced him to posts of great honour and dignity;

[a] Adv. Hæres. l. 5. c. 26.

he was a great man before in spiritual things, in which he was made great by the Lord: and now he was made a great man in worldly things, through the providence of God; those that honour him he will honour: *and gave him many great gifts*: gifts great in value, and many in number; rich garments, gold, silver, precious stones, and large estates to support his honour and grandeur; and which Daniel accepted of, not merely for his own use, but to do good with to his poor brethren the Jews in captivity: *and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon*; the whole monarchy was divided into several provinces, over each of which was a deputy-governor; this of Babylon was the chief of them, Babylon being the metropolis of the empire; the whole government of which, and all belonging to it, was given to Daniel; a proof of the king's high esteem for him: *and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon*: here was an university consisting of several colleges, over each of which there was a governor, and Daniel was the president of them all; or the principal or chancellor of the university: this office he might accept of, that he might have an opportunity of inculcating true knowledge, and of checking and correcting what was impious and unlawful.

Ver. 49. *Then Daniel requested of the king, &c.*] Being in his favour, he improved it to the advantage of his friends, whom he did not forget in his elevated state; but made suit to the king for them to be put into places of trust and honour, which the king listened to: *and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon*: that is, under Daniel, who was made ruler over it: these were deputies under him, appointed to take care of some affairs, which would have been too troublesome to him, and would have took up too much of his time from court; where he chose to be, to improve his interest on behalf of the church of God. De Dieu thinks, from the use of the word in Chaldee, and from what answers to it in the Arabic language, that it was agriculture, the fruits of the field, and the revenues arising from thence, which these men had the care of; this Daniel got for them: that as they had assisted him in their prayers to God, to obtain the dream, and the interpretation of it, so they might share with him in his honours and profits he had on the account thereof; and probably he might suggest this to Nebuchadnezzar, which the more easily engaged him to grant the request: *but Daniel sat in the gate of the king*: either as judge there, or to introduce persons into the king's presence: or it may be rendered, *in the king's court*[t]; he was chief man at court, and always resided there; he was prime minister and privy counsellor: it was usual with the eastern nations to call their court a *port*, as the Turks do at this day; the Ottoman court is called *the Port*.

CHAP. III.

IN this chapter an account is given of a golden image made by Nebuchadnezzar; its bigness; and where placed, ver. 1. a summons to all his princes, governors, and officers, to attend the dedication of it, ver. 2, 3. a proclamation commanding men of all nations to fall down and worship it, at hearing the sound of music, ver. 4, 5, 6, 7. an accusation of the Jews to the king, particularly Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, for not worshipping it, ver. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. the king's sending for them in rage, and threatening to cast them into a fiery furnace if they continued to disobey his will, ver. 13, 14, 15. their answer, which shewed an inflexible resolution at all events not to comply with it, ver. 16, 17, 18. the king's order to heat the furnace seven times hotter than usual, and cast them into it, which was executed; the consequence of which was, they that cast them in were destroyed through the vehement heat of the furnace, but the three Jews were unhurt, ver. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. Nebuchadnezzar's amazement at the sight of four persons, instead of three; and these loose, walking in the midst of the fire without hurt: and one of them like the son of God, which he observed to his counsellors, ver. 24, 25. upon which he called to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, to come out of the furnace, which they did in the presence of his princes, governors, and officers, having received not the least damage in their persons or clothes, ver. 26, 27. and then the king, praising the God of the Jews, published an edict that none should speak against him on pain of death; and restored the three men to their former dignity, ver. 28, 29, 30.

Ver. 1. *Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, &c.*] Not of solid massy gold; but either of a plate of gold, and hollow within; or of wood overlaid with gold; for otherwise it must have took up a prodigious quantity of gold to make an image of such dimensions as follow; this he ordered his statuaries or workmen to make for him; whether this image was for himself, or his father Nabopolassar, or for his chief god Bel, or as a new deity, is not easy to say; however, it was made for religious worship: the reasons that moved him to it cannot be ascertained; it might be out of pride and vanity, and to set forth the glory and stability of his monarchy, as if he was not only the head of gold, but as an image all of gold; and to contradict the interpretation of his dream, and avert the fate of his empire signified by it; or to purge himself from the jealousies his subjects had entertained of him, of relinquishing the religion of his country, and embracing the Jewish religion, by his praise of the God of Israel, and the promotion of Jews to places of trust and honour; or this might be done by the advice of his nobles, to establish an uniformity of religion in his kingdom, and to prevent the growth of Judaism; and it may be to lay a snare for Daniel and his companions; of which we have an instance of the like kind in ch. vi. When this image was made is not certain; some

[t] בתרע מלכא in aula regis, Grotius.

think in a short time after his dream before related; if so, he soon forgot it, and the God that had revealed it. The Septuagint and Arabic versions place it in the 18th year of his reign; and some are of opinion that it was after his victories over the Jews, Tyre, Egypt, and others; and that being flushed therewith, in the pride of his heart, ordered this image to be made; and out of the spoils he brought with him from the several countries he had conquered. Mr. Whiston[u] places this fact in the year of the Julian period 4127, and before Christ 587; and so Dr. Prideaux[w], who makes it to be in the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar, agreeably to the above versions. Mr. Bedford[x] puts it in the year before Christ 585: *whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits;* a common cubit being half a yard, it was thirty yards high, and three yards broad; but Herodotus[y] says the king's cubit in Babylon was three fingers larger than the usual one; and, according to that, this image must be thirty-five yards high, and three yards and a half bread; but since there is so great a disproportion between the height and breadth, some have thought that the height includes the pedestal on which it stood; and, allowing twelve cubits for that, the height of the image was forty-six cubits. Diodorus Siculus[z] makes mention of a statue of gold in the temple of Belus, which Xerxes demolished, which was forty feet high, and contained a thousand Babylonish talents of gold, which, at the lowest computation, amounts to three millions and a half of our money; which image Doctor Prideaux[a] conjectures was this image of Nebuchadnezzar's; but this seems not likely, since the one was between thirty and forty yards high, the other but thirteen or fourteen; the one in the plain of Dura, the other in the temple of Bel: *he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon;* that so it might be seen of all, and there might be room enough for a vast number of worshippers together. The Septuagint version calls this place the plain of Deeira, which some take to be the Deera of Ptolemy[b]; but that is in the province of Susiana; rather this is Duraba[c], which he places near the river Euphrates, in the province of Babylon. Aben Ezra says, this is the place where the children of Ephraim fell, and where the Chaldeans slew the Jews when they came into captivity. In the Talmud[d] it is said, "from the river "Eshal unto Rabbath is the valley of Dura;" in Arabic دور *dauro* signifies *round;* it was a round valley. The Jews have a notion that this was the valley in the land of Shinar where the tower of Babel was built: and observe, that "although the design of that "generation was not accomplished, yet after their "times their punishment was made manifest, in that "they said, *let us make us a name*, Gen. xi. 4. for Ne- "buchadnezzar having wasted and subverted many "kingdoms, and destroyed the sanctuary, thought it "possible to put in execution the wicked design of "the age of the dispersion; hence it is said, Dan. iii. 1. "*King Nebuchadnezzar made an image, &c. and set it* "*up*, בבקעת דורא, *in the valley of generation*, in the pro- "vince of Babylon, which is the valley spoken of in "Gen. xi. 2, 9. what therefore they could not do, he "attempted to do; hence he gathered all the people "to worship the image, which agrees with Gen. xi. 4. "for he put a certain vessel of the vessels of the tem- "ple on the mouth of it (the image), on which was "engraven the divine *name*, that he might render ef- "fectual the intention of the dispersed generation; "but the Scripture says, Jer. li. 44, *and I will punish* "*Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth* "*that which he hath swallowed up, and the nations shall* "*not flow together any more unto him:* for Daniel came "and caused that vessel that was swallowed to be "taken out of the mouth of the image, whence it fell, "and was broke to pieces, which is the same as that "in Gen. xi. 4[e]."

Ver. 2. *Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes*, &c.] He sent letters, or dispatched messengers, into the several provinces of his empire, and parts of his dominions, to convene all the peers of his realm, and governors of provinces, and all officers, civil, military, and religious, expressed by various names and titles: *the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces:* who are particularly and distinctly designed is not easy to say. Jacchiades thinks they answer to the same offices and officers which now obtain in the Turkish empire; princes are the *bashaws;* governors the *beglerbegs;* captains the *agas* of the janizaries; judges the *kadies;* treasurers the *dephterdaries;* the counsellors the *alphakies;* and *zayties* the sheriffs; their chief doctors their *muphties*, as L'Empereur; and the rulers of the provinces the *zangiakies* or *viziers;* but, be they who they will, they were the principal men of the empire, both in things civil, military, and ecclesiastic, who were ordered *to come to the dedication of the image, which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up;* for though it was made and set up, it was not a proper object of worship till dedicated; and which was done by burning incense, blowing trumpets, &c.: now these great men were gathered together on this occasion, because of the greater honour done hereby to the king and his image; and also by their example to engage the populace the more easily to the worship of it; and likewise as being the representatives of them, since they could not all be collected together in one place; and it may be it was done, as some think, to insnare Daniel and his companions. Philostratus[f] makes mention of an officer at Babylon that had the keeping of the great gate into the city; which some take to be the same with the first sort here mentioned; who first offered the golden statue of the king to be worshipped, before he would permit any to enter into the city, which perhaps might take its rise from the worship of this golden image.

[u] Chronological Tables, cent. 10.
[w] Connexion, &c. par 1. B. 2. p. 87.
[x] Scripture Chronology, p. 703.
[y] Clio, sive l. 1. c. 178.
[z] Bibliothec. Hist. l. 2. p. 98. Ed. Rhod.
[a] Connexion, &c. par. 1. B. 2. p. 101.

[b] Geograph. l. 6. c. 3.
[c] Ibid. l. 5. c. 20.
[d] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 92. 2.
[e] Kabala Denudata, par. 1. p. 671.
[f] De Vita Apollonii, l. 1. c. 19.

Ver. 3. *Then the princes, the governors, and captains,* &c.] And all the rest of the officers before mentioned, having received their orders from the king, in obedience to them, *were gathered together unto the dedication of the image Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up;* at great expense, and with much fatigue and trouble, they came from all parts to attend this great solemnity: *and they stood before the image Nebuchadnezzar had set up;* they stood and looked at it, and viewed its several parts; they stood and beheld it with wonder, its richness and largeness; they stood and attended to all the rites and ceremonies of the dedication of it; they stood and were ready to fall down and worship it, when the word of command was given; so obsequious were they to the king's will.

Ver. 4. *Then an herald cried aloud,* &c.] That his voice might be heard all over the plain; or if it should be thought that one was not sufficient to be heard throughout, which probably was the case, and where, so great a number being assembled together, all could not hear one man, the singular may be put for the plural; and many being set in different places in the plain, and speaking different languages, might proclaim when the image was dedicated, as follows: *to you it is commanded:* by the king's authority: *O people, nations, and languages;* the several kingdoms, states, and provinces, that belonged to the Babylonian monarchy, and spoke different languages, as now represented by their several governors and officers; as the Armenians, Parthians, Medes, Persians, &c.

Ver. 5. That *at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet,* &c.] So called of the horn of which it was made; a sort of trumpet; so the Jews had trumpets of rams' horns: *flute:* or pipe, or whistle, so called for its hissing noise; it is used of the shepherd's pipe or whistle; see Zech. x. 8. *harp;* an instrument of music used by David, and much in use among the Jews, and other nations; *sackbut:* or *sambuca;* which, according to Athenæus[g], was a four-stringed instrument, an invention of the Syrians; and Strabo[h], a Greek writer, speaks of it as a barbarous name, as the eastern ones were reckoned by the Grecians: *psaltery;* this seems to be a Greek word, as does the next that follows, rendered *dulcimer;* but in the original text is *symphonia;* which does not signify symphony, or a concert or consort of music, but a particular instrument of music. Maimonides[i] makes mention of it as a musical instrument, among others; Servius[k] calls it an oblique pipe; and Isidore[l] describes it a hollow piece of wood, with leather stretched upon it, and beat upon with rods or sticks, something like our drum: the king of Babylon might have Grecian musicians, or, however, Grecian instruments of music, in his court, as the Grecians had from the eastern nations: *and all kinds of music;* that could be had or thought of; and this was done in honour to this idol, and to allure carnal sensual persons to the worship of it, according to the order given: *ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up;* when they heard the music sound, immediately they were to repair to the plain where the image stood, and pay their adoration to it; or to fall down prostrate in their own houses in honour of it; and perhaps persons were appointed in all cities and towns throughout the empire to play this music; at hearing which, all people, nations, and tongues, were to bow down, in token of their religious regard unto it.

Ver. 6. *And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth,* &c.] Who refuses to worship it, or wilfully neglects it; which would be interpreted a contempt of it, and of the king's command: *shall in the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace;* such as were used to burn stones in for lime, as Jarchi observes: the music was to draw, the furnace was to drive, men to this idolatrous worship; the one was to please and sooth the minds of men, and so allure them to such stupid service; the other to frighten them into obedience. This is the first time that mention is made of *hours* in the sacred Scriptures; it was very probably the invention of the Chaldeans or Babylonians; for Herodotus[m] says the Greeks received the twelve parts of the day from the Babylonians.

Ver. 7. *Therefore at that time,* &c.] Such a severe edict being published, threatening with so terrible a punishment: *when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of music;* not only at Babylon, and that lived near the plain of Dura, but in all places where it was played: *all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up;* what through love of music, the fear of the furnace, regard to superstition and idolatry, and to the king's command, men of all nations and languages gave it homage and worship.

Ver. 8. *Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near,* &c.] That is, to King Nebuchadnezzar, either in his palace at Babylon, or more likely in the plain of Dura: *and accused the Jews;* particularly Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, as after mentioned, of not obeying the king's command, to worship the golden image: these Chaldeans at the time of adoration had their eyes upon the Jews, particularly those three men, to observe how they would behave; and as they stood up whilst the others fell down, they were easily observed: wherefore they immediately hasten to the king, to lay an information against them; whose places of trust and honour they envied, and now hoped to be put into them in their room; and if these were the Chaldeans, or some of them, whose lives these men had been the means of saving, as is probable, they acted a very ungrateful part. Should it be asked, how came these three men to be present? it may be answered, they came here in obedience to the king's orders, as his officers, who had summoned them to this place; which they judged their duty to do, though they determined not to worship his image, should he require it; or they came here on purpose to bear their testimony against such idolatry. No mention is made of Daniel; very probably he was not

[g] Deipnosoph. l. 4.
[h] Geograph. l. 10. p. 324.
[i] Hilchot Celim, c. 6. sect. 14.
[k] In Virgil. Æneid. l. 11.
[l] Originum, l. 3. c. 21.
[m] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 109.

here; for what reasons cannot be said; however, no accusation is laid against him; perhaps he was too great to be meddled with, being high in the king's favour.

Ver. 9. *They spake and said to Nebuchadnezzar, &c.*] Having got access unto him, and within his hearing, they expressed themselves in the following manner: *O king, live for ever;* this they said to shew their fidelity and hearty attachment to him, and their regard to his welfare, and the continuance of his life; and the rather to ingratiate themselves into his affections, and gain audience of him; see the note on ch. ii. 4.

Ver. 10. *Thou, O king, hast made a decree, &c.*] According to his own mind and will, and which he had published as such to his subjects: *that every man;* let him be who he will, high or low, rich or poor, in whatsoever station or condition: *that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music;* such as had been just then blown or played on: *shall fall down and worship the golden image;* which the king had ordered to be made and set up, and now dedicated, and had been worshipped by men of all ranks.

Ver. 11. *And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, &c.*] The image; the above is the decree, this that follows the sanction of it: that *he should be cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace;* see the note on ver. 6.

Ver. 12. *There are certain Jews, &c.*] Men, by birth, by nation, and religion, despicable, foreigners, exiles, and captives; this they observe by way of contempt, and tacitly suggest that they were never worthy of the king's regard, and improper persons to be put in places of profit and trust, and that the king had done a wrong thing in advancing them: *whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon;* not to see that the streets, ways, and walls, were kept in order, as Saadiah observes; for this is mentioned as an aggravation of their crime, that, being set in such high places, should be guilty of such ingratitude to the king, and set such a bad example to his subjects: *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego;* by name; they say nothing of the common people of the Jews, who either were not present, being employed in a servile manner, or were below their notice; nor of Daniel, who was above them, and out of their reach, and whom the king himself, as Aben Ezra observes, had ordered an oblation to be offered to; or perhaps he was not there, being sick, or on the king's business elsewhere; for that he was present, and worshipped, can never be imagined by any that know his character. The Jews, who do not shew all the respect that is due unto Daniel, say [s] some very idle and foolish things of him, as reasons why he was not present at this time. It is asked, "where did Daniel go? says "Rab, to dig a large river in Tiberias; some copies "read, in a mountain; but Samuel says, to fetch the "seed of herbs, food for beasts; and R. Jochanan "says, to fetch swine from Alexandria in Egypt— "there were three in the consultation about his absence at this time, the holy blessed God, Nebuchadnezzar, and Daniel himself. The holy blessed "God said, let Daniel be gone, that it may'nt be "said, they (the three children) were delivered by "his merits; Daniel said, I'll be gone from hence, "that I may not fulfil that, *the graven images of their* "*gods shall ye burn:* Nebuchadnezzar said, let Daniel "be absent, that it may not be said he burnt his God "in the fire." *These men, O king, have not regarded thee;* shewed no respect to his person and authority; they disobeyed his orders, and were guilty of rebellion against him, and contempt of majesty: the proof follows, *they serve not thy gods;* whom the king and the nation worshipped, as Bel, Nebo, Merodach, and others: *nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up;* they did not bow down to it, in reverence of it, as had been ordered; this they knew would be most provoking to the king.

Ver. 13. *Then Nebuchadnezzar, in his rage and fury, &c.*] Which did not become him as a man, much less as a king, and still less as engaged in devotion and religion: *commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego;* that is, immediately before him; who very probably were not afar off: he did not order them in his wrath and fury to be slain directly, as he did the wise men and soothsayers in another case; but to be brought before him, and examined first, that he might know the truth of these allegations against them; which shews, amidst all his rage, he retained still some respect for them, and esteem of them: *then they brought these men before the king;* which they had not much trouble to do, being very ready to come and answer for themselves, and give an account of their conduct, and their reason for it.

Ver. 14. *Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, is it true, &c.*] What I have heard of you, what you are charged with and accused of; surely it cannot be; so Aben Ezra and Saadiah interpret the word as we do, and all the Oriental versions: it is only used in this place: it is expressed by way of admiration, as Jacchiades observes; it being incredible to the king, what he could never believe, unless it appeared plain in his own eyes. Some [t] render it, is it a *desolation?* so Jarchi; is my decree such? or should you not obey it? was this suffered, nothing but disorder and desolation would follow in the kingdom: or, *is it of purpose?* as others [v]; have you done this willingly and knowingly, or through imprudence and inadvertency? if the latter, it is pardonable; if not, it cannot be borne with. De Dieu, from the Syriac use of the word, renders it, *is it a joke?* are you serious, and in good earnest, or in joke, that ye worship not my gods? or do you mock me and them? *O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego;* on whom I have conferred so many favours, raised from a low to a high estate, and yet used by you in this manner: *do ye not serve my gods;* one would think he had no need to have asked this question; since he must needs know, that, by their nation and religion, they served only one God, and could serve no other; and that by their daily practice

[s] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 1.

[t] הצדא numquid desolatio? Montanus. So Jacchiades, and some in Ben Melech.

[v] An certo consilio? Junius & Tremellius; sive ex proposito? Piscator; so Rabbenu Hai in Ben Melech; an de industria? Cocceius; num revera, vel studiose? Michaelis.

they never did, in which they were indulged: *nor worship the golden image that I have set up?* it is for the sake of this the question is put; this was the thing his heart was set upon; and such was his pride, that he could not bear any control in it.

Ver. 15. *Now if ye be ready that at what time ye shall hear*, &c.] The meaning is, that if they were disposed in mind, which the king was very desirous they should, both for his own honour, and for their safety, for whom he had a regard; and were willing to comply with his orders, and readily yield obedience to his will, and worship his idol; the following would be a signal to them, and all would be well with them: or it may be rendered, *when now ye shall be, that at what time ye shall hear*[t]; for the word signifies future, as well as *ready*, and is by some so translated; and the sense is, when it shall be, or for the future, that they should hear *the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music*: which was played not once only, but perhaps at certain times every day, and designed to be continued: *ye fall down and worship the image which I have made*: it is well; so doing, the king's wrath would be appeased, their lives would be preserved, and they continued in his favour, and in their honourable posts: *but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace*: immediately, without any delay; no reprieve will be granted, and much less a pardon: *and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?* he knew their confidence in the God of Israel, which he attempts to break and remove; he foresaw the objection they would make, which he endeavours to anticipate by this proud and vain boast, forgetting what he himself had said, ch. ii. 47.

Ver. 16. *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, answered and said to the king*, &c.] In a mild and gentle manner, without affronting his majesty, or insulting his gods, and yet without the least degree of servile fear or fawning flattery: *O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter*; about worshipping the image; we are not solicitous about a choice of words, or in what manner to draw up our answer, it is ready in our mouths; we have no need to take time and consider of this matter, and think what to say, we are at a point about it: as thou art peremptory in thy will to have thine image worshipped, we are as resolute, as determined, never to worship it; so that there is no need to spend time in a debate about it; thou art come to a conclusion, and so are we: or in this matter, about the power of our God to deliver, we are not solicitous about an answer to that; we leave him to defend himself, and his own power, against such insults upon him.

Ver. 17. *If it be so*, &c.] That we must be cast into the fiery furnace, as thou hast threatened: *our God whom we serve*; for though they did not serve the gods of the Babylonians, they did not live without God in the world; they believed in the one true God, the God of Israel, their covenant God and Father; whom they worshipped, had an interest in, and who had and would have a regard for them: he, say they, is *able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace*: either to prevent their being cast into it, or to preserve them unhurt in it, and to bring them safe out of it: instances of his power in other cases, such as the passage of the Israelites through the Red sea safe, when their enemies were drowned, with others, confirmed their faith in this: *and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king*: they might have a well-grounded hope and persuasion of deliverance, arising partly from former instances of the divine power and goodness in such-like cases; and partly from the consideration of the glory of God, which would be greatly conspicuous herein; and chiefly because of the king's defiance of God, and blasphemy against him, which they had reason to believe would be taken notice of; for it does not appear that they had any foresight of certain deliverance, or any secret intimation of it to them, or a full assurance of it, as is evident by what follows:

Ver. 18. *But if not*, &c.] If our God does not think fit to exert his power, and deliver us, which we are well assured he is able to do; if it is not his will, we are content, we are resigned unto it: *be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods*: be it as it will, whether we are delivered or not; we are not sure of the one, but we are at a point as to the other: *nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up*; come life, come death, we are ready; we had rather die than sin: they were all of one mind, and agreed in this matter; a noble instance of spiritual fortitude and courage!

Ver. 19. *Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury*, &c.] Nettled at the answer given him; perceiving his threats made no impression on these three men, and that they were resolutely determined at all events not to obey his will: *and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego*: not only to what it was in times past, when they were his favourites, and he smiled upon them; but with respect to what it was while they were under examination, and he was trying to bring them to his will; when finding it impracticable, fury rose up, and shewed itself in the furrows and frowns of his forehead; in the sharpness of his nose; in his sparkling eyes, foaming mouth, and gnashing teeth, and that general redness his face was covered with: therefore *he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated*: this seems to be a furnace for this purpose, and where it was usual to burn malefactors; it being a common punishment with the Chaldeans; see Jer. xxix. 22. the order was to put seven times more fuel in the furnace, that it might be so much the hotter, and burn so much the fiercer; which order of the king shews indeed the greatness of his wrath and fury, but at the same time that it had transported him out of his sense and judgment; since so fierce a fire was the better for the three men, supposing them to have died as he intended; who would have been the sooner dispatched by it, and so not suffer so much pain and torment as in a slow fire, or less heat; but this was overruled by the providence of God, that so it should be, that the miracle of their walking in it unsinged and unhurt, and their deliverance out of it, might appear the greater.

[t] הן איתיכון עתידין si futuri estis, Gejerus.

Ver. 20. *And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army,* &c.] The most famous for courage of mind, and strength of body, that were in all his army: *to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego:* either their hands or their feet, or both; unless it can be thought that they were all three bound together in one bundle, and so cast into the furnace; which is not improbable, as Gejerus observes; seeing the king afterwards wondered to see them walk separately in the furnace: there was no need to bind them, for they would not have resisted; and if he ordered this to secure them from the power of their God, it was vain and foolish: and *to cast* them *into the burning fiery furnace:* if they were all three bound together, it required some able-bodied men to take them up and cast them in, especially if the furnace was above them; though it is more probable that it was a more depressed place, or below them, and so the cast was more easy.

Ver. 21. *Then these men were bound in their coats,* &c.] Their upper coats, cloaks, or mantles, as Aben Ezra and Jacchiades; though, according to the use of the word in the Arabic language, the *femoralia*[r] or breeches are meant: *their hosen, and their hats, and their* other *garments:* their turbants on their heads, which were usually wore in those countries; and their stockings and shoes, and other under-garments, as waistcoats and shirts; which through haste or negligence, or with design, were kept on them, to make their torment the greater; but were intended by the Lord to make the miracle the more conspicuous. According to Cocceius[s] and Bynæus[t], the first of these words signifies the outward covering of the body, as cloaks, *&c.;* the second the covering of the feet, as socks, shoes, and sandals; and the third the covering of the head, as caps, turbants, helmets, *&c.;* the last the inner garments that were under the upper ones: *and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace;* in the manner and circumstances before related.

Ver. 22. *And therefore, because the king's commandment was urgent,* &c.] Or was ordered to be obeyed in haste, and with expedition and dispatch, hence the men were cast into the furnace with clothes on; or those that cast them were not so careful of themselves: *and the furnace exceeding hot;* being heated seven times more than usual: *the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego:* which came out of the furnace, being so excessive hot, and the smoke along with it; so that when those men took up the three children, and brought them so near to it as was necessary to cast them in, the flame and smoke catched their breath, and suffocated them; who might be men that advised the king to such cruel measures, or however were very ready, out of ill will to these good men, to execute them, and therefore righteously perished in their sins: in the Apocrypha it is said, that the flame issued out forty-nine cubits above the furnace.

Ver. 23. *And these three men fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.*] The fire not so much as destroying what they were bound with, and much less them; but being bound they fell, and there they lay for the present, unbound and alive; when those that cast them in were destroyed. In the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, follow sixty-seven verses, containing the song of Azariah and his companions in the furnace, which are not in the Hebrew text.

Ver. 24. *Then Nebuchadnezzar was astonished,* &c.] At the burning of those that cast the three men into the furnace, as Jacchiades; or he might be seized with a panic, and his spirits filled with fear and dread, as the word[u] is by some said to signify, and this from the immediate hand of God: *and rose up in haste;* from the place where he was, and went to the mouth of the furnace, to see what was become of those that were cast into it: *and spake and said unto his counsellors;* who had advised him to do what he had done, out of envy and ill will to these Jews: *did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?* that is, was there not an order of council for it? and was it not done according to it? *they answered and said, true, O king;* it was certainly so: thus they are brought to bear a testimony to the truth of this; it was not only the king that gave the orders, and saw them obeyed, but his counsellors also; and which they own, and serves to corroborate the truth of the miracle.

Ver. 25. *He answered and said, lo, I see four men loose,* &c.] Not bound as the three were, when cast in; but quite at liberty in their hands and feet, and separate from one another. As this fiery furnace may be an emblem of the fiery trials and afflictive dispensations the children of God pass through in this world, being not joyous, but grievous to the flesh, though useful to purge and purify; so this and some other circumstances attending these good men in the furnace are applicable to the saints in such cases; for though afflictions are sometimes themselves called cords, with which men are said to be bound, yet by means of them they are loosed from other things; from the power and prevalence of sin over them; from the world, and the things of it, they sometimes too much cleave and are glued unto; from a spirit of bondage, and from doubts and fears; their hearts under them being comforted and enlarged with the love of God; he knowing, visiting, and choosing them in the furnace of affliction; or making known himself to them, his love and choice of them; whereby their souls are set at liberty, and the graces of his spirit are drawn forth into a lively exercise, through his love being shed abroad in them. *Walking in the midst of the fire;* the furnace being large enough to walk in, and where they took their walks as in a garden; nor were they concerned to come out of it; nor uneasy at being in it; the violence of the fire being quenched, as the apostle says, referring to this instance, Heb. xi. 34. Saadiah says, the angel Gabriel, who is over the hail, came and cooled the fire of the furnace. So afflictions are a path to walk in, the

[r] בסרבליהון cum femoralibus, Pagninus; so Syr. Ar.; cum braccis suis, V. L.

[s] Lex. Dict. Chald. col. 1022. rad שׁפט.

[t] De Calceis Hebr. l. 2. c. 10. sect. 4, 5, 6, 7.

[u] תוה expavit, Munster, Piscator, Michaelis; trepidavit, Gejerus; so Ben Melech from the Targum on Gen. xxvii. 33; trepidus, Junius & Tremellius.

narrow way to eternal life, through which all must enter the kingdom of heaven, of which there will be an end. Walking in it supposes strength, which God gives his people at such seasons; and when they have his presence they are unconcerned; none of these things move them, nor can they separate them from the love of Christ; they walk on with pleasure and delight, sing the praises of God, as did Paul and Silas in a prison, and as many martyrs have done in the flames: conversing with Christ, and with his people, they pass on, and pass through the more cheerfully, and are not anxious about their deliverance, but leave it with God to work it in his own time and way; nay, are ready to say with the disciples, it is good for them to be here; and indeed it was better for these good men to be with Christ in the fiery furnace, than to be with Nebuchadnezzar in his palace without him. *And they have no hurt;* either in their bodies, or in their garments, neither of them being burnt; they suffered no pain in the one, nor loss in the other. Afflictions do no hurt to the people of God; not to their persons, which are safe in Christ, and to whom he is a hiding-place and covert, as from the storm and tempest, so from the force of fire, that it shall not kindle upon them to hurt them; nor to their graces, which are tried, refined, and brightened hereby; faith is strengthened, hope is encouraged, and love made to abound. All the afflictions of the saints are in love, and are designed for good, and do work together for good to them that love God; they are sometimes for their temporal, and often for their spiritual good, and always work for them an exceeding weight of glory. *And the form of the fourth is like the son of God;* like one of the angels, who are called the sons of God; so Jarchi, Saadiah, and Jacchiades; but many of the ancient Christian writers interpret it of Christ the son of God, whom Nebuchadnezzar, though a Heathen prince, might have some knowledge of from Daniel and other Jews in his court, of whom he had heard them speak as a glorious Person; and this being such an one, he might conclude it was he, or one like to him; and it is highly probable it was he, since it was not unusual for him to appear in a human form, and to be present with his people, as he often is with them, and even in the furnace of affliction; see Isa. xliii. 2. and xlviii. 10. to sympathize with them; to revive and comfort them; to bear them up and support them; to teach and instruct them, and at last to deliver them out of their afflictions.

Ver. 26. *Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace,* &c.] He came so nigh before, as to see at a distance four persons walking in it; now he comes nearer, as near as he could with safety: *and spake and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the most high God;* he not only spake to them in a different tone than he did before; not in wrath and fury, but mildly and gently, with great respect unto them, and reverence of them; and not only calls them by the names he and his courtiers had given them, but styles them the servants of the most high God; he owns their God was a God above his: the Chaldeans worshipped fire, but the God of the Jews had power over that, and could restrain the force of it at pleasure; and he acknowledges that these men were faithful worshippers of him; who had in this wonderful manner appeared for them, and thereby approved their faith and confidence in him, and their service of him; see Acts xvi. 17: *come forth, and come* hither; that is, come out of the furnace, and come to the place where I and my nobles are: *then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, came forth of the midst of the fire:* as they had been cast into it by the king's order, therefore they did not presume to go out of it without the same; nor were they concerned about coming out; they had very agreeable and delightful company, and had reason to say it was good for them to be there; however, when they had the king's order, they immediately obeyed it.

Ver. 27. *And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together,* &c.] Either by the order of the king, or of their own accord, to see the miracle that was wrought: *saw these men;* saw them walking in the furnace, saw them come out of it at the king's call, and saw them when they were out, and examined them thoroughly; so that they had ocular demonstration, full proof and conviction, of the truth of what was done: *upon whose bodies the fire had no power;* to blister, scorch, burn, and consume them, as it has usually over the bodies of men, or any creature: *nor was an hair of their head singed;* which is easily done with the weakest flame; and this must be understood of the hair of their eyebrows and beards also; see Luke xxi. 18: *neither were their coats changed;* neither the substance, nor form, nor colour of them, but were just as they were when cast into the furnace; the same holds good of all their other garments, their interior ones, with their turbants, shoes, and stockings: *nor the smell of the fire had passed on them;* as will upon persons that stay at any time in a place where there is much fire and smoke; and especially where much combustible things are burnt, as pitch, sulphur, and the like, as in furnaces; and very probably in this, which had been so vehemently heated; and yet there was no smell of it on their garments; all which serve to make the miracle the more wonderful.

Ver. 28. Then *Nebuchadnezzar spake and said,* &c.] In the presence of his princes and prime ministers of state, and made the following confession, to the praise and glory of the true God; which was extorted from him at this time through the force of conviction; for it does not appear to be a thorough conversion; nor did he relinquish his gods, and the worship of them: *blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego;* he does not call him his God, but theirs, as he had called him the God of Daniel before, ch. ii. 47: *who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him;* the fourth man he saw in the furnace he now calls an angel of God; for the Heathens had notions of some being the messengers of the gods: this seems to favour the sense of those who think an angel is designed by the fourth person; though it does not follow that a created one must be meant; for it may be understood of the Angel of God's presence, the increated Angel, Jesus Christ; who, being sent by his divine Father, came and delivered these three persons from being consumed in the fire, who had in so strong a manner expressed their confidence in God, which the

king now remembers and observes; see ver. 17, 18: *and have changed the king's word;* made it null and void, refused to obey it, knowing it was their duty to obey God rather than man; so that the king was forced to change his word, and, instead of obliging them to worship his image, blesses their God: *and yielded their bodies;* freely gave them up, without any resistance, into the hands of those who were ordered by the king to take and bind them, and cast them into the furnace, to which also they readily yielded themselves: so the Septuagint and Arabic versions add, *to the fire, that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God;* they chose rather to deliver up themselves to death, to be burnt in a furnace, than to serve any other god than the God of Israel; such was their constancy and firmness of mind; such their attachment to the true God, and their faithfulness to him.

Ver. 29. *Therefore I make a decree, &c.*] Or, *a decree is made by me**; which is as follows: *that every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego;* any thing indecent, blasphemous, or by way of contempt: he does not give orders that their God should be worshipped, or signify that he would worship him himself, and quit his false deities; no, only that he should not be spoken against, as very probably before this time he was, to the great grief of these good men; and to whom therefore such an edict would be grateful, though no more could be obtained; by which it was enacted, that any such person, so blaspheming and reproaching, *shall be cut to pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghil;* see the note on ch. ii. 5: *because there is no other god that can deliver after this manner;* no, not even Bel himself, as was plain; for he could not deliver the men at the mouth of the furnace, that cast in these three, for they were destroyed by the force of the flame and smoke that came out; but the true God delivered the three men cast in, even in the midst of it; this was beyond all contradiction, and therefore he could not but own it.

Ver. 30. *Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, in the province of Babylon, &c.*] He restored them to their places of trust and profit, and increased their honours: or, *made* them *to prosper*, as the word* signifies; they flourished in his court, and became very great and famous. The Septuagint and Arabic versions add, "and he counted them worthy "to preside over all the Jews that were in his king-"dom."

CHAP. IV.

THIS chapter was written by Nebuchadnezzar himself; and was either taken out of his archives, or given by him to Daniel, who under divine inspiration inserted it into this work of his; and a very useful instruction it contains, shewing the sovereignty of God over the greatest kings and potentates of the earth, and this acknowledged by one of the proudest monarchs that ever lived upon it. It begins with a preface, saluting all nations, and declaring the greatness and power of God, ver. 1, 2, 3. then follows the narrative of a dream the king dreamed, which troubled him; upon which he called for his wise men to interpret it, but in vain; at length he told it to Daniel, ver. 4—9. the dream itself; which being told, astonished Daniel, the king being so much interested in it, ver. 10—19. the interpretation of it, with Daniel's advice upon it, is in ver. 20—27. the fulfilment of it, time and occasion thereof, ver. 28—33. Nebuchadnezzar's restoration to his reason and kingdom, for which he praises God, ver. 34—37.

Ver. 1. *Nebuchadnezzar the king, &c.*] This and the two following verses are annexed to the preceding chapter in the Hebrew Bible, and in the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions; as if the author of the division of the chapters thought that Nebuchadnezzar proposed by this public proclamation to celebrate the praise of the Lord, on account of the wonderful deliverance of the three Jews from the fiery furnace; whereas they are a preface to a narrative of a dream, and an event which concerned himself, and most properly begin a new chapter, as they do in the Syriac and Arabic versions. The edict begins, not with pompous and extravagant titles, as was the manner of the eastern monarchs, and still is, but only plainly *Nebuchadnezzar the king;* for he was now humbled under the mighty hand of God; whether his conversion was real is not evident; yet, certain it is, he expresses himself in stronger language concerning the divine Being and his works, and under a deeper sense of his sovereignty and majesty, than ever he did before. This proclamation is directed *unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth;* belonging to his kingdom, as Aben Ezra; and these were many; besides the Babylonians, Assyrians, and Chaldeans, also the Medes and Persians, the Egyptians, the Jews, and the nations round about them; and also the Spaniards, Moors, and Thracians, with others: but there is no reason to limit this to his own subjects, though first designed; for it was his desire that all people whatever in the known world might read, hear, and consider, what the grace of God had done unto him, with him, and for him, and learn to fear and reverence him: *peace be multiplied unto you;* a wish for all kind of outward happiness and prosperity, and an increase of it; thus it becomes a prince to wish for all his subjects, and even for all the world; for there cannot be a greater blessing than peace, nor a greater judgment than war. This phrase is borrowed from the common salutation in eastern countries, and is used often in the New Testament for spiritual and eternal peace.

* מני שים טעם a me proponitur edictum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Broughtonus; a me positum decretum, Montanus, Cocceius, Michaelis.

* הצלח prosperare fecit, Munster; prosperari jussit, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; prosperos feliceque fecit, Gejerus.

Ver. 2. *I thought it good,* &c.] Or, *fair* [y] and beautiful, highly becoming me, what was my duty, and what might be profitable and beneficial to others, and make for the glory of the great God of heaven and earth: *to shew the signs and wonders the high God hath wrought toward me;* to declare by writing the wonderful things God, who is above all, the most high God, had done unto him, by giving him a wonderful dream, exactly describing his future case and condition, and then as wonderful an interpretation of it, and which was as wonderfully fulfilled, and, after all, in a wonderful manner restoring him to the exercise of his reason, and the administration of his kingdom, after both had departed from him.

Ver. 3. *How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders!* &c.] They are great, very great, exceeding great; so great that it cannot be said, nor even conceived how great they are, what a display of wisdom, power, and goodness is in them; they are wonderful beyond expression and conception: and so strong and mighty as not to be resisted and made void by all the powers of nature, earth, or hell; and if this may be said of his works of providence, and his miracles of that, how much more of his works and miracles of grace! *his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom;* Nebuchadnezzar's reign, though a long one, had an end, and so have all others; but the kingdom of God is for ever; the kingdom of providence, and also of grace; the kingdom of his son, the Messiah, as in ch. ii. 44. from whence Nebuchadnezzar had learnt this: *and his dominion is from generation to generation;* or, *with generation and generation* [z]; it goes along, and continues with all generations, and will do so to the end of time.

Ver. 4. *I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house,* &c.] Being returned from his wars, and having obtained victory over the Egyptians, and other nations, and made himself an universal monarch; and now was in entire rest from all his enemies; enjoying himself in his family, and among his courtiers, and nothing to disturb him from any quarter. Josephus [b] says this was a little after the history of the former chapter; but it must be many years after that: he reigned 45 years; one year after this dream, it came to pass; it was seven years fulfilling, and he lived after his restoration a year or two; so that this must be about the 35th year of his reign. Bishop Usher [c] and Mr. Whiston [d] place it in the year of the Julian period 4144, and before Christ 570; and so Dr. Prideaux [e]. Mr. Bedford [f] puts it in the year 569: *and flourishing in my palace;* in health of body, in vigour of mind, abounding with riches; indulging himself in all sensual pleasures; adored by his subjects, caressed by his courtiers, and in fame throughout the whole world: a new palace was built by him, of which ver. 30. being, as Dr. Prideaux [g] says, four times as big as the old one; eight miles in compass; surrounded with three walls; and had hanging gardens in it, he made for his wife.

Ver. 5. *I saw a dream which made me afraid,* &c.] Things were represented to his fancy in a dream, as if he saw them with his eyes, as the tree, its leaves and fruit; the shaking and cutting it down to the stump, *&c.:* and though he did not understand the meaning of it, yet he thought it portended some evil, which threw him into a panic; he was afraid that something bad would befall him, though he knew not what: thus God can make the minds of the greatest men uneasy amidst all their glory, pride, and pleasure: *and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me;* the thoughts that came into his mind while he was upon his bed dreaming, and the things which were represented to his fancy in his brain, he remembered when awake, gave him a great deal of trouble and uneasiness, what should be the meaning of them, and what would be the issue and event of these things.

Ver. 6. *Therefore made I a decree,* &c.] Published a proclamation; signifying it was his mind and will *to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before him;* all together, supposing that one or other of them, or by consulting together, would be able to explain things to his satisfaction, and make him more easy: *that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream;* for though they could not tell the interpretation of his former dream, because he could not relate to them the dream itself; which, if he could, they promised him the interpretation; but now he could remember it, and therefore might expect they would make known the interpretation of it to him.

Ver. 7. *Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers,* &c.] See the note on ch. ii. 2: *and I told the dream before them, but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof;* because they could not; before they pretended, if the dream was told, they could give the interpretation of it; but now, though it was told, they could not do it; which shews the vanity of their art, the falsehood of their pretensions, and that they were but jugglers and impostors.

Ver. 8. *But at the last Daniel came in before me,* &c.] Whether sent for or no is not clear; the reason why he came not with the rest might be because he did not associate with them; nor did they care he should be among them, and present at this time; and it may be the king had forgot the knowledge he had of dreams; or, however, did not choose to send for him until he had tried all his wise men; and so it was ordered by the providence of God, and which is the chief reason of all, that he should come last, that the skill of the magicians might appear first to be baffled, and that Daniel, or rather Daniel's God, might be more known, and might be glorified: *whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god;* so called by him and his courtiers, after the name of his god Bel, with which this name of Daniel begins; see the note on ch. i. 7: *and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods;* meaning either the holy angels, as Saadiah; or speaking in his Heathenish manner, having imbibed the notion of many gods, some holy, and some impure; or it may be, speaking

[y] שפר pulchrum, Montanus, Grotius, Gejerus, Michaelis; decet me, Junius & Tremellius.

[z] עם דר ודר cum generatione & generatione, Pagninus, Montanus, Michaelis; cum omni ætate, Piscator.

[b] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 10. c. 10. sect. 6.

[c] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3434.

[d] Chronological Tables, cent. 10.

[e] Connexion, p. 92.

[f] Scripture Chronology, p. 710.

[g] Connexion, &c. par. 1. B. 2. p. 102.

in the dialect of the Jews, he may mean the one true God, who is holy, and from whom alone is the spirit of prophecy, or of foretelling things to come; which he knew by former experience Daniel had: *and before him I told the dream*, saying; as follows:

Ver. 9. *O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians*, &c.] So he called him, either because he excelled them in knowledge, and was greater than they, as Jacchiades; though not of their rank and order, which Daniel would have scorned to have been among, and reckoned of; so that this would have been no compliment, but a grief unto him: or because he was appointed by the king chief over them, and even over their governors; see the note on ch. ii. 48: *because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee*; see the note on the preceding verse: *and no secret troubleth thee*; any ways perplexes thy mind to find it out; it is easy to thee to come at; it gives thee no manner of trouble to get knowledge of it; there's no secret hidden from thee; all is plain before thee, and with the utmost facility canst thou reveal it: *tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen*; that is, the meaning of them; for the king remembered this his dream, and afterwards tells it very particularly: *and the interpretation of it*: it may be rendered, *that is, the interpretation of it*[h]; for that only was what the king wanted.

Ver. 10. *Thus were the visions of mine head in my bed*, &c.] So things appeared to my fancy thus; they ran in my head or brain in a dream in my bed, as if I saw them with my eyes, as follows; for so I thought, *I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth*; an emblem of a powerful prince well settled, and strongly supported in his power and government; so the Assyrian monarch, Ezek. xxxi. 3—9. and here Nebuchadnezzar himself, as it is afterwards explained; who was well established in his monarchy, the metropolis of which was Babylon; and which stood pretty much in the midst of the then known world: *and the height thereof was great*; taller than trees in common; denoting the superiority of the Babylonian monarch over all kings and kingdoms of the earth.

Ver. 11. *The tree grew, and was strong*, &c.] Grew higher and broader, taller and thicker, increased in boughs and branches, and became strong and stable, that no winds nor storms could move it: this shews the increasing power of Nebuchadnezzar, the enlargement of his dominions, and the stability of his empire: *and the height thereof reached unto heaven*; higher than any on earth; expressive of his dominion over all nations and people of the earth; or of his ambition of deity itself; and so Saadiah illustrates it by Isa. xiv. 14. *I will ascend above the heights of the clouds*, &c.: *and the sight thereof to the end of the earth*; being so high, it was seen afar off; the fame of this great monarch reached to the ends of the earth; the eyes of all were turned to him; some looking upon him with wonder, others with envy.

Ver. 12. *The leaves thereof were fair*, &c.] Or *branches*[i], as some; and design either the provinces belonging to his empire, which were very large and flourishing; or the governors of them under him, as Saadiah, who made no small and contemptible figure; his princes were altogether kings: *and the fruit thereof much*; great revenues from all parts of the empire were brought to him: *and in it was meat for all*; the produce of the several countries, and the trade carried on in them, brought in a sufficient livelihood to all the inhabitants: *the beasts of the field had shadow under it*; the inhabitants of the several Heathenish nations under him, and even those that were most savage, were protected in their lives and properties by him; so princes should be a screen, a protection to their subjects: *and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof*; which Saadiah interprets of the Israelites, in opposition to the foreign nations, comparable to the beasts of the field: *and all flesh was fed of it*; all his subjects shared in the good things his victorious arms brought into his empire; all enriched, or however made comfortable, and had a sufficiency of food and raiment; so that there was no reason to complain of him as oppressive to his subjects.

Ver. 13. *I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed*, &c.] The king goes on to relate what other things presented themselves to his imagination in his dream, concerning this tree which signified himself: *and, behold, a watcher*; which Saadiah interprets of Bath Kol; but Aben Ezra, Jarchi, Jacchiades, and Ben Melech, of an angel; so called because incorporeal, ever watches, and never sleeps, and is always attentive to, and observant of, the commands of God; so the angels in the fragment of Enoch are called *egregori*, watchers; and the same word is here used in the Alexandrian copy. Some[k] render it *an enemy, an holy one*: according to the sense of the word in 1 Sam. xxviii. 16. and produce it to shew that angels are called enemies: *and an holy one*; one of the holy angels that never sinned, nor left their first estate, but continued in it; in which they are established by Christ, and are impeccable; are perfectly pure and holy in their nature and actions: such an one *came down from heaven*; the place of their abode, as it seemed to Nebuchadnezzar in his dream.

Ver. 14. *He cried aloud*, &c.] Or, *with strength*[l]; being a mighty angel, and that he might be heard far and near: *and said thus, hew down the tree*; remove this mighty monarch from his throne; take away his government from him: this is said to fellow-angels employed in the affairs of Providence, and the execution of them, to bring about an event so momentous: *and cut off his branches*; take away his provinces, the several parts of his dominion, from him: *shake off his leaves*; cause his deputy-governors to shake off their allegiance to him: *and scatter his fruit*; the revenues of his vast empire, and let others take them: *let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches*; those that have either voluntarily betook themselves to him for protection; or have been carried captive by him, and have lived under his shadow, whether of the more barbarous nations, or more civilized, as the Jews; let them take the opportunity of withdrawing

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[h] פשרה id est, interpretationem ejus, Junius & Tremellius, Broughton, Michaelis.

[i] עפיה rami ejus, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Vatablus; ramos ejus, Junius & Tremellius; rami ejus, Piscator.

[k] Lex. Kabalist. in voce עיר, p. 54, 55.

[l] בחיל in virtute, Montanus; cum robore, Gejerus; fortiter, Cocceius, Michaelis; strenue, Junius & Tremellius, Broughtoune.

from him, and returning to their own lands; see Jer. li. 9.

Ver. 15. *Nevertheless, leave the stump of his roots in the earth,* &c.] Let him not be utterly destroyed, or his life taken away; but let him continue in being; though in a forlorn condition, yet with hope of restoration; for a tree may be cut down to the stump, and yet revive again, Job xiv. 7, 8, 9. and let his kingdom remain: *even with a band of iron and brass:* which some think was done to preserve it, and to shew that his kingdom remained firm and immovable; but that is meant by the former clause, ver. 26. rather the allusion is to his distracted condition afterwards related; it being usual to bind madmen with chains of iron or brass, to keep them from hurting themselves and others, as in Mark v. 4.: *in the tender grass of the field;* where his dwelling should be, not in Babylon, and in his fine palace, living sumptuously as he now did; but in the field, grazing there like a beast, and like one that is teddered and confined to a certain place: *and let it be wet with the dew of heaven;* suggesting that this would not only be his case in the day-time; but that he should lie all night in the field, and his body be wet all over with the dew that falls in the night, as if he had been dipped in a dyer's vat, as the word[m] signifies; and Jarchi says it has the signification of dipping; and not be in a stately chamber, and on a bed of down, but on a plot of grass, exposed to all the inclemencies of the air: *and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth;* instead of feeding on royal dainties, as he had all his days, let him eat grass like the beasts of the field, as it seems he did.

Ver. 16. *Let his heart be changed from man's,* &c.] Not as to the substance, but as to the quality: *and let a beast's heart be given unto him;* from a human heart, let it be changed into a brutal one; let him be deprived of the use of reason, and have no more exercise of it than a brute has; let him be wholly governed by the animal senses, and behave and act as a beast does; be as senseless, stupid, and savage, as that: and such a heart Nebuchadnezzar had; not that his rational soul departed from him, then he must have died; but the powers of it were sadly vitiated and depraved; his understanding, imagining himself to be a beast, not a man; his judgment, in not distinguishing the actions of a beast from those of a man; his memory of things past utterly failed; he forgot what he had been, and was; his will, inclination, and fancy, were towards brutal things, and ran upon deserts, fields, and grass; and he shunned the society of men: *and let seven times pass over him:* whilst in this condition; let him remain so long in it; not seven months, as Abarbinel, and others; nor seven half-years, or three years and a half, as some in Theodoret; dividing the year into two parts, summer and winter; and suppose, that seven of these seasons passed over him before he recovered: but seven years are meant, as Jarchi, Saadiah, and Jacchiades, as the phrase is used in ch. vii. 25. and xii. 7. so many years the temple of Solomon was building, which Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed, and so long this madness must remain upon him: no notice is taken of this affair by Heathen writers, only Abydenus[n] says, that being under a divine afflatus, he foretold the destruction of the Babylonian empire by a Persian mule (meaning Cyrus), and by a Mede, and immediately, ἠφανίσθη, he disappeared; which some have understood of this time of his madness, which quickly followed upon this dream.

Ver. 17. *This matter is by the decree of the watchers,* &c.] That is, the cutting down the tree, and what is signified by it, was with the advice, consent, and approbation of the watchers, by whom is generally understood angels; not that they were the authors of this decree, but approvers of it; and were ready, not only to subscribe it, but to execute it; it being against a wicked man, and an oppressor of the Lord's people: they are represented as assessors with God; called into a consultation with him; alluding to the manner of kings and princes, who have their privy council, whom they advise with on occasion; though, properly speaking, nothing of this nature is to be attributed to God, only after the manner of men; see 1 Kings xxii. 19—22: *and the demand by the word of the holy ones;* the same as before, in other words; watchers and holy ones being the same, the holy angels; see the note on ver. 13. and the decree and the demand the same; or the *request*[o], or petition; which shews what concern they had in the decree; they only requested it might pass, or be carried into execution; though some understand this of saints on earth, who, in their prayers and supplications, requested for the judgments of God to come down upon this proud monarch: though, after all, it may be best to interpret the whole of the three Persons in the Godhead, who are perfectly pure and holy, essentially and inderivatively; and may be called *watchers,* because they watch over the good, to bring it upon the Lord's people; and over the evil, to bring it upon their enemies; and to them well agree the decree and the demand; and the rather this may be thought to be the true sense, since this decree is called the decree of the most High, ver. 24. and who is expressed in the next clause: *to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men;* though men have kingdoms on earth, and multitudes subject to them, yet they are not absolute sovereigns; there is a God that is higher than they, at whose control they are, and does whatsoever he pleases in their kingdoms, of which the event signified in this dream was a proof; and would be brought about on purpose to make it appear that those that live on earth (for, as for the dead, they know nothing what is done on it), both princes and people, might be sufficiently convinced of the truth of it: *and giveth it to whomsoever he will;* that is, the kingdom; he takes it from one, and gives it to another; pulls down one, and sets up another, as he pleases; see ch. ii. 21: *and setteth up over it the basest of men;* or, *the lowest of men*[p]; men of the meanest and lowest rank and condition of life, as David was taken from the sheepfold, and made king of Israel; perhaps respect is had to Nebuchadnezzar

[m] יצטבע tingatur, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster; intingatur, Junius & Tremellius; tingetur, Piscator, Michaelis.

[n] Apud Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 41. p. 457.

[o] שאלתא petitio, Pagninus, Montanus; postulatio, Munster; hoc postulatum, Junius & Tremellius; petitio hæc, Piscator.

[p] שפל אנשים humilem hominum, Montanus, Grotius; humilem inter homines, Pagninus; humilem virorum, Michaelis; humillimum hominum, Cocceius.

himself; not to his person, as Saadiah, who says he was short, and low of stature; but to his after-state and condition, when he was taken from among the beasts of the field, and restored to his throne and kingdom.

Ver. 18. *This dream I King Nebuchadnezzar have seen, &c.*] So things were represented to him by a vision in a dream: *now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof*: at once, directly; as he was well assured he could, by what he had already done; having both told him his dream when forgotten by him, and the meaning of it; and therefore doubted not but he could interpret his dream, being told him: *forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation*: he had sent for them, even all of them; he had told them his dream, but they could not interpret it; see ver. 6, 7: *but thou art able, for the spirit of the holy gods is in thee*: he not only knew his ability from former experience, but for the reason here given; of which he might have more proofs than one, that the spirit, not of impure deities, of the gods and demons of the Heathens, but of the one true, living, and holy God, who knows all things, dwelt in him; see ver. 9.

Ver. 19. *Then Daniel (whose name was Belteshazzar) was astonied for one hour, &c.*] Not at the difficulty of interpreting the dream, which was plain and easy to him; but at the sad and shocking things he saw plainly by the dream were coming upon the king: and though he was a wicked prince, and justly deserved such treatment; yet Daniel, having received many favours from him, both for himself, and for his people, could not but be concerned for the unhappy condition and miserable circumstances he would be brought into; and thus he continued for the space of an hour like one thunder-struck, filled with amazement, quite stupid, dumb, and silent: *and his thoughts troubled him*: both about what should befall the king, and how he should make it known to him: *the king spake and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation thereof, trouble thee*: he saw by his countenance the confusion he was in, and imagined there was something in the dream which portended evil, and made him backward to relate it; and therefore encouraged him to tell it, be it what it would: *Belteshazzar answered and said, my lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies*: which is as if he had said, I could have wished, had it been the will of God, that what is signified by the dream might have befallen not the king, but his enemies; this he said, not merely as a courtier, but as one that heartily wished and prayed for his peace and prosperity; and to shew that he had no ill will to the king in the interpretation of the dream, but was his hearty faithful servant and minister; and yet suggests that something very dreadful and distressing was intended for him; and hereby he prepared him the better to receive it.

Ver. 20, 21. *The tree which thou sawest, &c.*] In these two verses is related part of the dream, which respects the flourishing estate of Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom; see the notes on ver. 10, 11, 12.

Ver. 22. *It is thou, O king, that art grown, and become strong, &c.*] Here begins the interpretation of the dream: the tree was an emblem of King Nebuchadnezzar, of his greatness, and growing power and strength: *for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven*: he overtopped all the kings of the earth, exceeding them in honour and power, and aspired to deity itself; see the note on ver. 11: *and thy dominion to the end of the earth*: as far as Hercules's pillars, as Strabo[s] says he came. Grotius interprets it, as far as the Caspian and Euxine sea, and the Atlantic ocean.

Ver. 23. *And whereas the king saw a watcher, and an holy one, &c.*] Here is related another part of the dream, which respects the cutting down of the tree, or the miserable condition the king should be brought into; see ver. 13, 14, 15, 16.

Ver. 24. *This is the interpretation, O king, &c.*] Of this part of the dream, namely, what follows in the two next verses: *and this is the decree of the most High*: called before the decree of the watchers, ver. 17, and is no other than the decree of that sovereign and absolute Being, whose purposes are unfrustrable: *which is come upon my lord the king*: the decree had passed concerning him, and would be most certainly fulfilled; and, because of the certainty of it, it is represented as if it was; for it would shortly and surely come upon him, exactly as it was determined, and by the dream signified.

Ver. 25. *That they shall drive thee from men, &c.*] From conversation with men, as unfit for it; from his court and palace, from his nobles and princes. Saadiah interprets this of the angels: it may be rendered impersonally or passively, as in ver. 33. *thou shalt be driven from men*[t]; not by his family, his wife and children; or by his nobles, who are afterwards said to seek him; but by the most high God, and to shew his power over him; and it may be by means of his ministering angels; or he was driven by his own fancy and imagination, which was suffered of God to prevail over him, judging himself not a man, but a beast; and so it was most agreeable to him to live with beasts, and not men: *and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field*: in the open air, or in some den and cavern, instead of being in his court, and among his nobles; a strange change of condition indeed! and in which he was preserved by divine Providence: *and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen*: imagining himself to be a beast, he should choose this sort of food, and eat it, and feed upon it with a gust, as if he had really been one; and besides, having no other food, would be obliged to eat this, as well as his degenerate and depraved imagination led him to it: *and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven*; strip him of his clothes, and leave him naked: so that he should have nothing to shelter him from the dew and rain, and other inclemencies of the heavens; and this his phrensy might lead him to do of himself: *and seven times shall pass over thee*: which some understand of weeks, others of months, others of the seasons of winter and summer; but it is best to interpret it of seven whole years; see the note on ver. 16: *till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will*: this was done, as for the instruction of men in general, so of Nebuchadnezzar in particular;

[s] Geograph. l. 15. p. 472.

[t] לך טרדין trudetis, Michaelis.

that his proud heart and haughty spirit might be brought down, and be made to acknowledge that there was a God higher than he, that judgeth in the earth, and that rules and overrules, and disposes of all things in it according to his will and pleasure; see ver. 17.

Ver. 26. *And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots, &c.*] That is, the watchers and the holy ones; or it was commanded: this was the order given by the most High: *thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee;* signifying that another king should not be set up in his room; and though the kingdom and administration of it would depart from him for a while, yet it would be restored again, and be firm and stable: *after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule;* that is, that God, who is the Maker of the heavens, and dwells there, is known and acknowledged by thee to rule on the earth; from the government of which he was desirous of excluding him, and taking it to himself; see Luke xv. 18.

Ver. 27. *Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to thee, &c.*] Since this is the true interpretation of the dream, and such evils are like to befall thee according to it, permit me, though thou art a king, and I am thy minister or servant, to give thee some advice; and let it be taken in good part, as done with a good design, and a hearty concern for thy welfare: *and break off thy sins by righteousness;* this advice carries in it a tacit charge of sins, and a reproof for them; which shews the faithfulness of Daniel: these sins probably, besides pride, intemperance, luxury, and uncleanness, were tyranny, rapine, violence, and oppression of his subjects, to which righteousness is opposed; and by which, that is, by a course and series of righteous living, by administering public justice, and giving to every one their due, he is advised to break off his sinful course of life; to break off the yoke of his sins upon his neck; to cease from doing evil, and to learn to do well: *and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor;* to his poor subjects, and especially to the poor captives the Jews, Daniel might chiefly bear upon his mind, whom the king had ill used, shewn no compassion to, and had greatly distressed; but is now counselled to relieve their wants, and give generously to them out of the vast treasures he was master of: *if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity;* peace or prosperity; perhaps by such a conduct there may be a reprieve for a while, the evil portended and threatened by this dream may be deferred for a time; and though the decree of the most High cannot be altered, yet the execution of it may be protracted, and prosperity be lengthened out. Daniel could not assure the king of this; but as there was a possibility, and even a probability of it, as in the case of Nineveh, and others, whose ruin was threatened, and yet upon repentance was prolonged; it was highly advisable to try the experiment, and make use of such a conduct, in hope of it; and the rather, since the humiliation of princes, and their reformation, though but external, is observed by the Lord, as in the case of Ahab. Aben Ezra, Jacchiades, and Ben Melech, render it, *if it may be an healing of thine error;* that is, the pardon of thy sins, that they may be forgiven thee; see Acts viii. 22.

Ver. 28. *All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar.*] All that was signified in the dream, his madness, the removal of him from the administration of government, and the brutal life he lived for seven years; for this was not a mere parable or fiction, as some have thought, framed to describe the state and punishment of a proud man, but was a real fact; though it is not made mention of by any historians, excepting what has been observed before out of Abydenus, yet there is no reason to doubt of the truth of it, from this relation of Daniel; and is further confirmed by his observing the same to Belshazzar his grandson some years after it was done, as a known thing, and as an unquestionable matter of fact, ch. v. 20, 21.

Ver. 29. *At the end of twelve months, &c.*] After the dream, and the interpretation of it; which, according to Bishop Usher[s], Dean Prideaux[t], and Mr. Whiston[u], was in the year of the Julian period 4145, and before Christ 569, and in the 36th year of his reign: one whole year, a space of time, either which God gave him to repent in, or which he obtained by attending for a while to Daniel's advice: *he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon,* or *upon the palace*[w]; upon the roof of it, which in the eastern countries was usually flat and plain; and so Abydenus[x], in the above-cited place, represents him, ὡς ἀναβὰς ἐπὶ τὰ βασίλεια, as ascending upon his royal palace; when, after he had finished his oration on it, he disappeared. From hence he could take a full view of the great city of Babylon, which swelled him with pride and vanity, and which he expressed in the next verse; see the note on ver. 4, where also mention is made of his palace, the new one built by him. The old palace of the kings of Babylon stood on the east side of the river Euphrates, over-against it, as Dean Prideaux[y] observes; on the other side of the river stood the new palace Nebuchadnezzar built. The old one was four miles in circumference; but this new one was eight miles, encompassed with three walls, one within another, and strongly fortified; and in it were hanging-gardens, one of the wonders of the world, made by him for the pleasure of his wife Amyitis, daughter of Astyages king of Media; who being taken with the mountainous and woody parts of her native country, and retaining an inclination for them, desired something like it at Babylon; and, to gratify her herein, this surprising work was made: though Diodorus Siculus[z] says it was made by a Syrian king he does not name, for the sake of his concubine; and whose account of it, and which is given from him by Dean Prideaux[a], and the authors of the Universal History[b], is this, and in the words of the latter: " these gardens are said to contain a square of " four plethra, or four hundred feet on each side, and " to have consisted of terraces one above another, " carried up to the height of the wall of the city; the " ascent, from terrace to terrace, being by steps ten

[s] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3435.
[t] Connexion, &c. part 1. p. 105.
[u] Chronological Tables, cent. 10.
[w] על היכל super palatium, Vatablus; super palatio, Cocceius, Michaelis.

[x] Apud Euseb. ut supra.
[y] Connexion, &c. part 1. B. 2. p. 102.
[z] Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 98.
[a] Ibid.
[b] Vol. 4. B. 1. ch. 9. p. 409, 410.

" feet wide. The whole pile consisted of substantial " arches upon arches, and was strengthened by a wall, " surrounding it on every side, twenty-two feet thick; " and the floors on each of them were laid in this " order: first on the tops of the arches was laid a bed " or pavement of stones, sixteen feet long, and four " feet broad; over this was a layer of reed, mixed with " a great quantity of bitumen; and over this two " courses of brick, closely cemented with plaster; and " over all these were thick sheets of lead, and on these " the earth or mould of the garden. This floorage was " designed to retain the moisture of the mould; which " was so deep as to give root to the greatest trees, " which were planted on every terrace, together with " great variety of other vegetables, pleasing to the " eye; upon the uppermost of these terraces was a " reservoir, supplied by a certain engine with water " from the river, from whence the gardens at the other " terraces were supplied." And it was either on the roof of the palace, as before observed, or perhaps it might be upon this uppermost terrace, that Nebuchadnezzar was walking, and from whence he might take a view of the city of Babylon; the greatness of which, as set forth by him, he prided himself with, in the following words:

Ver. 30. *The king spake and said*, &c.] Either within himself, or to his nobles about him; or perhaps to foreigners he had took up with him hither to shew the grandeur of the city: *is not this great Babylon, that I have built*: he might well call it great, for, according to Aristotle[c], it was more like a country than a city; it was, as Pliny[d] says, sixty miles in compass within the walls; and Herodotus[e] affirms it was four hundred and fourscore furlongs round, and such the *greatness* of it, and so beautified, as no other city was he ever knew; see the note on Jer. li. 58. though the king seems to have gone too far, in ascribing the building of it to himself; at least he was not the original builder of it; for it was built many hundreds of years before he was born, by Nimrod or Belus, who were the same, Gen. x. 10. and was much increased and strengthened by Semiramis, the wife of his son Ninus; wherefore to her sometimes the building of it is ascribed; but inasmuch as it might be in after-times greatly neglected by the Assyrian kings, Nineveh being the seat of their empire; Nebuchadnezzar, when he came to the throne, and especially after he had enriched himself with the spoils of the conquered nations, greatly enlarged, beautified, and fortified it: and Berosus[f] relates, that he not only adorned the temple of Bel therewith, but of the city which was of old he made a new one, and fortified it, built three walls within, and as many without; and another royal palace contiguous to his father's, which greatly exceeded it; and hanging-gardens in it, which looked at a distance like mountains, for the pleasure of his wife; and now, because he had done so much to the repairing, enlarging, and fortifying of this city, he takes the honour to himself of being the builder of it: and this was done, he says, *for the house of the kingdom*: that it might be the seat of the empire, and a proper place for the royal family to dwell in, to have their palace, and keep their court in: *by the might of my power*; through the great riches he was possessed of, which he employed in many great works, as before related, to the advantage of this city; he takes all to himself, and excludes all instruments, and even God himself; though, unless the Lord build the city, in vain the builders build, Psal. cxxvii. 1: *for the honour of my majesty?* not so much for the benefit of the city, for the good of his subjects, as for the honour and glory of himself; to shew his riches, power, and grandeur, and to make his name immortal to future ages.

Ver. 31. *While the word* was *in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven*, &c.] Before the king had done speaking in the above boasting manner, an articulate voice from heaven was heard by him, and all about him, formed by the angels, and much like what the Jews call Bath Kol; see Acts xii. 21, 22, 23. so Abydenus[g], in the account he gives of Nebuchadnezzar's oration to the people, relates, that when the king had spoke it, παραχρημα αφανες, immediately he disappeared: saying, *O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken, the kingdom is departed from thee*: that is, the administration of it: for he was not deposed, or declared to be no longer king; his office was not taken away from him, and another king set upon the throne; only the administration was taken into other hands, either of his wife or son, or his nobles; he being unfit for it, till such time as his reason returned to him.

Ver. 32. *And they shall drive thee from men*, &c.] According to the interpretation of the dream given by Daniel, which this voice from heaven confirms; see the note on ver. 25, where the same things are said as here.

Ver. 33. *The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar*, &c.] Whence it appears that this was a true history, and a matter of fact; and not a parable or allegory, as Origen thought, describing the fall of Lucifer or Satan; but relates what befell Nebuchadnezzar himself: nor was the change real as to soul and body; for then he would not have been the same person, not Nebuchadnezzar, and so not he himself punished, but the beast into which he was changed: and though there was a strange alteration, both in his body and mind; in some parts of his body, and perhaps in his voice, in his senses of feeling, tasting, and smelling, in his palate, and appetite, and stomach; in his rational powers, understanding, judgment, and memory; so that he acted like a beast, and choosing to live as one; yet so as to retain the essential parts of a man; his case was, that at once he fell raving mad and distracted, when they first bound him with chains, that he might not hurt himself and others, and afterwards turned him loose into the woods among the wild beasts; or perhaps into one of his parks, among the deer, hares, foxes, and such-like creatures; whither he might incline to go, fancying himself to be a beast, and delight to be among them: *and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen*: which he did

[c] Politic. l. 2. c. 3.
[d] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 26.
[e] Clio, sive l. 1. c. 178.

[f] Apud Joseph. Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 1. & contr. Apion, l. 1. sect. 19.
[g] Apud Euseb. ut supra.

by choice: so Aben Ezra reports of one in the island of Sardinia, who fled from his parents, and lost his reason, and lived among deer for many years, and went upon his hands and feet like them; and the king of the island going a-hunting one day, caught many deer, and among them this man, that was taken for one: his parents came and owned him, and spoke to him, but he answered not; they set before him bread and wine, to eat and drink, but he refused; they then gave him grass with the deer, and he ate that; and in the middle of the night made his escape to the deer of the field again. *And his body was wet with the dew of heaven*; lying all night in the woods or fields without clothing: *till his hair was grown like eagles' feathers*; thick, black, and strong; the hairs of his head having not been cut, nor his beard shaved for seven years: the Septuagint and Arabic versions read, *as lions: and his nails like birds' claws*; the nails of his fingers and toes were hard, long, and sharp, like theirs, having not been cut during this time; this shews that the seven times are not to be understood of weeks or months, but of years. Some have understood all this as a real metamorphosis, and that Nebuchadnezzar was changed into a beast; the upper part of him was the form of an ox, and the lower part that of a lion, as Epiphanius [h]; so Cyril [i] says of him, that he was changed into a beast, lived in a desert, had the nails and hair of a lion, ate grass like an ox; for he was a beast, not knowing who gave him the kingdom; and so others; closely adhering to the letter of the text, but wrongly, for reasons before given: nor is it to be ascribed merely to any natural disease of body, or melancholy in him, by which the fancy may be so disturbed, as for a person to imagine himself a beast; for though this was his case, yet not through any diseases, such as is called the lycanthropy; and much less to any witchcraft, or any diabolical art, exercised on him; but to the mighty hand of God, taking away the use of his reason, and throwing him into madness and distraction, for the demonstration of his power, and humbling the pride of an insolent monarch; not but that God could, if it had been his pleasure, have changed him into a brute, as he turned Lot's wife into a pillar of salt; and as a certain wicked nobleman in Muscovy was turned into a black dog, barking and howling, upon uttering horrible blasphemies against God for some judgment upon him, as Ciuverius [k] relates, who had it, he says, from both ear and eye witnesses of it; but such a judgment was not inflicted on Nebuchadnezzar, nor are such things usual. Herodotus [l] reports, though he himself did not credit it, of some people among the Scythians, that were every year, for a few days, changed into wolves, and then returned to their former shape again; and Pomponius Mela [m] relates the same of the same people; and the poets frequently speak of such transmutations; but these are all fictions and delusions.

Ver. 34. *And at the end of the days*, &c.] Of the time fixed in the dream; that is, at the end of seven years, as Jarchi rightly interprets it: this, according to Bishop Usher [n], Dean Prideaux [o], and Mr. Whiston [p], was in the year of the Julian period 4150, and before Christ 563, in the 42d year of his reign; after which he lived but one year, reigning from the death of his father 43 years, and according to the Jewish accounts 45; they reckoning from the beginning of his partnership in the kingdom with his father, and his first coming with an army into Syria. *I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven*: for, during the seven years he ate grass like an ox, his eyes were fixed upon the earth, looking out for his food, and especially if he went on all four, as the beasts do; but now standing upright, in his erect form as a man, he looked upwards; though this phrase does not merely design his looking up to the heavens, and viewing them with his bodily eyes; but his sense and consideration of the divine Majesty in heaven, his praying to him, lifting up the eyes being a prayer-gesture, and his devotion towards him: *and mine understanding returned to me*; his understanding as a man, which he had been deprived of during this time; and so came to know in what state and condition he was, by whom brought into it, and for what reason: *and I blessed the most High*; the most high God, he whose name alone is Jehovah, the God of gods, who is higher than the highest; him the king blessed for returning his understanding and reason to him, and restoring him to his senses; for which he had just cause to be thankful, for a greater blessing cannot be enjoyed: *and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever*; the living and true God, the author of life to all that have it, and who upholds in it; who lives in and of himself, and for evermore; which no mere man, even the most exalted and dignified, does: *whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation*: see the note on ver. 3.

Ver. 35. *And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing*, &c.] That is, by the most high God, in comparison of him; and that not only the common people, but magistrates, princes, and kings, and even so great a monarch as Nebuchadnezzar; they are like mere nonentities, nothing as to existence, substance, greatness, glory, and duration, when compared with him: for this is to be understood not absolutely as in themselves; for as such they are something; their bodies are something in their original, and especially in their make, form, and constitution, and even in their dissolution; and their souls are yet more valuable, are of more worth than the whole world, being immaterial and immortal; but comparatively with respect to God, in whom they live, and move, and have that being they have, and by whom they are supported in it; all whose glory and grandeur is fading and passing away, and their continuance is but very short; and all nothing with God, the Being of beings, whose glory is inconceivable, and with whom a thousand years are as one day, and who is from everlasting to everlasting: and this is meant chiefly of the rational inhabitants of the

[h] De Prophet. Vit. & Inter. c. 10.
[i] Catechis. 6. sect. 11.
[k] Apud. Bucheim Dissertat. de μεταμορφωσει Reg. Nebuchad. in Thesaur. Philol. Dissert. tom. 1. p. 880.
[l] Melpomene, sive l. 4. c. 105.
[m] De Situ Orbis, l. 2. c. 1.
[n] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3442.
[o] Connexion, &c. part 1. p. 106.
[p] Chronological Tables, cent. 10.

earth; not of the beasts of the field, the cattle on a thousand hills, and the innumerable reptiles of the earth, which also are the inhabitants of it; but of men, the principal ones, and of all of these, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free; not as in their own account, and that of others; for they are something in their own esteem, and seem so in the eyes of others, who judge according to the outward appearance; but they are nothing in the account of God: and as this is true of them in things natural and civil, it is much more so in things spiritual, or relating to everlasting salvation: in these men are nothing, and counted as nothing; no use is made of them, or any account is had of any thing done by them; these have no causal influence in their salvation; they are nothing in God's choice of them to eternal life, which is all of mere sovereign grace; nothing in redemption, which is only by Jesus Christ; nothing in regeneration, which is alone by the spirit and grace of God; nothing in justification, which is not by the works of the law, but by the righteousness of Christ; in short, they are nothing in their salvation from first to last, which is all of grace, and not of works. Jarchi and Saadiah interpret this of an atom or mote in a sunbeam, which is seen flying about, but can't be laid hold on, having no substance, and disappears when the sun shines not; see Isa. xl. 15, 17. *And he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth*; he orders the angels, which are the host of heaven, to stand or go where he pleases; and he disposes of men on earth, and puts them into such stations, and such conditions and circumstances, and appoints them such business and services, as he thinks meet. The angels are *the army of heaven*, or the heavenly host; so called for their number, there being legions of them, even an innumerable company; and for their military use, being employed to fight for the people of God, to encamp about them, and protect them: those who formerly belonged to them, that sinned against God, he cast them down to hell, without shewing them any mercy; and the rest he chose and confirmed in Christ, and all according to his sovereign will; and these he makes use of according to his pleasure, to minister to the heirs of salvation in life, to convoy their souls to heaven at death, and to gather in all the elect at the last day. The *inhabitants of the earth* are the men of it, as before, with whom he does as he pleases in things temporal and civil, making some rich, and others poor; raising some to great honour and dignity, whilst others live in meanness, poverty, and disgrace: and in things spiritual; he loves whom he will; he chooses whom he pleases; he redeems whom he thinks fit from among men; he regenerates and calls by his grace, of his own will; and reveals Christ, and the great things of the Gospel, to whom it seems good in his sight; he does what he will with his own; he bestows grace and glory on whomsoever he pleases, as free-grace gifts, without any merit of the creature, according to his sovereign will and pleasure. *And none can stay his hand*; stop his power, resist his will, or hinder him from acting, or cause him to cease from his work, which he is bent upon; his will in both worlds is sovereign and arbitrary, and his power uncontrollable. It was so in creation, he said, and it was done; it is so in providence, he does what he pleases; there's nothing done without his knowledge and will, and there's no counsel against the Lord: it is so in his works of grace; in the great work of redemption; no difficulties could discourage or hinder Christ from the performance of that arduous work, he being the mighty God: and in the work of grace upon the heart of a sinner, when God begins to work, none can let; not corruptions within, nor Satan without; nor can any thing hinder the carrying of it on; not indwelling sin, nor the snares of the world, nor the temptations of Satan. The purposes of God cannot be disannulled; his hand cannot be held, stopped, or turned back from the execution of them; he'll do his will and his work in the world, and in his churches, and on particular persons, maugre all the opposition of men and devils. *Or say unto him, what dost thou?* what is this thou hast done? and wherefore hast thou done it? why was it not done in another form and manner, and for other ends and purposes? see Isa. xlv. 9. all such-like questions are vain and foolish, and are despised by the Lord; he gives no account of his matters unto the children of men. Some may with wonder say, *what has God wrought!* but none ought to say, in a complaining and murmuring way, *what dost thou?* and should they, it is of no avail, he will do what he pleases.

Ver. 36. *At the same time my reason returned unto me, &c.*] Or, *my understanding*[t]; this he repeats, not only to express the certainty of it, but the sense he had of the greatness of the favour, and of which what he said at this time is a full proof: *and for the glory of my kingdom mine honour and brightness returned unto me*; or *form*[u], as the Septuagint; his majestic form, that royal majesty, that appeared in his countenance formerly, returned again; which graced him as a king, and made for the glory of his kingdom, and the administration of his office. Jarchi renders it, *and to the glory of my kingdom I returned*; and to the same purpose the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions. This whole clause is wanting in the Syriac version. Jarchi interprets *brightness* of the form of his countenance; and Jacchiades of the light of it, the sparkling lustre and majesty of it. A strange change and alteration this! *And my counsellors and my lords sought unto me*: who very likely had the administration of government in their hands during this time; and as the dream, and the interpretation, were publicly known, and they had seen the first part of it fulfilled in the king's madness and miserable state, they had reason to believe the latter part also, and therefore waited for the accomplishment of it at the end of seven years; when they sought for him, and sought unto him, very probably by the direction of Daniel, who was at the head of them; and this may be the reason why another prince was not set upon the throne, because they expected his return to it at the expiration of these years; and in the mean while held the reins of government in their own hands, but now delivered them up to him:

[t] מנדעי intellectus meus, Cocceius, Michaelis.

[u] זיוי, ἡ μορφή μου, Sept.; forma mea, Tigurine version; figura mea, Munster.

and I was established in my kingdom; as Daniel had told him, in the interpretation of his dream, that his kingdom should be sure to him, ver. 26: *and excellent majesty was added unto me*: or, *more majesty**; he had more honour and grandeur than he had before; more respect was shewn him, and homage paid him: his latter end, like Job's, was greater than his beginning.

Ver. 37. *Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven*, &c.] Now he knew that the heavens ruled, and that there was a God and a King there, above all gods and kings; who had brought him low, and raised him up again, and to whom were owing all his present glory and magnificence, and therefore worthy of his highest praises; and which he in the most public manner gave by words before his lords and counsellors, and by writing under his own hand, by this edict and proclamation: *all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment*: every thing he does in providence, and every step he takes therein, are according to truth and righteousness; he is true to his word, and righteous in his works, as he had been to him: *and those that walk in pride he is able to abase*; not only that shew it now and then, but always, and in every thing; in their looks and gestures, in their talk and walk, and throughout the whole of their conversation; in whom it is public, visible, notorious, and constant; but let them carry their heads ever so high, and be as proud and haughty as they will, God is able to humble them; he has various ways of doing it. Such as are proud of their outward beauty, or the strength of their bodies, he can, by sending a disease upon them, make their beauty to consume like a moth, and weaken their strength in the way; such as are elated with their wealth and substance, and with honours conferred upon them, or dignity they are raised to, he can soon strip them of all their riches by one providence or another, and bring down those that stand in slippery places of honour and dignity to destruction in a moment; and such as pride and plume themselves with their wit and knowledge, the natural endowments of their mind, he can take away their reason and understanding from them, as he did from this monarch, and put them upon a level with brutes; such who boast of their own righteousness and good works, and trust in themselves, that they are righteous and holy persons, and despise others; and think to be justified and saved by them, and not to be beholden to any other, but be their own saviours; these the Lord, by his spirit, can humble, by shewing them the impurity of their nature; their impotence to that which is spiritually good; the imperfection of their best righteousness to justify them in his sight; so that they shall appear to be polluted and defiled creatures, who thought themselves very holy; and to be very weak and insufficient of themselves, to do any thing spiritually good, who gloried in the power and strength of their free will; and see that their best works are no other than filthy rags, and to be renounced in the business of their justification and salvation: in short, he humbles by shewing them that all their temporal good things are owing to the good providence of God, and are dependent on it; and that all they have in spirituals is owing to the grace of God, and not to any desert of theirs; in consequence of which they become meek and lowly, and walk humbly with their God, who before walked in the pride of their hearts, and in the vanity of their minds. And a power to do this is peculiar to God himself; none but God can look upon him that is proud, and abase him, and bring him low; and sooner or later, by one means, or in one way or another, he will stain the pride of all glory; it is his usual way to abase him that exalts himself, and exalt him that humbles himself; see Job xl. 11, 12. Isa. xxiii. 9. Matt. xxiii. 12. Luke xiv. 11. pride being a most hateful sin to him, contrary to his nature and glory, to his grace and to his Gospel; the first sin of angels and men. And of abasement and humiliation of such proud ones, Nebuchadnezzar was an instance in various respects; who was one of the proudest monarchs upon earth, yet was humbled with a witness; but, after all, whether truly converted, is a question.

CHAP. V.

THIS chapter gives an account of a feast made by King Belshazzar, attended with drunkenness, idolatry, and profanation of the vessels taken out of the temple at Jerusalem, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. and of the displeasure of God, signified by a hand-writing on the wall, which terrified the king, and caused him to send in haste for the astrologers, &c. to read and interpret it, but they could not, ver. 5, 6, 7, 8. in this distress, which appeared in the countenances of him and his nobles, the queen-mother advises him to send for Daniel, of whom she gives a great encomium, ver. 9, 10, 11, 12. upon which he was brought in to the king, and promised a great reward to read and interpret the writing; the reward he slighted, but promised to read and interpret the writing, ver. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. and after putting him in mind of what had befallen his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar, and charging him home with pride, idolatry, and profanation of the vessels of the Lord, ver. 18—23, reads and interprets the writing to him ver. 24—28. when he had honour done him, and was preferred in the government, ver. 29. and the chapter is concluded with an account of the immediate accomplishment of ancient prophecies, and of this hand-writing, in the slaying of the king of Babylon, in the dissolution of the Babylonish monarchy, and the possession of it by Darius the Mede, ver. 30, 31.

Ver. 1. *Belshazzar the king made a great feast*, &c.] This king was not the immediate successor of Nebuchadnezzar, but Evil-merodach, Jer. lii. 31. who, according to Ptolemy's canon, reigned two years; then

* רבו יתירה magnificentia amplior, Pagninus, Montanus; amplitudo major, Junius & Tremellius; magnificentia major, Piscator; majestas amplior seu major, Michaelis.

followed Neriglissar, his sister's husband, by whom he was slain, and who usurped the throne, and reigned four years; he died in the beginning of his fourth year, and left a son called Laborosoarchod, who reigned but nine months, which are placed by Ptolemy to his father's reign, and therefore he himself is not mentioned in the canon; and then followed this king, who by Ptolemy is called Nabonadius; by Berosus, Nabonnedus[t]; by Abydenus[u], Nabannidochus; by Herodotus[w], Labynitus; and by Josephus[x], Naboandelus, who, according to him, is the same with Belshazzar; whom some confound with the son of Neriglissar; others take him to be the same with Evil-merodach, because he here immediately follows Nebuchadnezzar, and is called his son, ver. 11, 13, 18. and others that he was a younger brother, so Jarchi and Theodoret; but the truth is, that he was the son of Evil-merodach, and grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, which agrees with the prophecy in Jer. xxvii. 7. for though Nebuchadnezzar is called his father, and he his son, ver. 2, 11, 13, 18, 22. this is said after the manner of the eastern nations, who used to call ancestors fathers, and their more remote posterity sons. He had his name Belshazzar from the idol Bel, and may be rendered, *Bel's treasurer*; though, according to Saadiah, the word signifies *a searcher of treasures*, of his ancestors, or of the house of God. Hillerus translates it, *Bel hath hidden*. This king *made a great feast*; or *bread*[y], which is put for all provisions; it was *great*, both on account of plenty of food, variety of dishes, and number of guests, and those of the highest rank and quality. On what account this feast was made is not easy to say; whether out of contempt of Cyrus and his army, by whom he was now besieged, and to shew that he thought himself quite safe and secure in a city so well walled and fortified, and having in it such vast quantities of provision; or whether it was on account of a victory he had obtained that morning over the Medes and Persians, as Josephus Ben Gorion[z] relates; and therefore in the evening treated his thousand lords, who had been engaged in battle with him, and behaved well: though it seems to have been an anniversary feast; since, according to Xenophon and Herodotus, Cyrus knew of it before-hand; either on account of the king's birth-day, or in honour to his gods, particularly Shach, which was called the Sachæan feast; see the notes on Jer. xxv. 26. and li. 41. which seems most likely, since these were praised at this time, and the vessels of the temple of God at Jerusalem profaned, ver. 2, 3, 4. this feast was prophesied of by Isaiah, ch. xxi. 5. and by Jeremiah, ch. li. 39. it had its name from Shach, one of their deities, of which see the note on ch. i. 4, 7. the same with Belus or the sun. The feasts kept in honour of it were much like the Saturnalia of the Romans, or the Purim of the Jews; and were kept eleven days together, in which every one did as he pleased, no order and decorum being observed; and, for five of those days especially, there was no difference between master and servant, yea, the latter had the government of the former; and they spent day and night in dancing and drinking, and in all excess of riot and revelling[a]; and in such-like manner the Babylonians were indulging themselves, when their city was taken by Cyrus, as the above writers assert[b]; and from the knowledge Cyrus had of it, it appears to be a stated feast, and very probably on the above account. According to Strabo[c], there was a feast of this name among the Persians, which was celebrated in honour of the goddess Anais, Diana, or the moon; and at whose altar they placed together Amanus and Anandratus, Persian demons; and appointed a solemn convention once a year, called Sacæ. Some say the occasion of it was this; that Cyrus making an expedition against the Sacæ, a people in Scythia, pretended a flight, and left his tents full of all provisions, and especially wine, which they finding, filled themselves with it; when he returning upon them, finding some overcome with wine and stupified, others overwhelmed with sleep, and others dancing and behaving in a bacchanalian way, they fell into his hands, and almost all of them perished; and taking this victory to be from the gods, he consecrated that day to the god of his country, and called it Sacæa; and wherever there was a temple of this deity, there was appointed a bacchanalian feast, in which men and women appeared night and day in a Scythian habit, drinking together, and behaving to one another in a jocose and lascivious manner; but this could not be the feast now observed at Babylon, though it is very probable it was something of the like nature, and observed in much the same manner. And was made *to a thousand of his lords*: his nobles, the peers of his realm, governors of provinces, &c.; such a number of guests Ptolemy king of Egypt feasted at one time of Pompey's army, as Pliny from Varro relates[d]; but Alexander far exceeded, who at a wedding had nine (some say ten) thousand at his tables, and gave to every one a cup of gold, to offer wine in honour of the gods[e]; and Pliny reports[f] of one Pythius Bythinus, who entertained the whole army of Xerxes with a feast, even seven hundred and eighty-eight thousand men. *And drank wine before the thousand*; not that he strove with them who should drink most, or drank to every one of them separately, and so a thousand cups, as Jacchiades suggests; but he drank in the presence of them, to shew his condescension and familiarity; this being, as Aben Ezra observes, contrary to the custom of kings, especially of the eastern nations, who were seldom seen in public. This feast was kept in a large house or hall, as Josephus[g] says, afterwards called the banqueting-house, ver. 10.

Ver. 2. *Belshazzar, whilst he tasted the wine*, &c.] As he was drinking his cups, and delighted with the taste of the wine, and got merry with it: or, *by the advice*

[t] Apud Joseph. contr. Apion. l. 1.
[u] Apud Euseb. Evangel. l. 9. c. 41. p. 457.
[w] Clio, sive l. 1. c. 188.
[x] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 2.
[y] לחם panem, Montanus, Piscator. All food is called bread, Jarchi in Lev. xxi. 17.
[z] Hist. Hebr. l. 1. c. 5. p. 24.

[a] Athenæi Deipnosophist. l. 14. c. 10. ex Beroso & Ctesia.
[b] Xenophon. Cyropædia, l. 7. c. 23. Herodot. Clio, sive l. 1. c. 191.
[c] Geograph. l. 11. p. 352, 353.
[d] Nat. Hist. l. 33. c. 10.
[e] Plutarch. in Vit. Alexand.
[f] Ut supra.
[g] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 3.

of the wine[h], as Aben Ezra and Jarchi interpret it, by a prosopopœia; as if that dictated to him, and put him upon doing what follows; and which often puts both foolish and wicked things into the heads of men, and upon doing them: then he *commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels, which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which* was *in Jerusalem;* what these vessels were, and the number of them, we learn from the delivery of them afterwards to the prince of Judah by Cyrus, Ezra i. 9, 10, 11. these were put into the temple of Bel by Nebuchadnezzar, ch. i. 2. and from thence they were now ordered to be brought to the king's palace, and to the apartment where he and his nobles were drinking: *that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein;* Saadiah says, this day the seventy-years' captivity ended; and so, in contempt of the promise and prophecy of it, he ordered the vessels to be brought out and drank in, to shew that in vain the Jews expected redemption from it.

Ver. 3. *Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which* was *at Jerusalem,* &c.] That is, the servants to whom the orders were given fetched them from the temple of Bel, and brought them to the king's house; and though only mention is made of golden vessels, yet no doubt the silver ones were also brought, according to the king's command: *and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them;* by which they were profaned, being dedicated to holy uses, but now put to common use, and that by such impious persons; and who did it, not on account of the value and antiquity of these vessels, and in admiration of them, and to the honour of their festival; but in contempt of them, and in a profane and scurrilous way, as follows:

Ver. 4. *They drank wine,* &c.] That is, out of the vessels of the temple at Jerusalem, and perhaps till they were drunk: *and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone;* for they had gods of all these materials; see the note on ch. i. 2. and these they praised by offering sacrifices unto them; or rather by singing songs, and drinking healths, and by ascribing all their victories over the nations of the world to them; as that by their means they had got such large dominions, and such great wealth and treasures, and particularly these vessels of gold and silver; and so insulted and triumphed over the God of Israel, and defied the prophecies and promises of the deliverance of them that went under his name.

Ver. 5. *In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand,* &c. From heaven, as Jarchi; or they came forth as if they came out of the wall; this was done by the power of God, though it might be by the intervention or means of an angel; so Josephus Ben Gorion[i] says, that an angel came and wrote what follows; and Saadiah says it was Gabriel, called a man, ch. ix. 21. but this is conjecture; however, at the very time the king and his nobles were feasting and revelling, praising their idols, and reproaching the God of Israel, this wonderful phenomenon appeared: *and wrote over-against the candlestick, upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace;* this candlestick was either upon the table, as Saadiah; or affixed to the wall, or hung as a chandelier in the midst of the hall; or, be it where it will, right over-against it this hand appeared, and wrote, that, by the light of it, it might be clearly and distinctly seen: though Gussetius[k] thinks, not a candlestick, but a *buffet,* is meant; where stood the drinking cups and vessels, and which he takes to be more agreeable to the signification of the word; and moreover observes, that it is not likely this feast should be made in the night, or at least it is not certain it was, or that it was yet night when this affair happened: however, this writing was upon the plaster of the wall, made of lime, and was white; and if the writing was with red colour, as Ben Gorion says, it was the more visible: *and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote;* the back part of the hand; had he only seen a writing, but no hand writing it, he might have thought it was done by some present; but seeing a hand, and only part of one, or however not any other members of the body of a man, nor a man himself, it struck him with surprise, and he concluded at once there was something extraordinary in it; whether any other saw the hand besides himself is not certain; however, he saw it for whom it was particularly designed.

Ver. 6. *Then the king's countenance changed,* &c.] Or, *his brightness*[l]; his ruddy countenance, his florid looks, his gay airs; all his jollity and mirth, that appeared in his face, were changed into paleness, sadness, and confusion: *and his thoughts troubled him;* what should be the meaning of this; perhaps he might immediately fear it presaged ruin and destruction to him; the sins of his former life might at once come into his thoughts, and those particularly he had now been guilty of: his luxury and intemperance, his idolatry and profanation of the vessels of the sanctuary, which his conscience might accuse him of, and give him great distress and trouble: *so that the joints of his loins were loosed;* or, *the girdles of his loins*[m]; which were loosed or broke, through the agitation he was in; or he was all over in a sweat, so that he was obliged to loose his girdle: or, as persons in great fear and consternation, he was seized with a pain in his back; it opened as it were: nor could he hold his urine; as Grotius and others: see Isa. xlv. 1. where this seems to be prophesied of: *and his knees smote one against another;* as is the case of persons in a great tremour, or under a panic. *Et subito genua intremuere timore.*—Ovid.

Ver. 7. *The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers,* &c.] Or, *with strength*[n]; with a strong voice, as loud as he could; which is expressive of the fright he was in, and of his eagerness and impatience of information; laying aside all decency, and forgetting his royal majesty, like a man out of his senses, quite distracted, as it were: of the *astrologers,* &c. see the note on ch. i. 20. and ii. 2. this was the usual course the kings of Babylon took, when they had matters of difficulty upon them, as appears from ch. ii. 2. and iv. 6, 7. and though they found

[h] בטעם חמרא vino dictante, Tigurine version.
[i] Hist. l. 1. c. 3. p. 24.
[k] Ebr. Comment. p. 424.
[l] זיוהי splendores ejus, Montanus, Vatablus, Michaelis.
[m] קטרי חרצה cingula lumborum ejus, Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius.
[n] בחיל cum virtute, Vatablus; in virtute, Montanus; fortiter, Cocceius; cum robore, Michaelis.

it oftentimes fruitless and vain, yet still they pursued it; so besotted and addicted were they to this kind of superstition: *and the king spake and said to the wise men of Babylon*: who were presently brought in from the several parts of the city where they dwelt, and probably many of them might be at court at that time; and being introduced into the hall where the king and his nobles were, he addressed them in the following manner; *whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof*: pointing to the writing upon the wall, which continued; and which neither the king nor any about him could read or interpret, and therefore both are required to be done: *he shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck*; or *with purple*[o]; the colour wore by persons of rank and figure; and the chain of gold was an emblem of honour and dignity, and more to be regarded for that than for the value of the gold of which it was made: *and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom*; not rule over the third part of the kingdom, as Aben Ezra; but be the third man in the kingdom; next to the king and the queen-mother, or to the king and the heir apparent; or one of the third principal rulers; or one of the three presidents of the kingdom, as Daniel afterwards was.

Ver. 8. *Then came in all the king's wise men*, &c.] The whole college of them, the persons before described; over whom, in Nebuchadnezzar's time, Daniel was the chief of the governors, ch. ii. 48. these came in readily, in hope of getting both riches and honour: *but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof*; for if they could not do the former, it must be impossible to do the latter; of the reason of which, various are the conjectures[p]: as that, though these words were written in Chaldee, yet in characters, as the Samaritan or Phœnician, they did not understand; or were written without points, and so they knew not which were the proper ones to put to them; or they were written according to the position of the letters of the alphabet, called *athbash*, of which see the note on Jer. xxv. 26. or the words were placed so as to be read backward, or else downward, and not straightforward; or they were all in one word; or only the initial letters of words; but the true reason was, that it was so ordained by the Lord, that they should not be able to read and interpret them; this being reserved for another man, Daniel, that he might have the honour, and God the glory.

Ver. 9. *Then was King Belshazzar greatly troubled*, &c.] A second time, and perhaps more than before; since he had conceived some hope that his wise men would have informed him what this writing was, and the meaning of it; but finding that they were nonplussed by it, it gave him still greater uneasiness: *and his countenance was changed in him*; again; very likely, upon the coming in of the wise men, he had a little recovered himself, and became more composed and serene, which appeared in his countenance; but, upon this disappointment, his countenance changed again, and he turned pale, and looked ghastly: *and his lords were astonished*; were in the utmost consternation and confusion, when they understood that the writing could neither be read nor interpreted; neither the dignity of their station, nor their numbers, nor their liquor, could keep up their spirits; so that the king had not one with him, to speak a comfortable word to him, or give him any advice in this his time of distress; they were all in the same condition with himself.

Ver. 10. Now *the queen, by reason of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banquet-house*, &c.] Not the wife of Belshazzar, as Porphyry would have it; but rather the queen-mother, as Jacchiades, the widow of Evil-merodach his father, whose name was Nitocris; and is spoken of, by Herodotus[q], as a very prudent woman; and as this seems to be by her words and conduct: though Josephus[r] says it was his grandmother, she who had been the wife of Nebuchadnezzar; and of this opinion were some mentioned by Aben Ezra; whose name was Amyitis; and it appears, by what she says afterwards, that she was well acquainted with affairs in his time; and, being an ancient woman, might be the reason why she was not among the ladies at the feast in the banqueting-house; but came into it, without being sent for, on hearing the consternation and distress the king and his lords were in, and the moanful despairing words they expressed on this occasion: *and the queen spake and said, O king, live for ever*; the usual salutation given to the kings of Babylon, and other eastern monarchs; see ch. ii. 4. and vi. 21: *let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed*; at this affair, as if it could never be understood, and the true meaning of it be given; but be of good cheer, and put on a good countenance; there is hope yet that it may be cleared up to satisfaction.

Ver. 11. *There is a man in thy kingdom*, &c.] She does not say in his court; very probably, after the death of Nebuchadnezzar, perhaps in one of the former reigns, he was removed from his offices; for, had he been in one, very likely the queen would have described him by it; and this seems to receive confirmation by the question Belshazzar put to him upon his coming into his presence, *art thou that Daniel*, &c.; and only says that he had heard of him, ver. 13, 14: *in whom is the spirit of the holy gods*; something divine, something more than human; she uses the very words of Nebuchadnezzar; which seems to confirm that opinion, that she was his widow, ch. iv. 8: *and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him*; *light* in the knowledge of things obscure; *understanding* in the interpretation of dreams; and *wisdom* in things both human and divine, like that of an angel of God, as Jacchiades interprets *Elohim*: of this instances were given in the days of his grandfather, for so Nebuchadnezzar was; nor is it unusual for a grandfather to be called a father, and even a more remote ancestor; which instances were, telling him his dream when he had forgot it, as well as the interpretation of it; and explaining his dream or vision of the tree cut down to its

[o] ארגונא purpura, Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus, Grotius, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Coccceius, Michaelis.
[p] Vid. Jac. de Clerico Dissertat. de Epulo Belshazzar, in Thesaur. Theolog. Philol. vol. 1. p. 885.

[q] Clio, sive l. 1. c. 185, 188.
[r] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 2.

stump; of which see ch. ii. and iv: *whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king*, I say, *thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans,* and *soothsayers*, ch. ii. 48. she seems tacitly to upbraid him with his neglect of such a man, or with turning him out of his office, when so great a prince as his grandfather was took so much notice of him, and so highly advanced him.

Ver. 12. *Forasmuch as an excellent spirit*, &c.] A superior spirit to all the wise men in Babylon for natural knowledge and political wisdom; and he had yet a more excellent spirit which she knew nothing of, and was no judge of; a spirit of real grace, and true piety and devotion: *and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams;* of which interpreting two of Nebuchadnezzar's was a proof: *and shewing hard sentences;* or explaining enigmas and riddles, or proverbial, parabolical, and figurative phrases and expressions: *and dissolving of doubts;* or untying knots, solving problems, and answering knotty, intricate, and difficult questions: *were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar;* the prince of his eunuchs gave him that name, perhaps by the king's order; however, it was confirmed by him; he called him by it, and says it was according to the name of his god; see ch. i. 7. and iv. 8: *now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation;* this she was confident of, from the knowledge she had of the above facts.

Ver. 13. *Then was Daniel brought in before the king,* &c.] Proper officers being sent to seek and find him; and having fetched him from his house or apartment where he lived, which seems to have been in the city of Babylon, though not very probably at court as formerly, he was introduced in form into the king's presence: and *the king spake and said unto Daniel,* art *thou that Daniel, which* art *of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry?* by which it appears he did not know him, at least had forgot him; not having admitted him to any familiarity with him, as his grandfather had done; and though the queen had given such great commendations of him, yet the king does not treat him with that respect as might have been expected, and as Nebuchadnezzar did, ch. iv. 9. but seems to reproach him with his servile condition, being a captive whom his grandfather had brought out of Judea, as it were triumphing over him and his people; which shews the haughtiness of his heart, and that it was not brought down by this consternation and fright he was thrown into.

Ver. 14. *I have even heard of thee,* &c.] Very probably he had heard often of him, though he did not think fit to honour him, and use him with that familiarity his grandfather had; or however he had now just heard of him by the queen, whose encomiums of him he recites in her own words: *that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and* that *light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee;* which are the express words of his mother, ver. 11, 12.

Ver. 15. *And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me,* &c.] For it seems they came not of themselves, or upon hearing his loud cry; but were sent for by him, and came by his orders, and were introduced into his presence by the proper officers: *that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof;* pointing to the writing upon the wall: *but they could not shew the interpretation of the thing;* nor even read it; though it may be some of them might attempt to read it, and did read it in their way, as well as they could, or at least pretended to read; yet could make no manner of sense of it, which was the thing the king was intent upon.

Ver. 16. *And I have heard of thee,* &c.] That is, by the queen, which he repeats for the sake of observing what she had said of him, and which gave him encouragement to send for him: *that thou canst make interpretations;* of dreams, and of things hard to be understood: *and dissolve doubts;* untie knots, solve difficulties, and answer hard and intricate questions: *now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof;* that which is upon the wall before thee, and which the wise men of Babylon could not: *thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and* have *a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom;* the same reward he had proposed to the astrologers and soothsayers, ver. 7. but what was no temptation or motive to Daniel, as appears by what follows:

Ver. 17. *Then Daniel answered and said before the king,* &c.] With great freedom, boldness, and intrepidity: *let thy gifts be to thyself;* remain with thee; I neither want them, nor desire them; nor will I receive them on condition of reading and interpreting the writing: *and give thy rewards to another;* which he had promised to those that could read and interpret the hand-writing on the wall; even to be clothed with scarlet, have a golden chain, and be the third ruler in the kingdom. It may be rendered, *or give thy rewards to another**; either keep them thyself, or give them to whomsoever thou pleasest: should it be asked, why Daniel refused gifts now, when he received them from Nebuchadnezzar? it may be answered, he was then young, and wanted them, and could make use of them for the benefit of his countrymen, but now was old, and needed them not; besides, he knew then that the captivity would continue long, but that it was now just at an end, and the monarchy coming into other hands, when these gifts and rewards would be of little use; as also this king was a very wicked one, worse than his grandfather, and he did not choose to receive from him; and especially since the interpretation of the writing would be bad news to him; as well as to let him know that he did not do these things for fee and reward, but for the glory of God; and that as he had freely received such knowledge, he freely communicated it: and therefore adds, *yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation;* in reverence of him as a king, and in subjection to him, and to satisfy him in this matter; for he refused his gifts, not from pride and vanity, and a supercilious contempt of the king and his affairs; not as being doubtful of success in reading and interpreting the writing; which he well knew he was able to do, and therefore promises it.

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* ונבזביתך לאחרן הב tua tibi dona & munera habeto, aut in alios conferto, Castalie.

Ver. 18. *O thou king, &c.*] *Hear*[t], O king; so Aben Ezra supplies it; what he was about to say first, in order to prepare him for the meaning of the handwriting, and the cause of it; or, *thou knowest*, as Saadiah supplies it; namely, what follows: *the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom*: a very large one, which reached to the ends of the earth: this was not to be ascribed to his predecessor that left it to him; or to his victorious arms, which increased it; or to his idol-gods, to whom he attributed it: but to the most high God, from whom promotion alone cometh; and who, being above all gods and kings, sets up, and pulls down, as he pleases; he gave him his large dominions: *and majesty, and glory, and honour*: greatness among men; glory and honour from them, on account of the majesty of his person and kingdom; the victories he obtained, and the great things he did to make him famous while he lived, and to perpetuate his memory after death.

Ver. 19. *And for the majesty that he gave him, &c.*] The greatness of his power, the largeness of his dominions, and the vast armies he had at his command: *all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him*: not only those that were subject to him, but those that had only heard of him; who dreaded his approach unto them, and their falling into his victorious hands, and being made vassals to him: *whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive*: he ruled in an arbitrary and despotic manner, and kept the power of life and death in his own hands; whom he would he put to death, though ever so innocent; and whom he would he preserved from death, though ever so deserving of it; he had no regard to justice, but acted according to his own will and pleasure. Jacchiades renders the last clause, *whom he would he smote*; but both the punctuation of the word, and the antithesis in the text, require the sense our version gives, and which is confirmed by Aben Ezra and Saadiah: *and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down*; according to his pleasure, he raised persons from a low estate to great dignity, and put them into high posts of honour and profit, as he did Daniel: and others he as much debased, turned them out of their places, and reduced them to the lowest degree of disgrace and poverty; and all according to his absolute and irresistible will, without giving any reason for what he did.

Ver. 20. *But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, &c.*] When his heart was elated with his successes and victories, with the enlargement of his dominions, and with his grandeur and glory he had arrived unto; and his pride increased yet more, till he was strengthened and hardened in it: or, *to deal proudly*[u]; and behave haughtily to God and man: or, *to do wickedly*, as Jarchi interprets it; for pride and haughtiness of mind puts men, especially great men, kings and monarchs, on doing things extremely vile and wicked: *he was deposed from his kingly throne*: not by his nobles and subjects, but by the hand of God, which struck him with madness, and made him unfit for government; obliged him to quit the throne, and to range among the beasts of the field, as is afterwards observed: *and they took his glory from him*; the watchers, the angels, or the divine Persons that ordered the tree to be cut down to the roots, ch. iv. 14, 17, 23, or it may be rendered impersonally, *and his glory was taken from him*[w]; his glory as a man, being deprived of his reason, and acting like a brute beast; and his glory as a king, which departed from him for a season, while he was driven from men, from his royal palace and court, and lived among beasts, and fed as they did, as follows:

Ver. 21. *And he was driven from the sons of men, &c.*] From their company, and from conversation with them; his madness was of that kind, that he chose rather to be with beasts than men; it drove him from men, and made him more desirous of being with beasts; or it was so intolerable, that his family, friends, and courtiers, were obliged to remove him from them, from his palace and court, and from all conversation with men, which he was incapable of through his phrensy and madness: *and his heart was made like the beasts*; to have the same affections and desires as they have; to crave the same things they did, and like what they liked, and live as they lived: or, *he put his heart with the beasts*[x]; either Nebuchadnezzar himself chose to be with them, and delighted in a beastly life; or God did it; he put such a heart into him, or so disposed it, that it became brutish; though to read the words impersonally, as before, seems best: *and his dwelling was with the wild asses*: in a wilderness or field; or rather in some enclosed place, in one of his parks, where such creatures were kept for hunting; among these he dwelt, as being like them, having lost the use of his reason, and so was become stupid and sottish as they: *and they fed him with grass like oxen*; as they are fed, and which he chose above any other food: *and his body was wet with the dew of heaven*; being without clothes, and lying naked in some open place all night: *till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will*; till he came to his senses, and was brought to see and own the sovereign dominion of the one, true, and living God, over all the kingdoms of the earth, and that they are at his dispose; see ch. iv. 32.

Ver. 22. *And thou his son, O Belshazzar, &c.*] His grandson; see the note on ver. 1: *hast not humbled thine heart*; so as to acknowledge the most high God, and his dependence on him; to own him as his Sovereign, by whom he held his crown and kingdom, and to whom he was accountable; but, on the contrary, lifted up his heart in pride and haughtiness against him: *though thou knewest all this*; either by the relation of others, his father and mother, and others; or being an eye-witness of it himself; wherefore his sin was the more aggravated, since he had had an example before him of pride being humbled in a very awful manner, and yet took no warning by it.

Ver. 23. *But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord*

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[t] So Pagninus, Munster.

[u] להזדה ad superbe agendum, Junius & Tremellius; ad superbiendum, Piscator, Michaelis; ut superbe ageret, Cocceius.

[w] ויקרה העדיו מנה & gloria ejus ablata est, V. L.; honor ejus translatus fuit, Michaelis.

[x] ולבבה עם חיותא שוי cor ejus cum bestiis posuit, Vatablus, Calvin; animum suum cum bestiis posuit, Cocceius.

of heaven, &c.] Who made it, and dwells in it; from whence he beholds all the actions of the children of men, and will bring them to an account for them; and yet, though so high and great, such was the insolence of this king, that he dared to lift up himself against him, as if he was above him, and greater than he; and indeed so it may be rendered, *above the Lord of heaven*[*]; which shewed his great pride and vanity, his want of knowledge, both of himself, and of the true God. This name of God is the same with Beelsamen[†]; by which the Phœnicians used to call him: *and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee*; that is, his servants by his orders had brought the vessels of the temple at Jerusalem, which Nebuchadnezzar had took from thence, and set them upon his table for him and his company to drink out of; which is an instance of the pride of his heart, and of his daring boldness and impiety; see ver. 2, 3: *and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drank wine in them*: even that very day or night: this Daniel had knowledge of by some means or another; and his intelligence was so good that he could with great certainty affirm it: *and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone*: see ver. 4: *which see not, nor hear, nor know*; no more than the several metals and materials of which they are made; and therefore it must be great madness and folly to praise such as gods that are below men, and even brutes; have neither the sense of animals, nor the knowledge of men; see Psal. cxv. 4, 5, 6, 7: *and the God in whose hand thy breath is*; who gave it to him at first, and as yet continued it in him, and could take it away when he pleased: *and whose are all thy ways*; counsels and designs, works and actions; under whose direction and control they all are; the events, issue, and success of which all depend upon him: see Jer. x. 23: him *hast thou not glorified*; by owning him as the only true God; ascribing all he was and had unto him, and giving due worship, adoration, and honour to him; but, on the contrary, setting up his idol-gods above him, and treating him, and every thing belonging to him, with ignominy and contempt.

Ver. 24. *Then was the part of the hand sent from him*, &c.] That is, from God; being thus reproached and blasphemed, at that very instant, and for that reason, because the vessels of his sanctuary were profaned, and idol-gods were praised, and he despised; he caused part of a hand, the writing-fingers of it, to appear on the wall of the king's palace: *and this writing was written*; which was then upon the wall, and he points to it.

Ver. 25. *And this is the writing that was written*, &c.] They are such and such letters, and so to be read, as follows: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN; which are Chaldee words, and may be literally rendered, *he hath numbered, he hath numbered*; that is, God hath certainly, perfectly, and exactly numbered; *he hath weighed*, God hath weighed thee, Belshazzar; *and they divide* the kingdom; that is, the Medes and Persians, as appears from the following interpretation:

Ver. 26. *This is the interpretation of the thing*, &c.] Or, *word*[*]; for they might all seem as one word; or this is the sense of the whole: MENE; as for this word, it signifies, *God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it*: God had fixed the number of years, how long that monarchy should last, which he was now at the head of, and which was foretold, Jer. xxv. 1, 11, 12. and xxvii. 7. and also the number of years that he should reign over it; and both these numbers were now completed; for that very night Belshazzar was slain, and the kingdom translated to another people; and a dreadful thing it is to be numbered to the sword, famine, and pestilence, or any sore judgment of God for sin, as sometimes men are; so more especially to be appointed to everlasting wrath, and to be numbered among transgressors, among the devils and damned in hell.

Ver. 27. TEKEL, &c.] As for the meaning of this word, and what it points at, it is this: *thou art weighed in the balances*; of justice and truth, in the holy righteous law of God; as gold, and jewels, and precious stones, are weighed in the scales by the goldsmith and jeweller with great exactness, to know the worth of them: *and art found wanting*; found to be adulterated gold, reprobate silver, bad coin, a false stone; found to be a worthless man, a wicked prince, wanting the necessary qualifications of wisdom, goodness, mercy, truth, and justice. The Scriptures of truth, the word of God, contained in the books of the Old and New Testament, are the balances of the sanctuary, in which persons, principles, and practices, are to be weighed; and sad it is where they are found light and wanting: men, both of high and low degree, when put here, are lighter than vanity. The Pharisee, or self-righteous person, when weighed in the balance of God's law, which is holy, just, and good, will be found wanting of that holiness and righteousness he pretends to, and appear to be an unholy and an unrighteous man; his righteousness, neither for the matter of it, nor manner of performing it, being agreeable to that law, and so no righteousness in the sense of it, Deut. vi. 25. it being imperfect, and so leaves him to the curse of it, Gal. iii. 10. and not being performed in a pure and spiritual manner that it requires, is rejected by it: and miserable will be the case of such a man at the day of judgment, when his works will be found wanting, and not answerable to the demands of a righteous law, and he without the wedding-garment of Christ's righteousness, and so naked and speechless. The hypocrite, and formal professor, when weighed in the balance of the Scripture, will be found wanting the true grace of God; his faith will appear to be feigned, and his hope groundless, and his love to be in word and in tongue only, and not at all to answer to the description of true grace given in the word of God; and bad will it be with such persons at last, when at the bridegroom's coming they will be destitute of the oil of true and real grace; only have that which is counterfeit, and the mere lamp of an outward profession, which will then stand them in no stead, or be of any avail unto them: in the same balances are the doctrines and principles of men to be weighed; and such as are accord-

[*] על מרי שמיא super Dominum cœli, Montanus; super Dominum cœlorum, Michaelis.

[†] Sanchoniatho apud Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. l. 1. c. 9. p. 34.

[*] מלתא sermonis, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus, Montanus; verborum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Broughtonus; verbi, Cocceius; illius verbi, Michaelis.

ing to them are solid and weighty, and are comparable to gold, silver, and precious stones; but such as are not are light, and like wood, hay, and stubble, which the fire of the word will reveal, try, and burn up, not being able to stand against it; and if these are weighed in the balances, they will be found wanting of real truth and goodness, and be but as chaff to wheat; and what is the one to the other? there is no comparison between them; and dreadful will be the case of false teachers, that make and teach an abomination and a lie; and of those that are given up to believe them, these will not be able to stand the trying hour of temptation, and much less the last and final judgment. Sad for preachers of the word to be found wanting in their ministry, and hearers to be wanting in their duty; not taking care neither what they hear, nor how they hear, or whether they put in practice the good they do hear.

Ver. 28. PERES, &c.] The singular of *Pharsin*, ver. 25. The sense of this word is, *thy kingdom is divided*: which, though it consisted of various provinces, united under Belshazzar, now should be broken and separated from him: *and given to the Medes and Persians*; to Darius the Mede, and to Cyrus the Persian, who was a partner for a while with his uncle Darius in the government of the empire: there is an elegant paronomasia in the words *Peres* and *Persians*; and a grievous thing it is to sinners, not only to have body and soul divided at death, but to be divided and separated from God to all eternity; and to hear that sentence, *depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*.

Ver. 29. *Then commanded Belshazzar*, &c.] As soon as he had heard the writing read and interpreted; instead of being full of wrath, as might have been expected, he orders the reward promised to be given, to shew he had a regard to his word and honour, as a king; and to secure his credit with his nobles and people; and perhaps he might not understand, by Daniel's interpretation, that the destruction of him and his kingdom was so near at hand as it was; or he might put this evil day far from him, and hope it might be prevented: *and they clothed Daniel with scarlet*; the king's servants by his orders: or, *that they should clothe Daniel with scarlet* [a]; these were his orders; but whether executed is not certain; probably not, since the king was slain the same night; and so the rest of the clauses may be read, *and* should put *a chain of gold about his neck, and should make proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom*: all which was the reward promised to him that should read and interpret the writing, ver. 7, 16. but that this was done, the king's death being so sudden, does not appear; and therefore it is needless to inquire the reasons of Daniel's acceptance after his refusal.

Ver. 30. *In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain.*] Not by a servant of his own, as Jacchiades; or by an eunuch, one of his guards, as Saadiah and Joseph ben Gorion [b]; but by Gadates and Gobryas, who led Cyrus's army up the river Euphrates into the city of Babylon, its course being turned; the inhabitants of which being revelling and rioting, and the gates open, these men went up to the king's palace; the doors of which being opened by the king's orders to know what was the matter, they rushed in, and finding him standing up with his sword drawn in his own defence, they fell upon him, and slew him, and all about him, as Xenophon [c] relates; and this was the same night the feast was, and the hand-writing was seen, read, and interpreted. This was after a reign of seventeen years; for so Josephus says [d], that Baltasar or Belshazzar, in whose reign Babylon was taken, reigned seventeen years; and so many years are assigned to him in Ptolemy's canon; though the Jewish chronicle [e] allows him but three years, very wrongly, no more of his reign being mentioned in Scripture; see ch. vii. 1. His death, according to Bishop Usher [f], Mr. Whiston [g], and Mr. Bedford [h], was in the year of the Julian period 4176, and before Christ 538. Dean Prideaux [i] places it in 539.

Ver. 31. *And Darius the Median took the kingdom*, &c.] This was Cyaxares the son of Astyages, and uncle of Cyrus; he is called the Median, to distinguish him from another Darius the Persian, that came after, Ezra iv. 5. the same took the kingdom of Babylon from Cyrus who conquered it; he took it with his consent, being the senior prince and his uncle. Darius reigned not long, but two years; and not alone, but Cyrus with him, though he is only mentioned. Xenophon [k] says, that Cyrus, after he took Babylon, set out for Persia, and took Media in his way; and, saluting Cyaxares or Darius, said that there was a choice house and court for him in Babylon, where he might go and live as in his own: *being about threescore and two years old*: and so was born in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar, the year in which Jechoniah was carried captive, 2 Kings xxiv. 12. thus God in his counsels and providence took care that a deliverer of his people should be raised up and provided against the appointed time. Darius was older than Cyrus, as appears by several passages in Xenophon; in one place [l] Cyaxares or Darius says, "since I am present, and "am *elder* than Cyrus, it is fit that I should speak "first;" and in another place [m], Cyrus, writing to him, says, "I give thee counsel, though I am the "younger;" and by comparing this account of the age of Darius with a passage in Cicero, which gives the age of Cyrus, we learn how much older than he Darius was: for, out of the books of Dionysius the Persian, he relates [n], that Cyrus dreaming he saw the sun at his feet, which he three times endeavoured to catch and lay hold upon, but in vain, it sliding from him; this, the Magi said, portended that he should reign thirty years, and so he did; for he lived to be

[a] [illegible] ut induerent, Gejerus.
[b] Hist. Heb. l. 1. c. 6. p. 20.
[c] Cyropaedia, l. 7. sect. 22, 23.
[d] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 4.
[e] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 28. p. 81.
[f] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3466.
[g] Chronological Tables, cent. 10.
[h] Scripture Chronology, p. 711.
[i] Connexion, &c. par. 1. p. 120.
[k] Cyropaedia, l. 8. c. 26.
[l] Ibid. l. 6. c. 2.
[m] Ibid. l. 4. c. 31.
[n] De Divinatione, l. 1.

seventy years of age, and began to reign when he was forty; which, if reckoned from his reigning with his uncle, then he must be twenty-two years younger; or if from the time of his being sole monarch, then the difference of age between them must be twenty-four years; though it should be observed that those that make him to reign thirty years begin his reign from the time of his being appointed commander-in-chief of the Medes and Persians by Cyaxares[o], which was twenty-three years before he reigned alone, which was but seven years[p]; and this account makes but very little difference in their age; and indeed some[q] have taken them to be one and the same, their descent, age, and succession in the Babylonian empire, agreeing.

CHAP. VI.

THIS chapter gives an account of Daniel's being cast into the den of lions, and the causes of it, and the steps leading to it; and also of his wonderful deliverance out of it, and what followed upon that. It first relates how Daniel was made by Darius first president of the princes of the kingdom, which drew their envy upon him, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. and that these princes finding they could get no occasion against him, but in religion, proposed to the king to make a law forbidding prayer to any god for thirty days, which they got established, ver. 5—9. and Daniel breaking this law, is accused by them to the king; and the penalty, casting into the den of lions, is insisted on to be executed, ver. 10—13. which the king laboured to prevent, but in vain; and Daniel is cast to the lions, to the great grief of the king, ver. 14—18. who visited the den the next morning, and to his great joy found Daniel alive, ver. 19—23. upon which, by the law of retaliation, his accusers, their wives, and children, were cast into it, ver. 24. and an edict was published by the king, commanding all in his dominions to fear and reverence the God of Daniel, ver. 25—28.

Ver. 1. *It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes*, &c.] This is the same Darius mentioned in the latter part of the preceding chapter; who, as soon as he took the kingdom of Babylon, divided it into a hundred and twenty provinces, as Jacchiades observes; as was the manner of the Medes and Persians. So Darius the son of Hystaspes divided the kingdom of Persia into twenty provinces, and set governors over each, according to Herodotus[r]; to these hundred and twenty provinces seven more were afterwards added, through the victories of Cyrus and Cambyses, and Darius Hystaspes, Esth. i. 1. Josephus[s], through forgetfulness, makes these princes and provinces three hundred and sixty: *which should be over the whole kingdom*; or, *in the whole kingdom*[t]; in the several parts of it, and take care of all things relative to the civil government of it, both for the honour and advantage of the king, and the good of the subjects.

Ver. 2. *And over these three presidents*, &c.] To whom the hundred and twenty princes were accountable for their conduct, and to whom the people might apply for redress of grievances, if oppressed; perhaps the whole empire was divided into three greater parts, and each part had forty provinces in it, and over it a president or deputy of the king; to whom the princes of each province gave in the account of what they received for the king, and what use they made of it: *(of whom Daniel was the first:)* or *one*[u], who was now an old man, having been about seventy years in Babylon, and had had a large experience of the affairs of civil government, being advanced in the times of Nebuchadnezzar to high posts; and very probably Darius had heard of the wisdom of Daniel before he came to the kingdom, as well as the king of Tyre, Ezek. xxviii. 3. and might be informed of his prediction of Belshazzar's death, and the change of the empire: and of Belshazzar's promise to make him the third ruler in the kingdom; and he might also himself observe in him an uncommon sagacity and fitness for business of this sort. Josephus[w] says, that Darius took Daniel with him into Media, and made him one of the three presidents; and indeed no mention is made in this history of the nobles of Babylon, but only of the Medes and Persians: *that the princes might give account unto them, and the king should have no damage*: or loss in his revenues, through the fraud and bad management of the princes of the provinces; since they might be discovered and checked by the presidents, who were to audit their accounts: or, *have no trouble*[x]; in looking over and passing the accounts of the princes.

Ver. 3. *Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes*, &c.] Not only above the princes, but the presidents, being the first of them, as before: or, he was *victorious above them*[y]; he got more credit and applause than they did, being more exact, diligent, and laborious, faithful, and conscientious: *because an excellent spirit was in him*; meaning not a spirit of grace, piety, and religion, which the Heathen king was no judge of, nor valued him for it, though it was in him; but a spirit of knowledge of civil affairs, and of prudence in managing them, and of integrity throughout the whole of his conduct: *and the king thought to set him over the whole realm*; or, *wherefore the king thought*[z], &c.; because there was such a spirit in him, which so qualified him for public business, he began to think of abolishing his triumvirate of presidents, and making Daniel his viceroy over the whole empire, which very probably they had got some knowledge of;

[o] See the Universal History, vol. 5. p. 181. and vol. 21. p. 64, 65.
[p] Xenophon, Cyropædia, l. 8. c. 45.
[q] Nicol. Abrami Pharus Vet. Test. l. 12. c. 24. p. 338. Pererius in ib. Græci Patres apud Theodoret. Orat. 6. in Daniel.
[r] Thalia, sive l. 3. c. 89.
[s] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 4.
[t] בכל מלכותה in toto regno, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Cocceius; toti regno, Junius & Tremellius.
[u] חד εἷς, Sept.; unus, Vulg. Lat. Syr. Ar. Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis.
[w] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 4.
[x] לא להוא נזק ὅπως μὴ ἐνοχλῆται, Sept.; ne rex molestia afficeretur, Pagninus; ut rex ille levaretur gravamine, Munster.
[y] מתנצח victorem se gerebat, Piscator, Michaelis.
[z] ומלכא ideo rex, Gejerus, Michaelis.

and this, as well as being above them, drew the envy of them on him, and put them upon the following scheme.

Ver. 4. *Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom, &c.*] Concerning the management of the affairs of the kingdom, he being prime minister of state; the presidents and princes joined together in this inquiry; the princes, because Daniel was so strict and exact in looking into their accounts, that no fraudulent measures were taken to cheat the king of his revenue; and the presidents, because he was preferred above them: *but they could find none occasion nor fault*; or *corruption*[a], that he had been guilty of any mal-administration, or any corrupt practices: *forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him*: no mistake in his accounts; no blunder in his management of things; nothing done amiss, neither wilfully, nor through ignorance, negligence, or inadvertence; so faithful and upright, so prudent and discreet, so exact and careful, that the most watchful observers of him, and these envious, and his most implacable enemies, could find no fault in him, or any thing, or the colour of it, to ground an accusation upon.

Ver. 5. *Then said these men*, &c.] To one another: *we shall not find any occasion against this Daniel*; whom they speak of with great disdain and contempt, calling him this Daniel, this fellow, though in the highest post in the kingdom: *except we find it against him concerning the law of his God*; about his religion; not that they thought he would be prevailed upon to break the law of his God in any respect; but they knew he was tenacious of the Jewish religion, and of all the laws, rites, and ceremonies of it; if therefore they could get an act passed, and signed by the king, which would any ways affect his religion, or any branch of it, or prohibit the performance of it for any time, they hoped to get an advantage of him, knowing that he would not on any consideration forsake or neglect that; which being said by his enemies was greatly to his honour.

Ver. 6. *Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king*, &c.] Having consulted the matter, and agreed upon and formed a scheme among themselves, and drawn up a bill or decree in form, ready to be signed by the king, whom they hoped to persuade to it; and for that end they got together, and went in a body to him. The word[b] signifies to assemble in a tumultuous and noisy way; they thought, by their number and noise, their bustle and bluster, to carry their point. Ben Melech compares it with Psal. ii. 2: *and said thus unto him, O King Darius, live for ever*: this they said as courtiers, professing subjection to him, and affection for him, wishing him health, long life, and happiness.

Ver. 7. *All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains*, &c.] There were but three presidents, and Daniel was one of them, so that these *all* were but *two*; they made the most of it they could; and very probably not all and every one of the other officers mentioned were present; but they were willing to make their request appear as general as they could, in order that it might have the greater weight with the king: *have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree*; that is, they had met together, and had drawn up a bill that might be passed into a law by having the royal assent, and be made sure and firm by the king's signing it; which is as follows: *that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions*; by which law all invocation of their own gods was prohibited for a month, as well as of the living and true God; but this they stuck not at, provided they could gain their point against Daniel; and they were obliged to express it in this general way, to cover their designs; for had they mentioned a particular deity, as the God of the Jews, or the God of Daniel, their views would have been seen into by the king; and not only religious invocation is here forbidden, but all civil requests are prohibited: servants might not ask any thing of their masters, nor children of their parents, nor wives of their husbands, nor one neighbour of another; for this seems not to be limited to asking any thing of a man worshipped as a god; though Saadiah says there were some in Darius's kingdom that believed in, worshipped, and prayed to a man; but all men are excluded, except Darius himself, of whom only any thing was to be asked for thirty days; which was not only a deifying him, but exalting him above all gods and men; and suggesting as if it was in his power to answer all the exigencies of his subjects, and supply all their wants, many of which it was impossible for him to do. Josephus[c] mentions this law in a different manner; as if the design of it was to give the people an intermission from devotion for such a time, and that they were neither to pray to Darius, nor any of the gods, during it; whereas the exception is express, *save of thee, O king*. The sanction or penalty of it is, casting into the den of lions; the king's den of lions, as Jarchi, where his lions were kept; as it is usual with princes: this very probably was a punishment common in the eastern nations, as casting the Christians to the lions was usual with the Romans.

Ver. 8. *Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing*, &c.] For they had not only agreed upon it among themselves what to propose, as to the substance of it; but they had drawn it up in writing, ready to be signed, which they urge to have done immediately: *that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not*; when once signed by the king: mention being made of both the Medes and Persians, shews that these two nations were now united in one government; that Darius and Cyrus were partners in the empire; and it is easy to account for it why the Medes are mentioned first; because Darius was the Mede, and Cyrus the Persian; the one the uncle, the other the nephew; but afterwards, when a Persian only was on the throne, then the Persian is mentioned first, Esth. i. 19.

Ver. 9. *Wherefore King Darius signed the writing*

[a] שחיתה corruptela, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Michaelis; corruptionem, Gejerus.

[b] הרגשו tumultuarie convenerunt, Montanus; cum tumultu accurrerunt, De Dieu; convenerunt gregatim & cum strepitu, Gejerus.

[c] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 5.

and the decree.] Moved to it by the number and importunity of his principal men; and chiefly through affectation of deity, which this law gave him; and that he might have an opportunity of ingratiating himself into his new subjects by his munificence and liberality, not being aware of the snare laid for his favourite Daniel.

Ver. 10. *Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, &c.*] This he knew, either by the relation of others, or by the public proclamation of it through the city; however, he did not know of it till it was signed, or otherwise he might have prevented it by applying to the king, in whom he had great interest; but, now the thing was done, he did not solicit the abrogation of it, knowing it was in vain; nor did he go to the king with complaints against his enemies, shewing the design they had in it; but let things take their own course, he being determined to be found in his duty, be it as it would: *he went into his house:* he left the court at the proper time of prayer, and went to his own house to perform it; he did not, in defiance of this law, go to prayer in the court, or in the streets, but retired home, as he was used to do: *and his windows being opened:* not to be seen of men, but that he might have a clear view of the heavens, where his God dwelt, to whom he prayed, and be the more affected with the consideration of his greatness and glory: *in his chamber toward Jerusalem:* it was not in the lower part of the house, nor on the top of the house, in either of which he might be more easily seen; but in his chamber, where he was wont to retire, the windows of which were opened *towards Jerusalem:* not towards the king's palace, as if he prayed to him, and so eluded the decree; nor towards the east, as the Heathens did; but towards Jerusalem, which lay to the south of Babylon; and that, either because of his remembrance of that city, his affection to it, and concern for its re-edification; or having some respect to the words of Solomon, 1 Kings viii. 33, *&c.;* and so, according to the Jewish writers, it was the custom of their people. Ben Gersom, on the above place, says, that though they did not pray within the temple, yet they prayed, turning themselves towards it, as much as possibly they could; and even when it was destroyed, as now, yet they in praying turned to the place where it had stood, as Saadiah, Aben Ezra, and Jarchi observe: and chiefly Daniel did this, because the temple was a type of Christ, through whom the persons and prayers of the saints are acceptable unto God: *he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed:* kneeling is a prayer-gesture, a token of reverence and humility; this was done three times a day, morning, noon, and evening; see Psal. lv. 17. in the morning, before he went out about the king's business; at noon, when he returned home to dinner; and at evening, when all his work was done, and he was about to retire to bed; the hours of prayer with the Jews seem to have been the third, sixth, and ninth; that is, at nine in the morning, twelve at noon, and three in the afternoon; see Acts ii. 1, 15. and iii. 1, and x. 9: *and gave thanks before his God:* for the benefits he daily received from him; or he *confessed before* him[t]; the sins he had been guilty of, and owned the favours he partook of: *as he aforetime did;* as it had been his custom from his youth upward, and therefore would not omit it now, on account of this edict.

Ver. 11. *Then these men assembled, &c.*] Gathered together, and went in a body to Daniel's house; knowing his times of prayer, and where, and in what manner, he used to pray, to see if they could find him at it as aforetime; that so they might have to accuse him with it. Saadiah says, they found a girl, and asked her what Daniel was doing? she told him that Daniel was on his knees, praying to his God in his chamber; immediately they went, and found as she had said: *and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God:* they went into his house, and up into his chamber, the doors not being locked, pretending perhaps business with him, and saw him at his devotions; so that they were able, upon their own knowledge, to bring in an accusation against him for breach of the king's law, and prove it.

Ver. 12. *Then they came near, &c.*] They went immediately from Daniel's house to the king's palace, and into the king's presence; which they could do, either by virtue of their offices, or being admitted by the proper officer in waiting: *and spake before the king concerning the king's decree:* at first they said nothing about Daniel, but about the decree, to get it recognised, and afresh ratified and confirmed; lest, under some pretence or another, the king should change it: *hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask* a petition *of any god or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?* they don't say peremptorily that he had signed such a decree, but put the question to him, that they might have it affirmed by himself: *the king answered and said, the thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not;* it is true that such a decree is made and signed, and it is an unalterable one; such as is every established and signed decree of the Medes and Persians: it is as if he had said, it is very true what you put me in mind of, and I will never recede from it, or nullify and make it void.

Ver. 13. *Then answered they, and spake before the king, &c.*] Having obtained what they desired, a ratification of the decree, they open the whole affair to him they came about: *that Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king:* they call him *that Daniel;* by way of contempt; and, to make him the more despicable, represent him not only as a foreigner, but a captive, and therefore ought to have been humble and obedient, as Jacchiades observes; and a Jewish captive too, of all people the most odious; and, though he had been raised from a low estate to great honour and dignity, yet such was his ingratitude, that he made no account of the king, nor of his orders, but despised him: *nor the decree that thou hast signed:* the decree concerning making any petition to God or man for a month, which was signed with the king's own hand, and was firm and stable; and of which Daniel could not be ignorant, and therefore wilfully, and in a contemptuous manner, acted contrary to it: *but maketh his petition three times a*

[t] מודא confitebatur, V. L. Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Calvin, Cocceius.

day: to whom they say not, whether to God or man; but in this general way accuse him, which they thought best and safest; they feared, had they mentioned his God, something might have been said in his favour to excuse him; and, to aggravate the matter, they observe the frequency of his doing it, three times; so that it was not a single fact he is charged with, but what he had repeated again and again.

Ver. 14. *Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself*, &c.] Or *at it*[e]; or *with him*: with Daniel, not so much for what he had done, but that he had not done it with more caution, or more privately, that it might not have been known: or rather, as we render it, *with himself*, that he should so rashly sign the decree, without considering the consequences of it; for he now found that he was circumvented by his princes, and that their design was not his honour and glory, but the destruction of Daniel: or the sense in general is, that what he heard was very disagreeable, afflictive, and distressing to him: *and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him*: he resolved, if possible, to do it; he applied his mind to it; he turned his thoughts wholly that way, and contrived all ways and means to effect it: R. Mattathiah, in Saadiah, interprets the phrase of his offering money as a ransom for his life: *and he laboured till the going down of the sun to save him*; from the will of the princes, and from the jaws of the lions: very probably it was early in the morning these princes found Daniel at prayer, who went immediately to the king with their accusation; so that he was all day labouring with all his might and main to find out ways and means to save his darling favourite; he studied to put such a sense upon his decree, that it might not reach Daniel's case; he strove to make the princes easy, and to persuade them to drop the affair, and not insist on the execution of the decree.

Ver. 15. *Then these men assembled to the king*, &c.] Who had left him for a while to consider of the case; or they departed to consult among themselves about the king's proposals to them; or went home to their own houses to dinner, and returned in a body; they came in a tumultuous way, as the word signifies; see ver. 6. they cluttered about him, and were very rude and noisy, and addressed him in an authoritative and threatening manner: *and said unto the king, know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, that no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed*; they perceived that he was desirous of altering or nullifying the decree he had made, which to have done would have been to his reputation; and to this they oppose a fundamental law of the realm, that no decree ratified by the king could be altered; to attempt to do this would be a breach of their constitution, and of dangerous consequence; it would lessen the king's authority, and be a means of his subjects rising up in rebellion against him: for that there was such a law, the king knew as well as they; nor do they say this by way of information, but to urge him to the execution of the decree; and there is no doubt to be made that there was such a fundamental law, though a foolish one, and which afterwards continued, Esth. i. 19. but the instance which some writers give out of Diodorus Siculus[f], concerning Charidemus, a general of the Athenians, whom another Darius king of Persia condemned to die for the freedom of speech he used with him, and afterwards repented of it, but in vain; for his royal power, as the historian observes, could not make that undone which was done; this is no proof of the immutability of the laws of the Persians, since the king's repentance was after the general's death, which then was too late.

Ver. 16. *Then the king commanded*, &c.] Being overawed by his princes, and fearing they would conspire against him, and stir up the people to rebel; and consulting his own credit, lest he should be thought fickle and inconstant; he ordered the decree to be put in execution against Daniel, and delivered his favourite into their hands: *and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions*; not the princes, but proper officers employed by them: according to the additions to this book of Daniel, there were seven lions in this den, ch. xiv. 31. but, according to Joseph ben Gorion[g], there were ten, who used to devour ten sheep, and as many human bodies, every day; but this day they had no food, and ate nothing, that they might be more greedy, and devour Daniel the sooner: now *the king spake and said unto Daniel*; being brought into his presence in his palace, before he was cast into the den; or at the mouth of the den, whither the king accompanied him: *thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee*; he calls the Lord Daniel's God, not his own, as he was not; he served other gods; yet he suggests, that Daniel was right in serving him continually, in praying to him daily, the very thing for which he was cast to the lions; and expresses his confidence that his God he served would deliver him from being devoured by them; which he might conclude, from the innocency, integrity, and faithfulness of Daniel, and from his being such a peculiar favourite of God as to be indulged with the knowledge of future things; and perhaps he might have heard of the deliverance of his three companions from the fiery furnace: though the words may be rendered, as they are by some, as a wish or prayer, *may thy God, &c. deliver thee*[h]; I cannot, I pray he would; it is my hearty desire that so it might be.

Ver. 17. *And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den*, &c.] Not a heap of stones, but a single one, a very large one, sufficient to stop up the mouth of the den, that nothing might enter in at it, or be cast into it: this stone was brought by proper persons, and a sufficient number of them, according to the order of the king, or his princes, or both; for what Jarchi says, of there being no stones in Babylon, only bricks, and of the angels bringing this stone out of the land of Israel, is all fabulous; but for what end it should be brought and laid is not easy to say; if it was laid here by the order of the princes, it could not surely be to keep any of his friends from going in to deliver him, for

[e] עלוהי super eo, Montanus; super ipsum, De Dieu.
[f] Bibliothec. Hist. l. 17. p. 510.
[g] Hist. Heb. l. 1. c. 10. p. 34.
[h] ישזבנך liberet te, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Grotius, Cocceius, Michaelis.

who would venture himself there? nor to keep Daniel in it, since it might be concluded, that, as soon as ever he was cast in, he would be seized upon by the lions and devoured at once; unless it can be thought, that these men saw, that when he was thrown in, the lions did not meddle with him; which they might attribute to their having been lately fed, and therefore, that he might be reserved till they were hungry, they did this: if it was by the order of the king, which is very likely, the reason might be, he believed, or at least hoped, that God would deliver him from the lions; but lest his enemies, seeing this, should throw in stones or arrows, and kill him, the mouth of the den was stopped, so Jarchi and Saadiah: no doubt but this was so ordered by the providence of God, as well as the sealing of it, that the miracle of the deliverance might appear the more manifest: *and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of the lords:* that none might dare to remove it; so the stone that was laid at the door of Christ's sepulchre was sealed with a seal, Matt. xxvii. 66. the reason of sealing it follows, *that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel:* the view the lords had in it was, that the king might not change the sentence passed on Daniel, or take any methods to deliver him; and the view the king had in it might be, that should he be saved from the lions, as he hoped he would, that no other sentence might pass upon him, or he be delivered to any other kind of death.

Ver. 18. *Then the king went to his palace, &c.*] After he had accompanied Daniel to the den, and he was cast into it, the stone was laid to the mouth of it, and that sealed; this was after sun-set, for he had laboured till then to serve him, ver. 14. perhaps it was late at night: *and passed the night fasting;* vexed for what he had done, in signing the decree; fretting because he could not save Daniel, and his heart full of grief for him, and so had no stomach to eat; went to bed without his supper, lay all night fasting, and would not eat a bit nor drink a drop of any thing: *neither were instruments of music brought before him;* as used to be after supper, and played upon; his heart was too full, and his mind and thoughts so intent on Daniel's case, that he could not listen to music, or bear the sound of it. Jarchi interprets it a *table,* to sit down at, and eat, being furnished and well served, as was usual; but this is implied in the preceding clause. Aben Ezra, Saadiah, and Jacchiades, explain it by songs and musical instruments, harps and psalteries; and Saadiah adds, girls to sing and dance. De Dieu, from the use of the word in the Arabic language, thinks that incense is meant, which was used at feasts, and in the palaces of princes. *And his sleep went from him;* whilst he was up he could take no pleasure in eating and drinking, and hearing music; and when he was in bed, he could not sleep for thinking what he had done, and what was the case of Daniel.

Ver. 19. *Then the king arose very early in the morning, &c.*] Or, *in the morning with light*[1]; as soon as ever light appeared, or the day broke: the word for morning is doubled, and one of the letters in it is larger than usual; and all which denote not only his very great earliness in rising, but his earnestness and solicitude for Daniel, to know whether he was alive or no: *and went in haste unto the den of lions;* he did not send a servant, but went in person, and with as much expedition as possible, though a king, and an old man; this shews the great love and strong affection he had for Daniel, and his concern for his good and welfare.

Ver. 20. *And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel, &c.*] Expressing grief and sorrow his heart was full of; it was rather like howling than speaking; thus he cried before he saw Daniel, or heard him speak: *when he was near to the den*[*], as it may be rendered; and he was between hope and fear about Daniel's safety; when within sight of the den, and hearing of Daniel, should he be alive to speak: but when he came nearer and saw him, then *the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God;* art thou alive? this is a plain case, that the God whom thou servest is the living God, since he has saved thee; and that thou art a true and faithful servant of his, seeing he has wrought such deliverance for thee: *is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?* has he made it to appear that he is able to deliver from them? has he really done the thing? he could scarcely believe for joy, being filled with amazement; for these words are not to be considered as expressive of any doubt or hesitation he had of the power of God to save him; for he had declared he had before, yea, his confidence that he would deliver him; but of his wonder and admiration at it, the thing being so extraordinary and amazing.

Ver. 21. *Then said Daniel unto the king, &c.*] Whose voice he knew, though the tone of it was so much altered: *O king, live for ever;* he does not reproach him for delivering him into the hands of his enemies, and suffering him to be cast into that place, which he might have prevented, had he had more resolution; he knew it was done with reluctance, though with weakness; which he does not upbraid him with, but freely forgives him, and wishes him health, long life, and prosperity.

Ver. 22. *My God hath sent his angel, &c.*] Daniel takes up the king's expression, and confirms it; he asserts God to be his God, of which he had given him a proof in sending his angel to him that night; either one of the ministering spirits about him, or the Angel of the covenant, the same with him, said to be like the Son of God, that was seen in the fiery furnace, even the Messiah in human form: *and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me;* by taking away hunger from them, or by striking terror into them; so that they had either no inclination to hurt him, or were afraid of him: *forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me;* either before God, or before his Angel, Daniel appeared to be an innocent and righteous person; therefore the Lord pleaded his cause, and made it to appear that he was just, and his cause good; for this is not to be understood of the merits of his works, and the causality of them to justify and save; for here he is speaking not of the righteousness of his

[1] בשפרפרא בנגהא summa aurora cum luce, Junius & Tremellius; in tempore aurorae cum luce, Piscator.

[*] בקרבה לגבא cum appropinquasset ad foveam, Pagninus; quumque appropinquaret ad foveam, Piscator.

person, but of his cause; and not of eternal, but temporal salvation: *and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt*: either to his person or government; nothing that was criminal and sinful, but what was just and right, serving daily his God; and this was plain to the king, what he knew and owned; and though he had acted contrary to the decree the lords had craftily obtained, yet it was not out of disrespect to the king, but in obedience to his God; and in doing of which he had done nothing prejudicial to the king's interest.

Ver. 23. *Then was the king exceeding glad for him*, &c.] For Daniel, because of his safety, because he was alive, and in health, and unhurt; and the speech he made was very acceptable to him, agreeable to his sentiments, and which he was satisfied was just and true: *or with*, or *for himself*[l]; being now eased of a guilty and distracted conscience: *and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den*; that is, he ordered those that were with him, his servants that attended him, either to roll away the stone, and so let him out; or to let down ropes, and draw him out, or ladders by which he might ascend; for one would think it would not have been safe for them to have gone down into it, to take him up: these orders the king gave without the consent of his lords, being animated to it by the miracle wrought: *so Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him*; no bruise by throwing him into the den, no wound was made by the lions, or his flesh in the least torn by them: *because he believed in his God*; served and worshipped him; of which service and worship faith is a particular branch, and is put for the whole, and without which it is not pleasing and acceptable to God; he trusted in the Lord, he committed himself to his power and providence; he left himself wholly in the hands of the Lord, to dispose of him, whether for life or death, as he pleased; he believed he was able to deliver him, but he was not anxious about it: for this seems not to design any particular act of faith, with respect to this miracle wrought for him, but his general trust and confidence in God; and the apostle seems to have reference to this, when among other things he ascribes to faith the stopping of the mouths of lions, Heb. xi. 33.

Ver. 24. *And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel*, &c.] Not all the hundred and twenty princes, and the two presidents; but the chief of them, who were most busy in getting the decree signed; watched Daniel's house, and what he did there; brought the charge against him to the king, and were most solicitous and urgent to have the decree put in execution against him: *and they cast them into the den of lions*; the servants of the king, who were sent to fetch them, and who brought these by the king's orders, cast them into the same den of lions that Daniel had been in: thus often the pit wicked men dig for others, they fall into themselves; so Haman was hanged on the gallows he prepared for Mordecai: *them, their children, and their wives*; which might be according to the laws of this monarchy in capital offences, relating to affairs of state, as this was for an accusation of a prime minister of state, to take away his life; though such things were common with arbitrary princes, for the terror of others: so Haman and his sons were hanged up by Ahasuerus: this may seem cruel and inhuman, though it might be that the wives and children of these men advised them to do what they did, and were encouragers and approvers of it. Josephus[m] relates, that the enemies of Daniel, when they saw no hurt came to him, would not ascribe it to the providence of God, but to the lions being full of food; upon which the king ordered much meat to be given them, and then the men to be cast in to them, to see whether because of their fulness they would come unto them or no: *and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces, or ever they came at the bottom of the den*: the lions seized them at once; and though they did all they could to defend themselves, fighting with them; yet the lions were too powerful for them, and overcame them, and not only tore off their flesh, but broke their bones in pieces, and that as they were falling, before they came to the bottom, or the lower part of the den; this was a plain proof that it was not through fulness, or want of appetite, that the lions did not fall upon Daniel and devour him: this affair happened in the first year of Darius, which, according to Bishop Usher[n], and Dean Prideaux[o], and Mr. Whiston[p], was in the year of the Julian period 4176, and before Christ 538; Mr. Bedford[q] places it in 537.

Ver. 25. *Then King Darius*, &c.] Being thoroughly convinced of the miracle, and of the powerful interposition of divine Providence in it, and of the omnipotence of God, and of his concern in the government of the world; that all might be acquainted with the same, *wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth*: he being at the head of the Babylonish monarchy, which included many nations and people of various languages; and which was increased, and still increasing, by the victories of Cyrus, who was partner with him in the empire; see ch. iii. 4, 29: *peace be multiplied unto you*; an increase of all kind of prosperity; an usual salutation or wish with the eastern people.

Ver. 26. *I make a decree, that in every dominion of my kingdom*, &c.] In every province of his large empire; this explains who are meant by all people, nations, *&c.* before mentioned; namely, such as were within his dominions; for to no other could his decree reach: this decree is very different from that he had made a few days before, forbidding any man to ask any thing of any god or man for the space of a month; but now his order is, that *men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel*; that they would serve with fear and trembling, and reverence and adore the God that Daniel served and worshipped; and who manifestly appeared to be his God, and to be the true God, by his wonderful deliverance of him: *for he is the living God, and steadfast for ever*; that has life in himself, and is the

[l] עליה apud se, Piscator; apud illum, Michaelis.
[m] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 6.
[n] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3466.
[o] Connection, &c. part 1. p. 123, 128.
[p] Chronological Tables, cent. 10.
[q] Scripture Chronology, p. 711.

author and giver of life to others, and ever remains so, without any variation or shadow of turning: he is everlasting and unchangeable, permanent and immutable in his nature; steady and steadfast in his purposes and promises, in his conduct in the government of the world, and in the course of his providences: *and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end;* unto the end of time; other kingdoms will be destroyed, but his will not; all other rule, dominion, and authority, will be at an end, but his will continue for ever; his kingdom is an everlasting one: this doctrine Darius had learned from Daniel, as Nebuchadnezzar before had done; see ch. ii. 44. and iv. 3.

Ver. 27. *He delivereth and rescueth,* &c.] As he did the three companions of Daniel from the fiery furnace, and now Daniel himself from the lions' den: *and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth:* which are out of the common course of nature, and not according to the laws of it; such as hindering the natural force of fire from burning, as in the case of the three children; and stopping the mouths of lions from devouring Daniel, as follows: *who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions:* or, *from the hand*[r] of them; from their destroying paws, and devouring jaws; which was nothing less than a miracle, and a proof of the divine omnipotence, and of his power of doing wonders.

Ver. 28. *So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius,* &c.] This Daniel, of whom so much has been said in all the preceding chapters, and who had been so lately and so wonderfully delivered from the lions' den, the same flourished throughout the reign of Darius the Mede; continued a favourite with the king; retained his honour and dignity; and kept his posts and places of trust and profit. Darius the Mede reigned two years; though Jarchi says he reigned but one, and was slain in war; for which he refers to Joseph ben Gorion, who has not a word of it. *And in the reign of Cyrus the Persian:* who, as Jacchiades says, was the son-in-law of Darius, and inherited the kingdom after him; which is true, for he married the daughter of Cyaxares or Darius, who was his uncle, and succeeded him as sole monarch of the empire: he reigned with him the two years he had the government of the Babylonish monarchy; and, when he died, it solely devolved on him, who reigned seven years after, as Xenophon[s] relates; but the canon of Ptolemy ascribes nine years to his reign, which includes the two years he was partner with Darius. Daniel was in the same favour with this prince as the former, who in the first year of his reign proclaimed liberty to the Jews to return to their country, and build their temple; whether Daniel lived throughout his reign is not certain; he was alive in the third year of it, as appears from ch. x. 1. some take Darius and Cyrus to be one and the same person, and render this last clause as explanative of the former, *even,* or, *that is, in the reign of Cyrus the Persian*[t].

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL THE TANJORE

CHAP. VII.

THIS chapter contains Daniel's vision of the four beasts. The time, place, manner, writing, and declaration of the vision, ver. 1. the rise of the beasts, and the description of them, ver. 2—8. the judgment of God upon them, especially the last, and the delivery of universal monarchy to his Son, ver. 9—14. the interpretation of the vision at the request of Daniel, being greatly affected with it, ver. 15—18. a particular inquiry of his about the fourth beast, concerning which a full account is given, ver. 19—27. all which caused in him many thoughts of heart, and reflections of mind, ver. 28.

Ver. 1. *In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon,* &c.] Daniel having finished the historical part of his book, and committed to writing what was necessary concerning himself and his three companions, and concerning Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius the Mede, proceeds to the prophetic part, and goes back to the first year of Belshazzar's reign, seventeen years before his death, and the fall of the Babylonish monarchy last mentioned; for so long Belshazzar reigned, according to Josephus[u]; and with which agrees the canon of Ptolemy, who ascribes so many years to the reign of Nabonadius, the same with Belshazzar: he began to reign, according to Bishop Usher[w], Dean Prideaux[x], and Mr. Whiston[y], in the year of the Julian period 4159, and before Christ 555; and in the first year of his reign Daniel had the dream of the four monarchies, as follows: *Daniel had a dream;* as Nebuchadnezzar before had, concerning the same things, the four monarchies of the world, and the kingdom of Christ, only represented in a different manner: or, *saw a dream*[z]; in his dream he had a vision, and objects were presented to his fancy as if he really saw them, as follows: *and visions of his head came upon his bed:* as he lay upon his bed, and deep sleep was fallen on him, things in a visionary way were exhibited to him very wonderful and surprising, and which made strong impressions upon him: *then he wrote the dream;* awaking out of his sleep, and perfectly remembering the dream he had dreamt, and recollecting the several things he had seen in it; that they might not be lost, but transmitted to posterity for their use and benefit, he immediately committed them to writing: *and told the sum of the matters:* the whole of what he had dreamt and seen; or however the sum and substance of it, the more principal parts of it, the most interesting things in it, and of the

r מן יד de manu, Montanus, Cocceius.
s Cyropaedia, l. 8. c. 45.
t Vid. Nicolai Abram. Pharus Vet. Test. l. 12. c. 24. p. 338.
u Antiqu. Jud. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 4.
w Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3449.
x Connexion, &c. part 1. p. 114.
y Chronological Tables, cent. 10.
z חלם חזה somnium vidit, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, &c.

greatest importance: when it was day-light, and he rose from his bed, and went out of his chamber, he called his friends together, and told them by word of mouth what he had seen in his dream the night past; or read what he had written of it, which was as follows:

Ver. 2. *Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night,* &c.] He declared he had had a vision by night, and this was the substance of it: *and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea;* the east, west, north, and south winds, broke out from their several quarters, and rushed in upon the great sea; either the Mediterranean, so called in comparison of the sea of Sodom, and the sea of Tiberias in Judea; or upon the waters of the main ocean, and raised up its waves, and seemed as it were to be striving and fighting with them, and put them into a strange agitation; by which may be meant the whole world, and the kingdoms and nations of it, because of its largeness, inconstancy, instability, and disquietude; see Rev. xvii. 15. Isa. lvii. 20. and by the *four winds* some understand the angels, either good or bad, concerned in the affairs of Providence on earth, either by divine order or permission; or rather the kings of the earth raising commotions in it, striving and fighting with one another, either to defend or enlarge their dominions; and which have been the means in Providence of the rising up of some great state or monarchy, as after appears.

Ver. 3. *And four great beasts came up from the sea,* &c.] Which are afterwards interpreted of four kings or kingdoms, ver. 17. which rose up in the world, not at once, but successively, and out of the sea or world, through the commotions and agitations of it; and these are the four monarchies, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman; compared to *beasts*, because of the rapine and violence, cruelty, oppression, and tyranny, by which they were obtained, set up, supported, and maintained; and to *great* ones, being not like single separate kingdoms, as the kingdom of Israel, and the like, but consisting of many kingdoms and nations, and so like beasts of an enormous size; *diverse one from another;* in their situation, language, manner, strength, and power; hence expressed by divers sorts of beasts, as the lion, bear, leopard, *&c.*; as in Nebuchadnezzar's dream by different metals, gold, silver, brass, and iron.

Ver. 4. *The first was like a lion,* &c.] That which rose up first, the kingdom of the Babylonians, as the Syriac version expresses it; or the Assyrian monarchy, founded by Nimrod, increased by the Assyrians, and brought to its height under Nebuchadnezzar by the Babylonians and Chaldeans; this is said to be like a lion for its strength and power, for its greatness, dignity, and majesty; the same with the head of gold in Nebuchadnezzar's dream; see Jer. iv. 7. and l. 17: *and had eagles' wings;* denoting the celerity and swiftness with which Nebuchadnezzar ran, or rather flew, over several kingdoms and countries, and added them to his empire; see Jer. iv. 13. and xlviii. 40. and xlix. 22: and *I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked;* it was retarded and stopped in its conquests; it could fly no further, nor make any new acquisitions; yea, it was deplumed and stripped of some of its dominions, the Medes and Persians falling off, and making war with it: *and it was lifted up from the earth;* or, *with which it was lifted up from the earth*[a]; with which wings it raised itself up, and lifted itself above other kingdoms and nations; but now were plucked, and could not soar aloft as formerly; its glory and majesty, power and strength, were lessened, whole provinces revolting, as in the times of Evil-merodach, Neriglissar, and Belshazzar: *and made stand upon the feet as a man;* it did not fly like an eagle as before, and overrun countries, and waste them; or go upon all four, as a beast; but stood on its feet, its two hinder legs, like a man; signifying that it abated, in the reigns of the above princes, of its strength and fierceness, and became more mild and tractable, and was reduced within bounds like other kingdoms: *and a man's heart was given to it;* instead of a lion-like heart, that was bold and intrepid, and feared nothing, it became weak and fearful, and timorous like the heart of man, especially in Belshazzar's time; not only when he saw the hand-writing on the wall, to which Jacchiades refers this; but when he was so fearful of Cyrus that he shut himself up in Babylon, and durst not stir out to give him battle, as Xenophon[b] relates; and when the city was taken, the Babylonians were obliged to deliver up their arms, employ themselves in tilling their fields, and to pay tribute to the Persians, and always salute them as their lords and masters, as the same historian[c] says; see Jer. li. 30.

Ver. 5. *And, behold, another beast, a second, like to a bear,* &c.] Another monarchy, and which succeeded the former, and rose up upon the ruins of it, the Medo-Persian monarchy; and so the Syriac version prefixes to this verse, by way of explanation, "the kingdom of the Medes;" like to a bear, less generous and strong than the lion; more rough and uncivil, but equally cruel and voracious; which describes the Medes and Persians as a fierce and cruel people, and less polished, and more uncivilized, than the Chaldeans; and answers to the silver breasts and arms in Nebuchadnezzar's dream; see Isa. xiii. 17, 18. Jer. li. 27, 28: *and it raised up itself on one side;* either of the lion, the first beast it destroyed; or rather on one side of itself, on the side of Persia; from whence Cyrus came, who was the principal instrument of raising this empire to the pitch it was brought unto. Some render it, *and it raised up one government*[d]; one empire out of many nations and kingdoms it subdued: *and* it had *three ribs in the mouth of it, between the teeth of it;* that is, three ribs covered with flesh, which it was devouring; the bear being very voracious, and a great flesh-eater: these, according to some, signify three kings that followed Darius the Mede; Cyrus, Ahasuerus, and Darius; so Jarchi and Jacchiades; and, according to Jerom, three kingdoms, the Baby-

[a] ונטילת מן ארעא quibus efferebatur e terra, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; per quas efferebatur supra terram, Grotius.

[b] Cyropædia, l. 5. c. 10.

[c] Cyropædia, l. 7. c. 24.

[d] ולשטר חד הקימת quæ dominatum unum erexit, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; & dominatum quendam erexit, Piscator.

lonian, Median, and Persian: but neither of these kings nor kingdoms can be said to be in its mouth, and between its teeth, as ground and devoured by it, unless the Babylonian; wherefore it is better interpreted by others, as Theodoret, the three parts of the world it conquered, westward, northward, and southward, ch. viii. 4. though it is best of all, with Sir Isaac Newton and Bishop Chandler, to understand by them Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt; which countries were ground and oppressed by the Medes and Persians, as the ribs of any creature are ground in the mouth of a bear: *and they said thus unto it, arise, devour much flesh*: which Jerom refers to Haman's orders to destroy the Jews in the times of Ahasuerus; but it is much better applied by others to Cyaxares or Darius sending for Cyrus to take upon him the command of his army; and to the Hyrcanians, Gobryas, and others, inviting him to avenge them on the Babylonians, promising to join and assist him, as Xenophon[e] relates: or rather this is to be interpreted of the divine will, and of the conduct of Providence by means of angels stirring up the spirit of Cyrus, and of the Medes and Persians, to attack and subdue many nations, and particularly the Babylonians, and fill themselves with their wealth and substance; hence they are styled the Lord's sanctified, whom he ordered and called to such service; see Isa. xiii. 3. and xxi. 2.

Ver. 6. *After this I beheld, and, lo another, like a leopard*, &c.] Another beast, another monarchy, a third monarchy succeeding the Persian monarchy, and which rose up on the ruins of that; Darius king of the Persians being beat by Alexander king of Macedon, who was the instrument of setting up the Grecian monarchy here intended; compared to a leopard, a smaller creature than a lion; signifying that this monarchy arose from a small beginning; and a crafty one, Alexander having many wise counsellors of his father's about him, though he himself was rash and hasty; and a spotted one, denoting the various virtues and vices of Alexander, and his inconstancy in them; sometimes exercising the one, and sometimes the other; or rather the different nations, and the manners of them, he conquered, of which this empire consisted; not to say any thing of the cruelty and swiftness of this creature, which are both to be observed in this conqueror: *which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl*; denoting the swiftness of Alexander in his conquests; who in a few years made himself master of the whole world, at least as he thought, whose empire was greater than that of Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans, to whom only two wings of an eagle are given, ver. 4. Says Jerom, " nothing was " more swift than the conquest of Alexander, from " Illyricum and the Adriatic sea, unto the Indian " ocean, and the river Ganges; he rather ran through " the world by victories than by battles, and in six " years subdued part of Europe, all Asia even unto " India," to which may be added all Egypt, Syria, and Palestine. Arimazes being master of a rock in Sogdiana, which was thought inaccessible and impregnable, Alexander sent a messenger to him to demand the delivery of it to him; but, among other things he proudly said, he asked the messenger, with a sneer, if Alexander could fly; which, when the messenger reported, nettled him much, that he should be insulted because he had not wings; and vowed that the next night he would make him believe that the Macedonians did fly; and accordingly they found ways and means to get to the top of it, which, when the governor saw, he declared that Alexander's soldiers had wings[f]: *the beast also had four heads*; which signify the four kingdoms into which the Grecian empire was divided after Alexander's death, under four of his generals, who were heads or governors of them: Macedonia under Antipater, or, as others, Cassander; Egypt under Ptolemy; Syria under Seleucus; and Asia under Antigonus, or, as others, Lysimachus: *and dominion was given to it*; the dominion of the whole world, or, however, a very large dominion; and this was given of God, and according to his will, and the ordering of his providence; for to nothing else can it be ascribed, that with thirty thousand men Alexander should beat an army of six hundred thousand; and with such a handful of men subdue so many kingdoms and nations, and that in the space of a few years.

Ver. 7. *After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast*, &c.] Not in another night, as Jarchi; but in the same night, and in the same visions of it; only after he had seen the other three successively, then last of all he saw this fourth beast; and more being said of this than of the rest, shews that this was the principal thing in the vision to be observed, as being to endure until, and having a close connexion with, the kingdom of the Messiah; which, arising, shall destroy it, and take place of it: this is not the Turkish empire, as Aben Ezra, and others: nor the kingdom of the Seleucidæ, as Grotius, and others; to which neither the characters, nor the duration of it, agree; but the Roman empire, which succeeded the Grecian, so Gorionides[g]: *dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly*; exceeding powerful, as the Roman empire was, and terrible to all the kingdoms of the earth; its arms, wherever they came, struck terror among the nations, and threw them into a panic, killing, wasting, robbing all they met with[h]; and especially it was terrible to Christians, by their persecutions of them, as both Rome Pagan and Rome Papal have been. Rome has its name from strength with the Greeks, and from height with the Hebrews, as Jerom[i] observes: *it had great iron teeth*; which may design its generals and emperors, such as Scipio, Pompey, Julius Cæsar, and others; which crushed and devoured all that came in their way: this monarchy answers to the legs and feet of iron in Nebuchadnezzar's dream: *it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it*; it devoured nations, broke kingdoms in pieces, and brought them in subjection to them; reducing them to the greatest servitude, and obliging them to pay heavy taxes and tribute: *it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it*; in its original, language, laws, customs, and forms of government; it was such a

[e] Cyropædia, l. 1. c. 22. l. 4. c. 4, 24.
[f] Curt. Hist. l. 7. c. 11.
[g] L. 3. c. 15. p. 221.
[h] Raptores Orbis, &c. Taciti Vita Agricolæ, c. 30.
[i] Adv. Jovinian. l. 2. fol. 32. L.

monster, that no name could be given it; there was no one beast in nature to which it could be compared; it had all the ill properties of the other beasts, for craft, cruelty, oppression, and tyranny; and therefore John describes this same beast as being like a leopard, having the feet of a bear, and the mouth of a lion, Rev. xiii. 2: *and it had ten horns;* which are explained of ten kings or kingdoms, ver. 24. the same with the ten toes in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and with the ten kings that received power as kings with the beast, or ten kingdoms, into which the Roman empire was divided about the time of the rise of antichrist, Rev. xvii. 12. see the note there.

Ver. 8. *I considered the horns,* &c.] The ten horns of the fourth beast; these the prophet particularly looked at, took special notice of them, carefully observed them, their number, form, and situation, and pondered in his mind what should be the meaning of them: *and, behold;* while he was attentive to these, and thinking within himself what they should be, something still more wonderful presented: *there came up among them another little horn:* not Titus Vespasian, as Jarchi; nor the Turkish empire, as Saadiah; nor Antiochus Epiphanes, as many Christian interpreters; for not a single person or king is meant by a horn, but a kingdom or state, and a succession of governors; as by the other ten horns are meant ten kings or kingdoms; besides, this little horn is a part of the fourth, and not the third beast, to which Antiochus belonged; and was to rise up, not in the third or Grecian monarchy, as he did, but in the fourth and Roman monarchy; and was to continue until the spiritual coming of Christ, or until his kingdom in a spiritual sense takes place; which is not true of him: and since no other has appeared in the Roman empire, to whom the characters of this horn agree, but antichrist, or the pope of Rome, he may be well thought to be intended. Irenæus[k], an ancient Christian writer, who lived in the second century, interprets it of antichrist; of whom having said many things, has these words: "Daniel having respect to the end of the last "kingdom, that is, the last ten kings, among whom "their kingdom should be divided, upon whom the "son of perdition shall come; he says, that ten horns "shall be upon the beast, and another little horn should "rise up in the midst of them; and three horns of the "first be rooted out before him; and *behold,* saith he, "*in this horn* were *eyes as the eyes of man,* &c.; of "whom again the Apostle Paul, in 2 Thess. declaring "together the cause of his coming, thus says, *and "then shall the wicked one be revealed,*" &c.; and in a following chapter[l] the same writer observes, "John "the disciple of the Lord in the Revelation hath yet "more manifestly signified of the last time, and of "those ten kings in it, among whom the empire that "now reigns (the Roman empire) shall be divided; "declaring what shall be the ten horns, which were "seen by Daniel, saying, *the ten horns which thou "sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom "as yet,* &c.; therefore it is manifest, that of these he "that is to come shall slay three, and the rest shall "be subject to him, and he shall be the eighth among "them;" and Jerom on the place says, that this is the sense of "all ecclesiastical writers, that when the "Roman empire is destroyed, there shall be ten kings "who shall divide it among them; and an eleventh "shall arise, a little king, who shall conquer three of "the ten kings; and having slain them, the other "seven shall submit their necks to the conqueror;" who, he further observes, is not a devil or demon, but a man, the man of sin, and son of perdition; so as that he dare to sit in the temple of God, making himself as if he was God: now to the Roman antichrist every thing here said answers: he is a *horn* possessed of power, strength, authority, and dominion, of which the horn is an emblem: a *little* one, which rose from small beginnings, and came to his ecclesiastic power, from a common pastor or bishop, to be a metropolitan of Italy, and then universal bishop; and to his secular power, which at first was very small, and since increased; and yet, in comparison of other horns or kingdoms, but little; though, being allowed to exercise a power within others, is, or at least has been, very formidable: this *came up among* the other horns; when the northern barbarous nations broke into the empire, and set up ten kingdoms in it, this little horn sprung up among them; and while they were forming kingdoms for themselves, he was contriving one for himself; they rose at the same time, and reigned together; see Rev. xvii. 12, 13: *before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots;* before whom three kings or kingdoms fell, and were subdued, as in ver. 20, 24. which, according to Mr. Mede[m], were the kingdoms of the Greeks, of the Longobards, and of the Franks; but, according to Sir Isaac Newton[n], they were the exarchate of Ravenna, the kingdom of the Lombards, and the senate and dukedom of Rome; or, according to the present bishop of Clogher[o], the Campagnia of Rome, the exarchate of Ravenna, and the region of Pentapolis, which were plucked up by Pipin and Charlemagne, kings of France, and given to the pope; and were confirmed to him by their successor Lewis the pious, and is what is called the patrimony of St. Peter; in memory of which a piece of Mosaic work was made and put up in the pope's palace, representing St. Peter with three keys in his lap; signifying the three keys of the three parts of his patrimony; and, to shew his sovereignty over them, the pope to this day wears a triple crown: *and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man:* in some monstrous births there have been eyes in the knees, and in the belly above the navel[p]; but never was there known such a monster as this, to have a horn, and eyes in the horn; horns some monsters have had, but not eyes in them: these may design the pretended sanctity and religion of the pope of Rome or antichrist, who, though a beast, would be thought to be a man, a religious creature; or his pretended modesty, humanity, and courtesy, when he is all the reverse; or rather his insight into the Scriptures he makes pretensions to,

[k] Advers. Hæreses, l. 5. c. 25.
[l] Ibid. c. 26.
[m] Works, B. 4. p. 779.

[n] Observations on Daniel, p. 72—78, 80, 94.
[o] Inquiry into the Time of the Messiah's coming, p. 89.
[p] Vid. Schott. Physica Curiosa, l. 5. c. 22. p. 711, 714.

setting himself up as an infallible judge of them, and of all controversies: though they seem better to design what he really has than what he pretends to; and may denote his penetration and sagacity, his craft and cunning, and sharp looking out to get power and dominion, temporal and spiritual; and his watchfulness to keep it, that it is not encroached upon, and took away from him; and also all means and instruments by which he inspects his own and others' affairs; particularly the order of the Jesuits, which are his eyes everywhere, spies in all kingdoms and courts, and get intelligence of what is done in the councils and cabinets of princes: how many eyes this horn had is not said; nor is it easy to say how many the pope of Rome has; he has as many as Argus, and more too, and these sharp and piercing: *and a mouth speaking great things;* as that he is Christ's vicar on earth, Peter's successor, head of the church, and universal bishop; that he is infallible, and cannot err; that he has all power in heaven, earth, and hell; that he can forgive sin, grant indulgences, make new laws, and bind the consciences of men; dispense with the laws of God and men; dispose of kingdoms, and remove and set up kings at pleasure, with many others of the like kind; see Rev. xiii. 5. 6.

Ver. 9. *I beheld till the thrones were cast down,* &c.] On which the governors of the above monarchies sat; and those of the ten kings, signified by the ten horns; and also that of the little horn. The prophet kept looking on the objects before him, till he in his dream, and the visions of the night, saw all those empires and kingdoms demolished, and all rule, power, and authority, put down, and way made for the glorious kingdom of the Messiah, and his saints with him; to this sense Aben Ezra, Saadiah, and Jacchiades, interpret the word used; but the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it, *until the thrones were set up*[s]; for the judges to sit upon to try, judge, and condemn the four beasts or monarchies; in order to make way for the kingdom of the Son of man to take place in the spirituality and glory of it: here are more thrones than one; see Rev. xx. 4. one for the Ancient of days, and another for him who was like to the Son of man, brought near before him; and so the Jews [t] say, here were two thrones pitched and prepared, one for the Ancient of days, and another for David, that is, the Messiah, or son of David; and so Jarchi paraphrases the words, "the thrones were pitched and prepared to sit upon in "judgment;" and this sense is confirmed by the use of the word in Ezra vii. 24. and in the Targum on 2 Kings xviii. 14. Jer. i. 15. and to this agrees best the following clause: *and the Ancient of days did sit;* on one of the thrones pitched, as chief Judge: this is to be understood of God the Father, as distinct from the Messiah, the Son of God, said to be like the Son of man brought unto him, ver. 13. and is so called, not only because he is from everlasting, and without beginning of days; but chiefly because he is permanent, and endures for ever; his years fail not, and of his days there will be no end; and he will be when these empires, signified by the four beasts, will be no more; and very fit to be Judge of them, because of his consummate wisdom and prudence, signified also by this phrase; and the divine Father of Christ is still more proper, because it is in Christ's cause the judgment will proceed; and this in order to introduce him openly into his dominions in the world: *whose garment was white as snow;* denoting the purity of his nature, the brightness of his majesty, and his incorruptness in judgment: *and the hair of his head like the pure wool;* signifying his venerableness, gravity, wisdom, and ripeness of judgment; being wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working: *his throne was like the fiery flame;* expressive of him, as awful and formidable, as a consuming fire; and of his piercing judgment, and the severity of it; and *his wheels as burning fire;* the wheels of his throne; alluding to such seats and thrones as were made to turn about, and to be moved from place to place; denoting the power and providence of God everywhere; the clear view he has of all things, in all places; and his swiftness in the execution of his judgments.

Ver. 10. *A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him,* &c.] Or, *a river of fire*[u]; which denotes the copious judgments of God, the abundance of them; the full flow of his wrath, and the fierceness of it; and also its rapidity, which cannot be resisted and stopped: *thousand thousands ministered unto him;* attended upon him, waiting his orders, and ready to execute them; an innumerable company of angels, Psal. ciii. 20, 21: *and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him;* to be judged by him; the numerous inhabitants of the several monarchies, with their kings; particularly all the antichristian states, and the worshippers of the beast, whom the whole world went after, Rev. xiii. 3, 8. and xiv. 10, 11: *the judgment was set;* that is, the court was set; the Judge was upon the bench, and all his assessors and apparitors about him, and that ministered to him: *and the books were opened;* both to take the trial in writing, and to produce evidence against the criminals; the book of God's purposes and decrees concerning these beasts; the book of prophecies relating to them; the book of God's remembrance, and of their own consciences, with respect to the evils committed by them; and the book of records, statutes, and laws made in such cases; even the book of the Scriptures, which contains the revelation of the will of God. In some things there is a likeness between this and the last and future judgment, and in other things a disagreement; the Judge in both is a divine Person, the eternal God, omniscient, omnipotent, holy, just, and true, which is absolutely necessary for carrying on such a process; none but God over all is equal to such a work: in the last judgment, as in this, there will be thrones; the throne of God and of the Lamb, particularly a great white throne, a symbol of purity, justice, and equity, on which the Judge himself will sit, and execute judgment, from whose presence the earth and heaven will flee away; and besides, there will be other thrones for the martyrs of Jesus, and true professors of his name, to sit upon as spectators, witnesses, and ap-

[s] כרסון רמיו subsellia posita sunt, Tigurine version; solia posita sunt, Piscator, Cocceius; throni elati sunt, Pagninus, Montanus.
[t] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 14. 1. & Gloss. in ib.

[u] נהר די נור fluvius ignis, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis.

provers of the solemn procedure, and shall reign with Christ a thousand years: likewise the number of the persons judged, as here, will be very great, even innumerable; all, both small and great, as to age or dignity, will stand before the Judge, to be judged by him, and receive their sentence from him; and there will be books for that purpose, as here, even the same, and particularly the book of life, in which, if a man's name is not written, he will be cast into the lake of fire; see Rev. xx. 4, 11, 12, 15. but in other things they differ; here the Judge is God the Father, the first Person in the Trinity, called the Ancient of days, distinguished from Christ, said to be like the Son of man; whereas the last and future judgment will be committed to the Son of God, the second Person, who is ordained Judge of quick and dead; and who will come a second time to judge the world in righteousness; and, though the description of the Ancient of days will agree well enough with him, he having the same glorious perfections his Father has, which qualify him for a Judge; see Rev. i. 14. yet it is certain not he, but his divine Father, is intended: nor in the account of the future judgment is there any mention of a *fiery stream* issuing forth before him, as here, for the burning of the body of the beast; unless the lake of fire may be thought to answer to it, into which will be cast all such who have no part in the Lamb, nor a name in his book of life: however, the accounts of both are very awful and striking; and this may be considered as a type, example, presage, and pledge, of the future judgment; this will be at the beginning of the spiritual reign of Christ, when antichrist will be destroyed with the breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming; the judgment of the saints will be at the beginning of his personal reign, even of the quick and dead, those that will be found alive, and those that will be raised from the dead, at his appearing and kingdom; and the judgment of the wicked will be at the close of it, or at the end of the Millennium; see Rev. xx. 5, 6, 12.

Ver. 11. *I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake*, &c.] Or, *from the voice*[r]; from the time it was heard, the prophet continued looking to see what would be the issue of all this; especially from the time he heard the little horn speak such blasphemous things against God, and Christ, and his people, which were so intolerable, that he concluded some notice would be taken of them in a way of correction and punishment; and the rather, when he saw the Judge appear with so much majesty and grandeur, and all things prepared for a judicial process: *I beheld even till the beast was slain*: the fourth beast, the Roman monarchy, to which a period will be put, and be utterly abolished in every form and shape, and with it the little horn or Papacy; when the beast on which the whore of Rome sits and rules, and by whom she is supported, will go into perdition; and she herself shall be made desolate and naked, her flesh eaten, and she burned with fire by the ten horns, or kings, that shall rise up against her, being filled with hatred to her, Rev. xvii. 3, 8, 16: *and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame*; when Rome with all its power and wealth shall cease, and be no more, the whole body of the antichristian states shall perish; the city of Rome shall be burnt with fire; the beast and false prophet shall be taken and cast into a lake of fire, burning with brimstone, Rev. xviii. 8. and xix. 20.

Ver. 12. *As concerning the rest of the beasts*, &c.] The other three, which represent the Babylonian, Persian, and Grecian monarchies: *they had their dominion taken away*: not at this time, when the fourth beast, or Roman empire, is destroyed, but long ago; and not together, but successively; the dominion was taken away from the Babylonians, and given to the Persians; and then their dominion was taken away, and given to the Grecians; and after that the dominion of the Grecians was taken away from them, and given to the Romans: the prophet having observed what became of the fourth beast, he was most intent upon, just in a few words takes notice of the fate of the other three, before this: *yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time*: these monarchies did not at once become extinct, as the fourth beast or monarchy will, but by degrees; and the kingdoms of which they consisted are still in being, though in another form of government, and in different hands; whereas, when the fourth monarchy is destroyed, all rule and authority will be put down, and the kingdom be given to Christ and his saints, as follow:

Ver. 13. *I saw in the night visions*, &c.] Very probably the same night in which he had the dream and vision of the four beasts; but this that follows, being a new object presented, is introduced and prefaced after this manner; as well as, being something wonderful and worthy of attention, has a *behold* prefixed to it: *and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven*: not Judas Maccabæus, as Porphyry; nor the Roman people, as Grotius; nor the people of Israel, as Aben Ezra; nor the people of the saints of the most High, as Cocceius; but the Messiah, as most Christian interpreters, and even the Jews themselves, both ancient and modern, allow. In the ancient book of Zohar[s] it is said, "in the times of the Messiah, Israel shall be "one people to the Lord, and he shall make them "one nation in the earth, and they shall rule above "and below; as it is written, *behold, one like the Son* "*of man came with the clouds of heaven*: this is the "King Messiah, of whom it is written, *and in the days* "*of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a king*-"*dom which shall never be destroyed*, &c. ch. ii. 44." So in the Talmud[t] this prophecy is thus reconciled with another, concerning the Messiah, in Zech. ix. 9. to what R. Alexander said, R. Joshua ben Levi objects what is written, *and, behold, one like to the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven*: and it is written, *poor, and riding upon an ass*: which is thus adjusted, "if "they (the Israelites) are worthy, he (the Messiah) "comes with the clouds of heaven; but if they are "not worthy, he comes poor, and riding on an ass;" and so it is interpreted in their ancient Midrashes[u], or expositions, as well as in more modern ones: Jarchi on the text says, "he is the Messiah;" and so R. Saa-

[r] לקל מן à voce, Montanus, Cocceius; ex quo cœpit vox, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius; ex quo audita fuit vox, Piscator.

[s] In Gen. fol. 85. 4. Ed. Sultzbac.

[t] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 1.

[u] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 13. fol. 209. 4. Midrash Tillim apud Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. Ver. l. 10. c. 1.

diah Gaon and Jacchiades, this is Messiah our righteousness; and Aben Ezra observes, that this is the sense R. Jeshua gives, that *one like to the Son* of man is the Messiah; and he adds, it is right, only along with him must be joined the holy people, who are the Israelites: and, with the Jews, Anani, which signifies *clouds*, is the name of the Messiah, founded upon this text, in the Targum of 1 Chron. iii. 24. where mention is made of the name of a person, Anani, it is added, "who is the Messiah that is to be revealed;" so in an ancient book called Tanchuma [y], speaking of Zerubbabel, it is asked, from whence did he spring? it is answered from David, as it is said, 1 Chron. iii. 10. *and Solomon's son was Rehoboam*, &c.; and so all in the line are mentioned unto Anani, ver. 24. and then it is asked, who is this Anani? this is the Messiah, as it is said, Dan. vii. 13: *and I saw in the visions of the night, and, behold, one like to the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven.* He is said to be *as*, or *like the Son of man*, in agreement with the style of these visions, ver. 4, 5, 6. or because as yet he was not really incarnate, only appeared in a human form: or this *as* is not a note of similitude, but of truth and reality, as in John i. 14. Matt. xiv. 5. Phil. ii. 7, 8. or because he was more than a man: and his coming *with the clouds of heaven* denotes the majesty, visibility, and swiftness, with which he came to take open possession of his kingdom and glory. Saadiah interprets them of the angels of heaven, with which he will be attended: *and came to the Ancient of days*; his divine Father, from whom, as man and Mediator, he receives his mediatorial kingdom, is invested with it, and instated into it; see Rev. v. 7. this is not to be understood of his first coming in the flesh, which was from his Father, and not to him; nor of his ascension to heaven, exaltation and session at the right hand of God, when he indeed received the kingdom from the Father, and was made and declared Lord and Christ; but this seems to respect what shall be upon the destruction of the fourth beast, when Christ shall receive and take to himself his great power, and reign, and more visibly appear by his Father's designation and appointment, and his open glory, to be King and Lord over all: *and they brought him near before him*; not Elijah the prophet, as Jacchiades; rather the angels, as others; or the saints by their prayers, who hasten to, and hasten thereby, the coming and kingdom of Christ in a more spiritual and glorious manner; or it may be rendered impersonally, "he was brought near before him," as by the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions.

Ver. 14. *And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom*, &c.] That is, a large, powerful, and glorious kingdom; not but that he had a kingdom before, but now it will be more extensive, and appear in greater glory: this will be fulfilled when the kingdoms of this world shall become his, and all nations shall serve and worship him, Rev. xi. 15. and xv. 3, 4. as follows: *that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him*: embrace his Gospel, submit to his ordinances serve and worship him in every religious duty; every people, of all nations, and of every language under heaven; which will be the case when the everlasting Gospel will be preached to them all with success, Rev. xiv. 6. Psal. lxxii. 11: *his dominion is an everlasting dominion*; it shall never have an end, as the rest of the monarchies, signified by the four beasts, have had, or will have; see Psal. xlv. 6. Isa. ix. 7: *which shall not pass away*; or be removed from one to another, like the above monarchies: *and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed*; or *corrupted* [z], abolished and brought to nothing, as the said monarchies were one by another; and, at last, all of them by the stone cut out of the mountain; see Dan. ii. 44.

Ver. 15. *I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body*, &c.] Or *sheath* [a]; the soul being in the body as a sword in its scabbard; where it was cut [b] and pierced, as the word signifies; and was wounded, distressed, and grieved at the vision seen; not at the sight of the Son of man, and the glorious and everlasting kingdom given to him; but of the four beasts, and especially the last, and more particularly the little horn, and the look, and words, and actions of that, as well as the awful scene of judgment presented to his view: *and the visions of my head troubled me*: the things he saw, which appeared to his fancy as real things, gave him a great deal of uneasiness, and chiefly because he did not understand the meaning of them; it was not so much the things themselves, as ignorance of them, that cut him to the heart, and grieved and troubled him; for what is more so to an inquisitive mind, that has got a hint of something great and useful to be known, but can't as yet come to the knowledge of it?

Ver. 16. *I came near unto one of them that stood by*, &c.] To one of the angels that attended, either the throne of judgment, or the Son of man in his approach to his divine Father: *and asked him the truth of all this*; the substance of these visions; what these images, presented to his view, were shadows and representations of; so type and truth, shadow and substance, are opposed to each other. The real meaning of all this was what he asked; nor need any be ashamed to ask of whomsoever they can hope to get knowledge of truth, and especially of superiors, of the angels of the churches, or pastors of them: *so he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things*: he interpreted every thing in the vision to him, and gave him the true meaning and real design of the whole, as follows: this was asked and told, not when Daniel was awake, and was considering of what he had dreamed; but in his dream, in his vision by night; this was all transacted in a visionary way, both the things and the interpretation of them.

Ver. 17. *These great beasts, which are four, are four kings*, &c.] Or kingdoms, as the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions; and so Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Saadiah; so the fourth beast is called the fourth kingdom, ver. 23. or a succession of kings in four kingdoms or monarchies, comparable to beasts for their strength, cruelty, and tyranny: these are the words of

[y] Apud Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 85. 2.
[z] יתחבל corrumpetur, Pagninus, Montanus; corrumpitur, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.

[a] בגו נדנה in medio vaginæ, Montanus; intra vaginam, Munster, Vatablus.
[b] אתכרית transfixus est, Junius & Tremellius, Polanus; succisus vel excisus est, Munster.

him that stood by, of one of the angels Daniel applied to, *to know the meaning of his dream*; and might be better rendered, as to *these*[c] *great beasts, which are four*; for their quality beasts, for their quantity great, and for number four. The meaning is, *four kings shall arise out of the earth*; or kingdoms; which have an earthly original and foundation; are supported by earthly and worldly means, and with earthly and worldly views; and are different from the kingdom of Christ and his saints, which is not of the world, though it may be in it: this explains what is meant by the great sea, from whence these beasts are said to come up, ver. 3. nor is it any material objection that the first of these kingdoms, the Babylonian, was risen already, and almost at an end; since the denomination is taken from the larger number; three of them were to arise, and the first was of the same original with them; thus 'tis said, ch. xi. 2, that three kings of Persia should stand up, and yet Cyrus, who was one of them, reigned already.

Ver. 18. *But the saints of the most High*, &c.] Or, *of the most high Ones*[d], Father, Son, and Spirit, separated by God the Father in election, and in that sense his saints, or sanctified ones, Jude, ver. 1. and redeemed by the Son, and sanctified with his blood, or their sins atoned by it, and to whom he is made sanctification, and so his saints, Heb. xiii. 12. 1 Cor. i. 30. and sanctified by the Spirit, who in conversion implants principles of grace and holiness in them, 1 Cor. vi. 11. or, *the saints of high*[e], places or things; who are born from above, and are called with a high and heavenly calling, towards which they are pressing, reckoning themselves strangers here below: these *shall take the kingdom*; or *receive*[f] it, as a free gift from God; and not by force, and rapine, and violence, as the beasts did: *and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever*; after the four monarchies are destroyed, a fifth kingdom shall be set up; and this will be given to, and put into the possession of, the saints; they shall have the rule and government in the world, even in the whole world, as well as reign with Christ spiritually; which manner of rule shall last long; and then after the first resurrection they shall reign with him a thousand years on earth, and afterwards in heaven to all eternity. There is another rendering and sense of the words given, *and they* (the beasts) *shall receive the kingdom of the saints of the most High*[g], &c.; and so Saadiah interprets them, "and these kingdoms shall "receive the kingdom of Israel, who are the saints of "the most High, until the world to come, until the "Messiah reigns;" and this way go many others, who understand the words of those several monarchies possessing the land of Judea, and ruling over it; and of the continuance of it in the hands of Papists or Turks for a long time, even until the glorious kingdom of Christ takes place; but this does not agree with the accentuation of the words, their form of construction, their connexion, and strong manner of expression, *for ever and ever*; and especially if compared with ver. 22, 27.

Ver. 19. *Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast*, &c.] What it represented, what kingdom or monarchy was meant by it; for, by the above answer of the angel, he understood the four beasts signified four kings or kingdoms; the three first he pretty well understood; at least he was not so solicitous about them as about the fourth; and this he was desirous of having a very particular and exact account of; it threatening, by its appearance, a great deal of trouble to the world, and especially to the church of God: *which was diverse from all the others*; or, *from all them*, or *those*[h], the other three beasts: *exceeding dreadful*; to other kingdoms and nations: *whose teeth were of iron*; of these parts of its description, see on ver. 7: *and his nails of brass*; this is a new circumstance, not before mentioned, and here added with great propriety; *nails* belonging to a beast of prey, and these said to be of *brass*, to denote its strength, cruelty, and voraciousness in tearing its prey to pieces; and, moreover, to shew that this kingdom has somewhat of the nature of the third or Grecian monarchy, said to be of brass in Nebuchadnezzar's dream; some out of that kingdom being taken into the Roman militia, as Theodoret observes; and soldiers are to a king what nails are to a beast: which *devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet*; some kingdoms and provinces were destroyed by it, and the rest were made subject to it; see ver. 7.

Ver. 20. *And of the ten horns*, &c.] That is, Daniel desired to know the truth of the ten horns, or the meaning of them, what they signified, and who they pointed at, of which in ver. 7. here it is added, *that were in his head*; observing the situation of them; though the horns of a beast could hardly be thought to be elsewhere: *and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell*; particularly he was very desirous to know the meaning of a single horn, which rose up among the rest, and before which three of the other horns fell, being plucked up by the roots: *even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things*; see the note on ver. 8: *whose look was more stout than his fellows*; than the other beasts, or rather than the other horns; either than his fellow-bishops, claiming an authority over them, as being universal bishop; or than the kings and princes of the earth, setting up himself above all that is called god, emperors and kings; taking to himself all power in heaven and in earth; a power to depose kings, and absolve their subjects from allegiance to them, and even over the consciences of men; so that his look is more bold and impudent than others, as well as more fierce and terrible, threatening kings and kingdoms with his bulls, anathemas, and interdicts: or, *whose appearance is greater than his fellows*[i]; in pomp and splendour, making a greater

[c] Quod attinet, Michaelis.
[d] קדישי עליונין sanctorum altissimorum, Pagninus, Montanus; sanctorum excelsorum, Junius & Tremellius.
[e] Sancti excelsorum, scil. locorum, Piscator.
[f] ויקבלון accipient, Munster, Piscator, Tigurine version.
[g] Suscipient regnum sanctorum, Pagninus, Montanus; sortientur, vel obtinebunt regnum, Calvin; so Polanus, Sanctius.
[h] מן כלהין a cunctis ipsis, Pagninus, Montanus; ab omnibus illis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[i] וחזוה רב מן חברתה cujus aspectus, Munster; et aspectus ejus major sociis suis, Pagninus.

shew and figure than the kings of the earth, and claiming a superiority over them.

Ver. 21. *I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, &c.*] The same little horn before described; not Antiochus Epiphanes, who made war with the Jews, as many think; or the Roman Cæsars, that persecuted the church of Christ, as others; nor Titus Vespasian, who fought against Israel, as Saadiah; but antichrist, or the pope of Rome; and this refers to the wars of the popes with the Waldenses, which began in the year 1160, and continued long, and with the two witnesses at the close of their testimony, Rev. xi. 7. and xiii. 7. this Daniel had a view of in vision; not whilst he was inquiring of the angel, but before, though not mentioned till now; and was a reason he was so very inquisitive about this little horn, because of its war with the saints, and its success, as follows: *and prevailed against them*: as the popes and their abettors did against the Waldenses and Albigenses, whom they slew in great numbers, and got the victory over; as the beast also, the same with this little horn, will overcome the witnesses, and slay them, Rev. xi. 7.

Ver. 22. *Until the Ancient of days came, &c.*] Not locally, by change of place, he being the omnipresent God; but in a providential way, to check and put a stop to the power and prevalency of the little horn over the saints; for this is the terminus or end of that; which puts a period to it: for when the Ancient of days comes in the exertion of his power and providence, he will come and sit as a Judge upon this little horn or antichrist, and judge, and condemn, and punish it; see ver. 9, 11: *and judgment was given to the saints of the most High*: their characters vindicated from all calumny and false aspersions; their adversaries condemned and punished; and power, dominion, and authority, given to them with Christ; see ver. 27. John v. 22: *and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom*: as in ver. 18. see the note there; till which time the little horn or antichrist will reign and rage, and prevail over the saints, but no longer.

Ver. 23. *Thus he said, &c.*] The person that stood by, the angel, of whom Daniel made his inquiries, and who answered him, as follows: *the fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom on earth*: which shews that the angel, by four kings, ver. 17, meant four kingdoms, that should successively arise in the earth, and out of it, one after another; and this kingdom is not the kingdom of the Seleucidæ, nor the Turkish, but the Roman empire; for this is to continue until the kingdom of Christ takes place; see ver. 7: *which shall be diverse from all kingdoms*: from the kingdoms and monarchies that were before it; particularly as a kingdom, in its form of government, both when Pagan and when Papal; see ver. 7: *and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces*: not the whole land of Judea only, as some read and interpret it; but the whole world, which the Romans became masters of; and the phrases used denote the destruction and desolation they made, wherever they carried their arms, and the cruelty and tyranny they exercised, and the vast profusion of blood made by them, both among the Heathens they subdued, and the Christians they persecuted.

Ver. 24. *And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise, &c.*] Or ten kingdoms which sprung out of the Roman empire, or into which it was broken and divided upon the dissolution of it, about A. D. 476; which, according to Mr. Mede[k], were thus divided, A. D. 456, 1. Britons; 2. Saxons; 3. Franks; 4. Burgundians; 5. Wisigoths; 6. Suevians and Alanes; 7. Vandals; 8. Almanes; 9. Ostrogoths; 10. Greeks. The list Bishop Lloyd[l] has given of them is, 1. Hunns, who erected their kingdom in that part of Pannonia and Dacia, which was from them called Hungary, about A. D. 356.—2. Ostrogoths, who settled themselves in the countries that reach from Rhetia to Mæsia, even to Thrace, about 377; and afterwards came into Italy under Alaricus, in 410.—3. Wisigoths, who settled in the south parts of France, and in Catalonia, about 378.—4. Franks, who seized upon part of Germany and Gaul, A. D. 410.—5. Vandals, who settled in Spain; afterwards set up their kingdom in Africa, A. D. 407; their king Gensericus sacked Rome, 455.—6. Suevians and Alans, who seized the western parts of Spain, A. D. 407; and invaded Italy, 457.—7. Burgundians, who came out of Germany, into that part of Gaul called from them Burgundy, 407.—8. Herules, Rugians, and Thoringians, who settled in Italy under Odoacer, about A. D. 476.—9. Saxons, who made themselves masters of Great Britain about the same time, 476.—10. Longobards, called likewise Gopidæ, who settled in Germany, about Magdeburg, A. D. 383; and afterwards succeeded the Heruli and Thuringi in Hungary, about the year 526. Sir Isaac Newton[m] reckons the ten kingdoms in the following order: 1. the kingdom of the Vandals and Alans in Spain and Africa;—2. of the Suevians in Spain;—3. of the Wisigoths;—4. of the Alans in Gallia;—5. of the Burgundians;—6. of the Franks;—7. of the Britons;—8. of the Hunns;—9. of the Lombards;—10. of Ravenna; who gives an account of the several kings of these kingdoms; and these, as the same learned writer says[n], whatever was their number afterwards, they are still called the *ten* kings from their first number; and though they have not always been in the same form and order, yet they have been generally about, if not exactly, the same number; as they are now near the same; and may be thus reckoned, as the kingdoms of France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Great Britain, Sardinia, Denmark, the two Sicilies, Swedeland, Prussia, and Poland; of which see more on the note on Rev. xvii. 12. *And another shall rise after them*: not Titus Vespasian, as Jarchi and Saadiah; nor the nation of Gog and Magog, as Jacchiades: but the pope of Rome, or antichrist; who came to his power as universal bishop, and as a horn or temporal prince, after the above kingdoms arose; not after they were at an end, but after they were constituted and established, as it was proper they should first be; since they were to give their strength, power, and kingdom, to the antichristian

k Works, B. 3. c. 14. p. 661.
l Apud Lowth in loc.
m Observations on Daniel, ch. 6. p. 47.
n Ibid. p. 73.

beast, by which it became a horn or temporal prince, Rev. xvii. 13. The Septuagint render it, *behind them*: which Mr. Mede[a] interprets of his springing up unawares, imperceptibly, unnoticed, and unobserved by them, till he overtopped them. *And he shall be diverse from the first*; from the first ten horns, kings or kingdoms; having, besides a secular power and temporal authority, an ecclesiastical and spiritual one; a power not only over the bodies and estates of men, but over their souls and consciences; and even over the other horns and kingdoms, which they had not over one another; and so was different from them all: *and he shall subdue three kings*: designed by the three horns plucked up by the roots, and which fell before him; of which see the note on ver. 8.

Ver. 25. *And he shall speak great words against the most High*, &c.] Or, *at the side of the most High*[b]; setting himself up as a rival, and upon an equality with him; taking the names and characters of holiness, infallibility, yea, of deity itself, unto him; claiming a power to forgive sin, which is peculiar to God; and preferring his own laws, doctrines, and traditions, to the word of God: *and shall wear out the saints of the most High*: by his wars with them, and murders and massacres of them; by taking away their lives and their substance; so lessening their numbers, and weakening their strength and power, wear them out, as a garment is wore out, as the word[c] signifies; utterly consume and destroy them, at least in his own apprehensions; which will be the case when the witnesses will be slain, Rev. xi. 8, 9, 10. and especially will wear out their patience, or however thoroughly exercise it. The word[d], in the Arabic language, signifies to *afflict* and *handle roughly*: and such usage the saints have met with, more or less, in all ages, from the man of sin. *And think to change times and laws*: to alter the forms and constitutions of kingdoms, and the customs and usages of them; yea, to set up and pull down kings at pleasure; see ch. ii. 21. or to change the use of times and seasons, by setting apart days as holy for canonized saints; and appointing such days in a week, and such a season in the year, for abstinence from meats; and even to change the laws of God and man, by dispensing with both, and making new ones of his own: *and they shall be given into his hand*; either the saints he makes war with, and wears out, who shall be overcome by him; or the times and laws, which he shall not only have it in his mind and purpose to change, but shall have it in his power to do it, and shall do it: *until a time, and times, and the dividing of time*: by *a time* is meant a year, the longest part of time; by *times*, two years; and *the dividing of time*, half a year; in all three years and a half, which is the same with 1260 days, or 42 months, the time of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, and of the reign of antichrist; so long shall he continue, exercising his power and authority, his wrath and rage, and blasphemy, and no longer; see Rev. xi. 2, 3. and xii. 14. and xiii. 5.

Ver. 26. *But the judgment shall sit*, &c.] As in ver. 10. the court shall sit, the Judge shall take the bench, and all things be prepared for the arraignment, trial, condemnation, and punishment, of the little horn or antichrist, when the above time is up; God the Father, the Ancient of days, and Christ, said to be like the Son of man, brought near to him, shall sit as Judges, attended by the holy angels: *and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end*: either the angels, or rather the saints of the most High; particularly the Christian princes, into whose hearts God will put it to hate the whore, eat her flesh, and burn her with fire; so that there shall be an utter end of antichrist; he shall be stripped of all his power and authority; his destruction will be inevitable and irrecoverable; he shall never come out of it; it shall continue to the end of the world, to the end of time.

Ver. 27. *And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High*, &c.] Not only the dominion that shall be taken away from the little horn or antichrist, and from all the antichristian states, but the dominion of all others throughout all the earth, and under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of God, and the true professors of faith in Christ. The kingdoms of this world will become Christ's, and Christian princes will be kings of them everywhere; and not only the royal power and authority will be vested with them, but all the grandeur and state belonging to them will be theirs; as well as all the saints in general shall reign in a spiritual manner with Christ, enjoying all ordinances, and all religious liberties, as well as civil, and be free from all persecutions. *Whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him*: the people of the saints of the most High, all shall be subject to them, all dominions, and the governors of them; or Christ the head of them, under and with whom they reign. So Saadiah[e] paraphrases it, "the "kingdom of the King Messiah is an everlasting king-"dom, and his government is to generation and gene-"ration, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." This spiritual reign of Christ, which will take place in a more glorious manner at the destruction of antichrist, will continue until the Millennium, or the personal reign of Christ, begins; and after that will be the ultimate glory, in which Christ and his people will reign to all eternity.

Ver. 28. *Hitherto is the end of the matter*, &c.] Of the angel's words, and of the interpretation of those things Daniel was desirous of being informed about, and of the whole dream and vision Daniel had; and indeed this is the end and issue of all events in Providence, the kingdom and glory of Christ with his people: *as for me Daniel*: with respect to his frame of mind, and the state of his body, when he awaked from this dream, and reflected upon it, and especially upon that part of it which affected the people of God:

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[a] Works, B. 4. ep. 24. p. 778.
[b] לצד עליא ad regionem, sive latus Altissimi, Calvin; juxta Altissimum, Cocceius; ex parte Altissimi, Munster.
[c] יבלא malaseu, Sept.; deteret, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; absichit, Montanus; absumet, Munster; consumet, Vatablus.
[d] بلا ingrate et duriere modo tractavit, afflixit, Giggeius apud Golium, col. 325. Erpenius apud Castel. col. 262. So Michaelis on the place observes.
[e] And R. Isaac in Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 44. applies it to the Messiah.

my cogitations much troubled me: when he thought of these powerful monarchies, their strength and cruelty, and what the people of God would suffer under them, and especially under the fourth beast or monarchy, and more particularly under the little horn or antichrist: *and my countenance changed in me*: turned pale; he looked sorrowful and dejected, because of the afflictions of God's people; though the issue of them, one would have thought, would have inspired him with joy and pleasure: *but I kept the matter in my heart*; laid it up in his memory; pondered it in his mind; meditated upon it; and well weighed the several things observed to him; that he might be thoroughly master of them, and make them known to others, and leave them in writing for the benefit of the church of God in future ages.

CHAP. VIII.

THIS chapter contains the vision of a ram and he-goat, and the interpretation of it. It begins with observing the time and place of the vision, ver. 1, 2. then describes the ram seen, by the place of his situation; by his two horns; and by his pushing several ways with so much force and fury, that none could stand before him, or deliver out of his hands, ver. 3, 4. next the he-goat appears, and is described by the part from whence he came; the swiftness of his motion; the notable horn between his eyes; and his running to the ram in great fury, smiting him between his horns, casting him to the ground, and trampling upon him, and none to deliver, ver. 5, 6, 7. but, after waxing great and powerful, its horn was broken, and four more rose up in its stead, and out of one of them a little horn, ver. 8, 9. which little horn is described by its power and prevalence to the south and to the east, towards the pleasant land, the host of heaven, and the Prince of the host; and by it the stars were cast down and trampled upon, the daily sacrifice made to cease, the place of the sanctuary cast down, and truth itself, ver. 9, 10, 11, 12. and upon inquiry it appeared that these sacred things were to continue in this desolate condition unto 2300 days, ver. 13, 14. Daniel being desirous of knowing the meaning of this vision, the Angel Gabriel is ordered by Christ to give him an understanding of it; who drew near to him, and awaked him out of his sleep, and gave him the interpretation of it, ver. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. which is as follows; the ram, with two horns, signifies the kings of Media and Persia; the rough goat, the king of Greece; and the great horn the first king, Alexander the great; and the four horns, four kingdoms which rose up out of the Grecian empire upon his death, ver. 20, 21, 22. and the little horn a king of fierce countenance, Antiochus Epiphanes; who is described by his craft and cunning, by his power and might, and by the destruction he should make, ver. 23, 24, 25. this vision the angel assures the prophet was true, and bids him shut it up, since it was for many days, ver. 26. upon which Daniel fainted, and was sick for a time, but afterwards recovered, so as to be able to do the king's business; but astonished at the vision himself, and which was not understood by others, ver. 27.

Ver. 1. *In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar*, &c.] Which some say[r] was the last year of his reign; but, according to Ptolemy's canon, he reigned seventeen years; and so says Josephus[s]; however, this, as well as the preceding vision, were seen before what happened recorded in the *fifth* and *sixth* chapters. The following vision was seen by Daniel, according to Bishop Usher[t] and Dean Prideaux[u], in the year of the Julian period 4161, and before Christ 553: Mr. Bedford[w] places it in 552; and Mr. Whiston[x], very wrongly, in 537, two years after the death of Belshazzar. The prophet having, in the preceding chapters, related what concerned the Chaldeans, he wrote in the Chaldee language; but now, henceforward, writing of things which concerned the Jews more especially, and the church and people of God in after-times, he writes in the Hebrew tongue. *A vision appeared unto me*, even *to me Daniel*; and not another; which is said for the certainty of it; whether it was seen by him waking, or in a dream, as the former vision, is not certain; it seems rather as if he was awake at first, though he afterwards fell prostrate to the ground, and into a deep sleep; yet the Syriac version takes it to be a dream, and so renders the first clause of the next verse: *after that which appeared to me at the first*; at the beginning of Belshazzar's reign, in the first year of it, recorded in the preceding chapter; which was concerning the four monarchies in general, and particularly concerning the fourth or Roman monarchy, of which a large account is given; and the Chaldean monarchy being near at an end, here the two monarchies between, namely, the Persian and Grecian, are in this vision described.

Ver. 2. *And I saw in a vision*, &c.] The following things: *and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam*; not in reality, but so it seemed to him in the vision; as Ezekiel, when in Babylon, seemed in the visions of God to be at Jerusalem, ch. viii. 3. This city Shushan, or Susa, as it is called by other writers, and signifies a *lily*, was so called from the plenty of lilies that grew about it, or because of the pleasantness of it; it was the metropolis of the country Susiana, which had its name from it, and was afterwards the royal seat of the kings of Persia. This was first made so by Cyrus; for Strabo[y] says, that he and the Persians having overcome the Medes, observing that their own country was situated in the extreme parts, and Susa more inward, and nearer to other nations, being, as he says, between Persia and Babylon, set his royal palace in it; ap-

[r] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 28. p. 81.
[s] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 4.
[t] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3451.
[u] Connexion, &c. part 1. p. 117.
[w] Scripture Chronology, p. 710.
[x] Chronological Tables, cent. 10.
[y] Geograph. l. 15. p. 500.

proving both the nearness of the country, and the dignity of the city. Here the kings of Persia laid up their treasures, even prodigious large ones; hence Aristagoras told Cleomenes, that if he could take that city, he would vie, and might contend, with Jupiter for riches[b]; for hither Cyrus carried whatever money he had in Persia, even forty thousand talents, some say fifty[c]. Alexander[d], when he took this city, found a vast quantity of riches in it. It is called here a palace; and so it is spoken of by Herodotus[e], Diodorus Siculus[f], Pausanius[g], Pliny[h], and others, as a royal city, where were the residence and palace of the kings of Persia; but the royal palace was not in it at this time; the kings of Babylon had their palace and kept their court at Babylon, where Daniel was; but in vision it seemed to him that he was in Shushan, and which was represented to him as a palace, as it would be, and as the metropolis of the kingdom of Persia, which he had a view of in its future flourishing condition, and as destroyed by Alexander; for, as before observed, it was Cyrus that first made it a royal city; whereas this vision was in the third year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon. Some versions render it, a *tower* or *castle*; and so several writers, as Strabo[i], Plutarch[k], and Pliny[l], speak of the tower or castle in it. Diodorus Siculus[m] says, when Antigonus took the tower of Susa, he found in it a golden vine, and a great quantity of other works, to the value of fifteen thousand talents; and out of crowns, and other gifts and spoils, he made up five thousand more. And Polybius[n] relates, that though Molon took the city, yet could not take the fortress, and was obliged to raise the siege, so strong it was. It must be a mistake of Pliny[o] that this city was built by Darius Hystaspes; he could only mean it was rebuilt, or rather enlarged, by him, since it was in being long before his time, and even a royal city in the times of Cyrus. Strabo[p] says it was built by Tithon the father of Memnon, was in compass a hundred and twenty furlongs, of an oblong figure, and the tower was called after his father's name Memnonia; and Shushan itself is called, by Herodotus[q], Susa Memnonia. At this day, with the common people, it goes by the name of Tuster[r]. The east gate of the mountain of the house, which led to the temple at Jerusalem, was called Shushan. Some say[s] there was a building over this gate, on which the palace of Shushan was portrayed, from whence it had its name. The reason of this portrait is differently given; the Jewish commentators on the Misnah[t] commonly say that this was ordered by the kings of Persia, that the people of Israel might stand in awe of them, and not rebel against them. Their famous lexicographer[u] says, that this was done, that the Israelites, when they saw it, might remember their captivity in it. But a chronologer[w] of theirs gives this as the reason, that the children of the captivity made this figure, that they might remember the miracle of Purim, which was made in Shushan; and this, he says, is a good interpretation of it. This city was in the province of Elam; that is, Persia, as it is also called, Isa. xxi. 6. for Josephus[x] says the Persians had their original from the Elamites, or Elameans; and Pliny[y] observes, that Elymais joined to Persia; and the country of Susiane, so called from Susa its chief city, was, according to Strabo[z] and Ptolemy[a], a part of Persia: and here Daniel in vision thought himself to be; and a very suitable place for him to have this vision in, which so much concerned the affairs of Persia. *And I saw in a vision, and I was by the river Ulai;* that is, in vision; it seemed to the prophet that he was upon the banks of the river Ulai; the same with the Eulæus of Strabo[b], Pliny[c], Ptolemy[d], and others, which ran by, and surrounded, the city of Shushan, or Susa; the water of which was so light, as Strabo[e] observes, that it was had in great request, and the kings of Persia would drink of no other, and carried it with them wherever they went. Herodotus[f] and Curtius[g] make mention of the river Choaspes, as running by Susa, and say the same things of its water; from whence it might be concluded it was one and the same river, called by different names; though Strabo takes notice of them together, as if they were distinct; yet he, from Polycletus[h], makes them, with Tigris, to disembogue into the same lake, and from thence into the sea. The river which runs by Shushan, now called Souster, according to Monsieur Thevenot[i], is Caron, and comes from the hills about it, and is thought to be the Choaspes of the ancients; near to which, as he was told, is a hill that now goes by the name of Choasp; so that, upon the whole, they seem to be one and the same river[k]. Josephus says[l], that Daniel had this vision in the plain of Susa, the metropolis of Persia, as he went out with his friends, that is, out of the city: and the Vulgate Latin version renders it, *by the gate Ulai;* a gate of the city of Shushan so called: and so Saadiah Gaon interprets it a gate; but the former sense is best.

Ver. 3. *Then I lifted up mine eyes, &c.*] To see what was to be seen in this place, where he in the

[b] Herodoti Terpsichore, sive l. 5. c. 49.
[c] Strabo, ib. p. 502.
[d] Curtius, l. 5. c. 2. Plutarch. in Vita Alexandri, Diodor. Sicul. Bibliothec. l. 17. p. 540.
[e] Terpsichore, sive l. 5. sect. 48.
[f] Bibliothec. l. 17. p. 539.
[g] Laconica, sive l. 3. p. 175.
[h] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 27.
[i] Geograph. l. 15. p. 500.
[k] In Vita Alexandri.
[l] Ut supra.
[m] Bibliothec. l. 17. p. 349.
[n] Hist. l. 5. p. 249.
[o] Ut supra.
[p] Geograph. l. 15. p. 500.
[q] Polymnia, sive l. 7. c. 151.
[r] Hiller. Onomastic. Sacr. p. 603, 935.
[s] Jarchi & Bartenora in Misn. Celim, c. 17. sect. 9.
[t] Maimon & Bartenora in Misn. Kelim, c. 17. sect. 9. & Middot, c. 1. sect. 3.
[u] R. Nathan, Sepher Aruch in voce שושן, fol. 160. 3.
[w] R. Abraham Zacuth, Sepher Juchasin, fol. 62. 2.
[x] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 4.
[y] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 27.
[z] Geograph. l. 15. p. 500.
[a] Geograph. l. 6. c. 3.
[b] Geograph. p. 501, 505.
[c] Ut supra, l. 6. c. 23, 27.
[d] Geograph. l. 6. c. 3.
[e] Ut supra, p. 502. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 27.
[f] Clio, sive l. 1. c. 188. Terpsichore, sive l. 5. c. 49. 52.
[g] Ut supra.
[h] Geograph. l. 15. p. 501.
[i] Travels, part 2. B. 2. ch. 9. p. 153.
[k] See the Universal History, vol. 5. p. 124.
[l] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 11. sect. 7.

vision was brought; he lifted up the eyes of his understanding, being enlightened by the vision of prophecy, and the eyes of his body, to which objects of corporeal things formed in the fancy were represented: *and saw, and, behold*; he saw something wonderful in a visionary way, and which struck his mind, and raised his attention: *there stood before the river*; the river Ulai, near Shushan, the palace, the seat of the kings of Persia, to the east: *a ram, which had two horns*; a symbol of the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, signified by the two horns, ver. 20. an emblem of power and dominion, and sometimes used to signify kings and kingdoms; see ch. vii. 24. and these as united in one monarchy, under one monarch, Cyrus, and continued in his successors unto the times of Alexander; and therefore called *a ram*, or *one ram* [m], as in the original; and which in sound has some likeness to Elam or Persia: and this kingdom or monarchy may be signified by it, partly because of its strength and power, and partly because of its riches, as some think, as well as because it is a fighting creature; and it may be chiefly because this monarchy was mild, and kind, and gentle to the Jewish nation: and it is very remarkable, that, according to Ammianus Marcellinus [n], the ram was the royal ensign of the Persians; whose kings used to wear for a diadem something made of gold, in the shape of a ram's head, set with little stones: *and the two horns* were *high*: grew straight up on high, and so were different from the usual horns of a ram, which are crooked; denoting the great power, authority, wealth, and riches, these two kingdoms rose up unto: *but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last*: I think the words might be rendered better, *and the first* was *higher than the second, but it ascended*, or *grew up, higher at last* [o]; the kingdom of the Medes was the first kingdom, and it was at first superior to the kingdom of Persia; but afterwards the kingdom of Persia became greater than that, under Cyrus and his successors: and Sir John Chardin says [p], that rams' heads, with horns one higher than another, are still to be seen in the ruins of Persepolis.

Ver. 4. *I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward*, &c.] That is, with his horns, as rams do; these kingdoms using all their power and strength, wealth and riches, in fighting with and subduing nations, and pushing on their conquests in all parts here mentioned; to the west, Babylon, Syria, Asia, and part of Greece; to the north, Iberia, Albania, Armenia, Scythia, Colchis, and the inhabitants of the Caspian sea; and to the south, Arabia, Ethiopia, Egypt, and India; all which places were conquered by Cyrus and his successors. No mention is made of the east, because this ram stood in the east, facing the west; and at the right and left were the north and south; and so Cyrus is said to come from the east, Isa. xlvi. 11. *So that no beast might stand before him*; no, not the first beast, the Babylonian monarchy, which fell into the hands of Cyrus; nor any other king or kingdom he and his successors fought against: *neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand*; or power; Crœsus, the rich king of Lydia, and other allies of the king of Babylon, assisted him against Cyrus, and endeavoured to prevent his falling into his hands, but all in vain: *but he did according to his will, and became great*: none being able to oppose him, he carried his arms where he pleased, and imposed what tribute he thought fit, and obliged them to do whatever was his will; and so became great in power and dignity, in riches and wealth: this monarchy was very large and extensive, and very rich and wealthy, in the times of Cyrus and his successors; and especially in the times of Darius, the last monarch of it, conquered by Alexander, who is described as follows:

Ver. 5. *And as I was considering*, &c.] The ram, and the strange things done by him; wondering that a creature of so little strength, comparatively with other beasts, should be able to do such exploits: and thinking with himself what should be the meaning of all this, and what would be the issue of it, *behold, an he-goat came from the west*; which is interpreted of the king or kingdom of Grecia, which lay to the west of Persia; and a kingdom may be said to do what one of its kings did; particularly Alexander, king of Macedon, in Greece, who, with the Grecian army under him, marched from thence to fight the king of Persia; and which might be signified by a *he-goat*, because of its strength, its comeliness in walking, and its being the guide and leader of the flock; and also it is remarkable, that the arms of Macedon, or the ensigns carried before their armies, were a goat, ever since the days of Caranus; who following a flock of goats, was directed to Edessa, a city of Macedon, and took it; and from this circumstance of the goats called it Ægeas, and the people Ægeades, which signifies *goats*; and put the goat in his arms [q]. *On the face of the whole earth*; all that lay between Greece and Persia, all Asia; yea, all the whole world, at least as Alexander thought, who wept because there was not another world to conquer: hence Juvenal says [r], *unus Pellæo juveni non sufficit orbis*; one world was not enough for this young man. *And touched not the ground*; as he went; he seemed rather to fly in the air than to walk upon the earth; with such swiftness did Alexander run over the world, and make his conquests: in six or eight years time he conquered the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, Babylon, Egypt, and all the neighbouring nations; and afar off, Greece, Thrace, Illyricum, and even the greatest part of the then known world: hence the third or Grecian monarchy under him is said to be like a leopard, with four wings of a fowl on its back [s], ch. vii. 6. see the note there: he conquered countries as

[m] איל אחד aries unus, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

[n] Hist. l. 19.

[o] והאחת גבהה מן השנית והגבהה עלה באחרונה.

[p] Travels, vol. 3.

[q] Justin ex Trogo, l. 7. c. 1.

[r] Satyr. 10.

[s] Alexander was remarkable for the agility of his body, as appeared by his mounting his horse Bucephalus *, to the admiration of his father, and all that beheld him; as well as famous for the quick marches of his army, and his very swift and expeditious execution of his designs. *Plurimum pedum celeritate pollebat*; he greatly excelled in swiftness of foot, says the historian: and again, *armatusque e navi, tripudiantis simile prosiluit*; he leaped armed out of the ship like one that danced †. And he himself, speaking of the countries he had conquered, says, *quæ tanta velocitate domuimus*: and elsewhere, *cujus velocitatem nemo valuisset effugere*. And of Bessus it is said, that *Alexandri celeritas pate-*

* Plutarch in Vita Alexandri.

† Suppl. in Curt. l. 1. p. 16. l. 2. p. 26.

soon almost as another could have travelled over them; in his marches he was swift and indefatigable. Ælianus[t] reports, that he marched, clad in armour, thrice four hundred, that is, twelve hundred furlongs, upon a stretch; and, before his army could take any rest, fought his enemies, and conquered them. Some render the words, *whom no man touched in the earth*[u]; that is, none could oppose, resist, and stop him; he bore down and carried all before him; there was no coming at him, so as to touch him, or hurt him; he was so swift in his motions, and so powerful in his army. *And the goat had a notable horn between his eyes; or, a horn of vision;* which in ver. 21 is interpreted of the first king of Greece, ver. 21. that is, when it became a monarchy; who was Alexander the great; and very properly called a *horn*, being possessed of great power and authority; and a *notable* one, very remarkable and famous, as he has been in all ages since: *a horn of vision*[w], as it may be rendered; a very visible and conspicuous one, to be seen afar off, and which attracted the eyes of all unto it: its situation was *between the eyes* of the goat, denoting his sagacity, wisdom, prudence, craft, and cunning; being attended and surrounded with his father Philip's wise counsellors, as Parmenio, Philotas, Clitus, and others. It is remarkable that by the Arabs Alexander is called Dulcarnaim, or Dhilcarnain; that is, one having two horns[x]: the reason of which was, he affected to be the son of Jupiter Hammon, and therefore at feasts and public entertainments would put on the purple and horns of Hammon: hence, as Clemens of Alexandria observes[y], he is by the statuaries represented as horned, or wearing horns; but then, as Arnobius[z] and others take notice, Hammon is made by the painters and statuaries to have ram's horns; whereas it seems more likely that Alexander's were goat's horns, since the goat was in the arms of Macedon; and so Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, who mimicked Alexander in his armour, is said to have goat's horns on his helmet, upon the top of his crest[a]; and to such ensigns is the allusion here.

Ver. 6. *And he came to the ram that had two horns,* &c.] Alexander being chosen and made by the states of Greece captain-general of all Greece against the Persians, marched from thence with his army, passed the Hellespont, and entered into the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, signified by the ram with two horns, and came up to Darius Codomannus, possessed of this large monarchy, and at the head of a numerous army: *which I had seen standing before the river;* the river Ulai, near to Shushan, the royal seat of the kings of Persia; here Darius stood in his royal majesty and dignity, as the defender of his empire, and unconcerned at the attempt of Alexander, having nothing to fear, as he thought, from such a puny adversary: *and ran unto him in the fury of his power; or, heat of his power*[b]; which denotes the haste Alexander made with his army into Asia; his eager desire, and the fervour of his mind to engage with the Persians: the historian says, that he passed the Hellespont into Asia, *incredibili ardore mentis accensus;* fired with an incredible ardour of mind: and a little after, having conquered the rebels of Pisidia, he marched against Darius, *summo mentis ardore;* with the greatest ardour of mind, and with no less alacrity[c]; which exactly agrees with the sacred text. The running of the he-goat to the ram in a hostile way is described in allusion to the manner of those creatures when they fight with one another, or attack an enemy.

Ver. 7. *And I saw him come close unto the ram,* &c.] Though the distance between Greece and Persia was very great, and many rivers and mountains in the way, which seemed unpassable; Alexander got over them all, and came up to Darius, and fought several battles with him, and entirely defeated him, though greatly inferior in number to him, as follows: *and he was moved with choler against him;* exceedingly imbittered against him; exasperated and provoked to the last degree, by the proud and scornful message he sent him; calling himself king of kings, and akin to the gods, and Alexander his servant; ordering his nobles to take Philip's madding stripling, as he called him in contempt, and whip him with children's rods, and clothe him in purple, and deliver him bound to him; then sink his ships with the mariners, and transport all his soldiers to the further part of the Red sea[d]: *and smote the ram;* in three battles, in each of which the Persians were smitten and routed by the Grecians: first at the river Granicus, where Alexander with thirty-thousand foot, and five thousand horse, met the Persians, though more than five times his number, being, as Justin[e] says, six hundred thousand, and got the victory over them; here twenty thousand of the Persian foot, and two hundred and fifty of their horse, were slain, and not more than thirty-nine of the Macedonians killed[f]: Plutarch[g] says, it was reported that the Persians lost twenty thousand foot, and two thousand five hundred horse; and from Aristobulus he says, that the Macedonians lost only thirty-four men, of which twelve were footmen: and Diodorus Siculus[h] relates that the Persians lost more than ten thousand foot, and not less than two thousand horse, and more than twenty thousand were taken: according to Justin[i], of Alexander's army there only fell nine foot, and a hundred and twenty horse: others say, that, of the Macedonians, twenty-five men of Alexander's own troop fell in the first attack, about sixty other of the horse were

vitae. And Coluthus, the magician, calls him *velocissimus rex**. And another historian says†, that having observed the enemy's city forsook by them, *sine ulla intelicle desiliit in planitiem urbis:* and again, *tanta celeritate instructo paratoque exercitu Graeciam oppressit, ut quem venire non senserant, videre se vix crederent.*

[t] Var. Hist. l. 10. c. 4.

[u] ואין נגע בארץ quem nemo attingebat in terra, Junius & Tremellius.

[w] קרן חזות cornu visionis, Montanus; visibile sive visendum, Vatablus; conspicuum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[x] See Gregory, de Æris & Epochis, c. 11. p. 158, 159.

[y] Protreptic. ad Gentes, p. 36.

[z] Adv. Gentes, l. 6. p. 232.

[a] Plutarch. in Vita Pyrrhi.

[b] בחמת כחו fervore virtutis suæ, Munster; cum ardore virium suarum, Cocceius; in æstu roboris sui, Michaelis.

[c] Supplem. in Curt. l. 2. p. 26, 28.

[d] Ib. p. 27.

[e] E Trogo, l. 11. c. 6.

[f] Supplem. in Curt. l. 2. p. 28.

[g] In Vit. Alexandri.

[h] Biblioth. l. 17. p. 503.

[i] E Trogo, l. 11. c. 6.

* Curt. Hist. l. 6. c. 3. & l. 7. c. 4, 7.

† Justin ex Trogo, l. 11. c. 2. & l. 12. c. 9.

killed, and thirty of the foot [k]; so different are the accounts of the slain in this battle; however, the victory appears to be very great, whereby Sardis, with all Darius's rich furniture, fell into the hands of Alexander, and all the provinces of the lesser Asia submitted to him. The next battle was fought at Issus in Cilicia, where Darius had an army, according to Plutarch [l], consisting of six hundred thousand men; according to Justin [m], four hundred thousand foot, and a hundred thousand horse, which was routed by Alexander; when a hundred thousand of the Persian foot, and ten thousand of their horse, were slain; and only, on Alexander's side, five hundred and four of the foot wounded, thirty-two wanting, and a hundred and fifty of the horse killed [n]: here also the accounts vary: Plutarch [o] says above a hundred and ten thousand of the Persians were slain: according to Diodorus Siculus [p], there fell of them a hundred and twenty thousand foot, and not less than ten thousand horse; and of the Macedonians three hundred foot, and about a hundred and fifty horse: according to Arrian [q], the Persians lost ten thousand horse, and ninety thousand foot: according to Justin [r], sixty-one thousand foot, and ten thousand horse, were slain, and forty thousand taken; and of the Macedonians there fell one hundred and thirty foot, and one hundred and fifty horse; but, be it as it will, the victory was exceeding great, whereby the camp of Darius, his mother, wife, and children, and all his riches at Damascus, fell into the hands of Alexander, with all Syria. The third and last battle was fought near Arbela, or rather at Gaugamela in Assyria, when Alexander with fifty thousand men beat Darius with an army of eleven hundred thousand men; Plutarch [s] says ten hundred thousand; forty thousand of which were slain, and of the Macedonians only three hundred or less were wanting [t]; according to Arrian [u] thirty thousand were slain; but Diodorus Siculus [w] says ninety thousand: this was the decisive battle: after this Babylon and Persepolis were taken by Alexander, and he became master of the whole empire, which is intended in the next clause: *and brake his two horns*; conquered the Medes and Persians, the two kingdoms united in one monarchy, but now destroyed; another monarchy, the Grecian, took its place: *and there was no power in the ram to stand before him*: there was no strength in the whole empire sufficient to resist, oppose, and stop him; though vast armies were collected together, these were soon broken and routed, and Darius at the head of them was forced to fly and make his escape in the best manner he could: *but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him*; not Darius personally, for he was slain by Bessus, one of his own captains; but the Persian empire, it ceased to be, and was no longer in the hands of the Persians, but was taken from them by Alexander; and all the glory and majesty of it were defaced and despised; the famous city and palace of Persepolis were burnt in a drunken fit, at the instigation of Thais the harlot: *and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand*: not his armies, nor his generals, nor his allies, nor his offers to Alexander of his daughter in marriage, and part of his kingdom; all were in vain, and to no purpose; he and his whole empire fell into the conqueror's hands, and there was no remedy against it. Josephus [x] says, that when Alexander was in his way to Jerusalem, Jaddus, the high-priest, met and accompanied him into the city and temple, and shewed him this prophecy of Daniel, that some one of the Grecians should abolish the empire of the Persians; and, thinking himself to be intended, was greatly pleased. Gorionides [y] says the high-priest, whom he calls Ananias, said to Alexander, on shewing him the prophecy, thou art this he-goat, and Darius is the ram; and thou shalt trample him to the ground, and take the kingdom out of his hand; and he greatly strengthened the heart of the king.

Ver. 8. *Therefore the he-goat waxed very great*, &c.] The Grecian monarchy, under Alexander, became very powerful, and was very extensive; he not only conquered the Persian empire, but also the Indies, yea, the whole world, as he imagined; and indeed he did bring into subjection to him the greatest part of the then known world; and he was very great in his own esteem, at least reckoned himself lord of the world, called himself the son of Jupiter Ammon, and affected to be worshipped as a god: *and when he was strong, the great horn was broken*: when the Grecian monarchy was established, and became very powerful, and reached to the greatest part of the earth, then Alexander the first king of it, a great horn, and powerful monarch, died, or was broken; not as the two horns of the ram, by the power of the enemy; not by violence, but by intemperance, in a drunken fit, or, as was suspected, by poison; and that when he was in the height of his glory, swelled with his victories; and that in the prime of his days, when in his full strength, being in the *thirty-third* year of his age: *and for it*, or in the room and stead of it [z], *came up four notable ones*; or, *four* horns *of vision* [a]; very famous and conspicuous, like that in ver. 5. which were the four kingdoms into which the empire was divided some time after Alexander's death, and the four kings that were over them: the kingdoms were those of Egypt, Greece, Asia, and Syria. Ptolemy was king of Egypt, to which belonged Lybia, Palestine, Arabia, and Cælesyria. Cassander was king of Macedonia and Greece. Lysimachus was king of Asia, to which belonged Thrace, Bithynia, and other places; and Seleucus was king of Syria, and of the eastern countries: these are the four heads of the leopard, or third beast, which signifies the Grecian monarchy, ch. vii. 6. and these were *toward the four winds of heaven*; east, west, north, and south: Egypt,

[k] Universal History, vol. 5. p. 297.
[l] In Vit. Alexandri.
[m] E Trogo, l. 11. c. 9.
[n] Curtius, l. 3. c. 11.
[o] In Vita Alexandri.
[p] Bibliothec. l. 17. p. 512.
[q] Exped. Alex. l. 2.
[r] E Trogo, l. 11. c. 9.
[s] Vit. Alexandri.
[t] Curtius, l. 4. c. 16.
[u] Ut supra, l. 3.
[w] Biblioth. l. 17. p. 536.
[x] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 8. sect. 5.
[y] Heb. Hist. l. 2. c. 7. p. 88.
[z] תחתיה loco ejus, vel illius, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis.
[a] חזות ארבע quatuor *cornua* conspicua, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; cornua aspectus quatuor, Michaelis.

with its appendages, lay to the south; Asia, and what belonged to that, to the north; Macedonia and Greece to the west; and Syria to the east: and thus was the Grecian empire divided into four kingdoms, among the successors of Alexander: there were some partitions of it before this into provinces among governors, under the brother and son of Alexander; but after the battle of Ipsus, in which Antigonus, one of Alexander's captains, and a very principal, active, and ambitious man, was slain, and his army routed; the four confederate princes against him, above named, divided by consent the empire between them into separate kingdoms, and became really, and not in title only, kings of them [b]; which is what is here prophesied of.

Ver. 9. *And out of one of them came forth a little horn, &c.*] Meaning not the kingdom of Titus Vespasian, as Jarchi; nor the kingdom of the Turks, as Saadiah; but the kingdom of Antiochia, as Aben Ezra and Jacchiades; or rather Antiochus Epiphanes, who sprung from the kingdom of the Seleucidæ in Syria, or from Seleucus king of Syria, one of the four horns before mentioned: this is that sinful root said to come out from thence, 1 Maccab. i. 11. called a *horn*, because he had some power and authority, and which he usurped and increased in; though but a *little* one in comparison of Alexander the great horn; or at his beginning, being an hostage at Rome; from whence he got away by stealth, and seized the kingdom of Syria, which belonged to his elder brother's son, whom he dispossessed of it; and by mean, artful, and deceitful methods, got it into his hands, who had no right unto it, nor any princely qualities for it: *which waxed exceeding great toward the south*: towards Egypt, which lay south of Syria; into which Antiochus entered, and fought against Ptolemy Philometer, king of it, took many cities, and besieged Alexandria; and in all probability would have subdued the whole country, had not the Romans [c] restrained him, by sending their ambassador Popilius to him, who obliged him to desist and depart; see 1 Maccab. i. 17, 18, 19, 20: *and toward the east*; towards Armenia and Persia, the Atropatii in Media, and the countries beyond the Euphrates, whom he made tributary to him; see 1 Maccab. iii. 31. and vi. 1, 2: *and toward the pleasant land*; the land of Judea, so called because of its delightful situation, and great fruitfulness; and because God chose it above all others for his habitation; where his word, and worship, and ordinances, were observed and enjoyed; and where the Messiah should be born and dwell; into this Antiochus led his army, and greatly afflicted and distressed it; he made himself master of most places in Galilee and Judea. The Arabic version reads *toward the west*: no mention is made of the north, because there he himself reigned; Syria being north to Egypt, as that was south to Syria; hence afterwards the king of Egypt is called the king of the south, and the king of Syria the king of the north.

Ver. 10. *And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven, &c.*] The people of the Jews, the army of the living God, the church militant, among whom were many of the citizens of heaven, whose names are written there; such was the insolence of this king, as to molest and disturb them: *and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them*; some of the common people he persecuted and destroyed, or prevailed upon them, either by threats or flatteries, to relinquish their religion; and even some of the *stars*, the lights of the people, the priests and Levites, that ministered unto them; or the princes, priests, and elders of the people, whom he slew, as Jacchiades interprets it; or removed from their posts, so that they could not do their office; or they turned apostates; and those that did not he barbarously put to death, and insulted over them, and used them in a very contemptuous manner, as old Eleazar, the mother and her seven sons; see 2 Maccab.

Ver. 11. *Yea, he magnified* himself *even to the prince of the host, &c.*] Either the high-priest Onias, whom he dispossessed of his office, and put Jason a wicked man into it; or Judas Maccabeus, the prince of the Jewish nation; or rather, as Jacchiades, God himself, the Lord God of Israel, the King, Prince, Governor, and defender of them, whom Antiochus blasphemed; whose worship he put a stop to; and whose temple he profaned, and ill-used his people; all which was against God himself, and is a proof of the pride and insolence of this king: *and by him the daily* sacrifice *was taken away*; the lambs in the morning and evening were forbid to be sacrificed; or they could not be offered, because the altar was pulled down, or profaned; and so all other sacrifices were made to cease, as well as this, which is put for all: or, *from him* [d], the prince, *the daily* sacrifice *was taken away*: either from the priest, who used to offer it; or from God, to whom it was offered: *and the place of his sanctuary was cast down*: not that the temple was destroyed by him, but it was profaned and rendered useless; the worship of God was not carried on in it, but the image of Jupiter was set up in it, and it was devoted to the service of an idol; yea, the altar was pulled down, and all the vessels and ornaments of the temple were taken away and destroyed; see 1 Maccab. i. 22, &c. and iii. 45, 52.

Ver. 12. *And an host was given* him *against the daily* sacrifice *by reason of transgression, &c.*] Which some interpret of a garrison of soldiers placed by Antiochus, through his sin and wickedness, to hinder the oblation of the daily sacrifice, as Grotius; others, of a host of apostates among the Jews, who advised Antiochus against the daily sacrifice, and to kill swine, and offer them on the altar, as Jacchiades; or rather it may be rendered, *and the host was given over*, or *delivered*, i. e. to the enemy, *because of the transgression against the daily sacrifice* [e]; that is, because of the transgression of the priests or the people, in neglecting the daily sacrifice, the host or people of the Jews were delivered up into the hands of Antiochus; or they were delivered up, together with the daily sacrifice, for their sins [f]. The word צבא is by Jarchi and Ben Melech interpreted a set time, a fixed time which shall have an end; and Calvin inclines to this sense, that though

[b] See Prideaux's Connexion, part 1. B. 8. p. 558, 559.
[c] See Joseph. Antiqu. l. 12. c. 5. sect. 2.
[d] ממנו ab eo, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius; ab ipso, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Michaelis.
[e] וצבא תנתן על התמיד בפשע exercitusque traditus est propter transgressionem contra res circa illud juge sacrificium, Vatablus.
[f] Et exercitus tradetur una cum sacrificio jugi ob prævaricationem, Michaelis.

the daily sacrifice would be taken away, because of the transgression of the people, yet it was only for a certain time, and would be restored again when that time was up; and so is spoken for the comfort of the Lord's people: *and it cast down the truth to the ground*; that is, the little horn Antiochus, or his host and army; he did all that in him lay to extirpate and abolish true religion and godliness; he cut in pieces the copies of the book of the law, and burnt them, called the law of truth in Mal. ii. 6. as Jacchiades observes, and put to death the professors of the truth: and shewed all the contempt of true doctrine and worship he was capable of; see 1 Maccab. i. 59, 60: *and it practised, and prospered*: he did what he pleased, and he succeeded in his attempts for a while, there being none to oppose him.

Ver. 13. *Then I heard one saint speaking*, &c.] An angel, either a created angel, pure and holy in his nature, as Gabriel; or the increated Angel Jesus Christ, the Word of God: what he was speaking of is not said; perhaps Daniel did not hear what he said, though he heard him speaking, or perceived that he spake; yet did not understand what he said, or what was the subject of his discourse; very probably it was something relative to the vision now seen: *and another saint said unto that certain saint that spake*; another angel said to him that spake, whose name is unknown, only called such an one, or Palmoni, which some render *the wonderful numberer*; or, *the numberer of secrets*, or *that has all secrets numbered* [g]; and apply it to Christ, whose name is *Pele*, wonderful: the eternal Word of God, that is in the bosom of the Father, and knows all secrets, and the number of times and seasons, how long they will last; what created angels know not, he does; and therefore they apply to him for instruction and knowledge in hidden things: *how long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?* that is, how long will this vision last? or when will this prophecy be at an end, and have its full and final accomplishment? how long will the sacrifice be taken away, or made to cease? how long will that transgression, that abomination, making the temple desolate, the image of Jupiter Olympius set up by Antiochus, continue in it? how long shall it be given to him, or he be permitted to tread under foot, and use in the most contemptuous manner, the temple of the Lord, and his people?

Ver. 14. *And he said unto me*, &c.] That is, *Palmoni*, the wonderful person, to whom the angel put the above question, gave the answer to it; not unto the angel that asked it, but unto Daniel that stood by; knowing that it was for his and his people's sake the question was asked, and therefore gave the answer to him, as follows: *unto two thousand and three hundred days*; or so many *mornings* and *evenings* [h]; which shews that not so many years, as Jacchiades, and others, are meant; but natural days, consisting of twenty-four hours, and which make six years, three months, and eighteen days; and reckoning from the 15th day of the month Cisleu, in the year 145 of the Selucidæ, in which Antiochus set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar, 1 Maccab. i. 57, to the victory obtained over Nicanor by Judas, on the 13th day of the month Adar, Anno 151, are just 2300 days; which day the Jews kept as an annual feast, in commemoration of that victory; and from that time enjoyed peace and rest from war [i]: this way goes L'Empereur after Capellus; but others begin from the defection of the people from the pure religion by Menelaus, Anno 141; though Antiochus did not enter on his impieties till the following year; and, reckoning from the 6th day of the 6th month in that year, to the 25th day of Cisleu in the year 148, when the Jews offered the daily sacrifice on the new altar of burnt-offerings, 1 Maccab. iv. 52, were just six years, three months, and eighteen days: and so it follows, *and then shall the sanctuary be cleansed*: as it was by Judas Maccabeus at the time above mentioned; when he purified the holy places, sanctified the courts, rebuilt the altar, renewed the vessels of the sanctuary, and put all in their proper places; see 1 Maccab. iv. 41—51. Indeed, as Antiochus was a type of antichrist, and his persecution of that desolation made by antichrist in the church; these 2300 days may be considered as so many years, which will bring it down to the end of the sixth Millennium, or thereabout; when it may be hoped there will be a new face of things upon the sanctuary and church of God, and a cleansing of it from all corruption in doctrine, discipline, worship, and conversation.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision*, &c.] The whole of the preceding vision, concerning the ram, he-goat, and little horn, and what were done by them; the prophet not only affirms he saw this vision, but repeats the affirmation, expressing his own name, partly for the sake of emphasis, and partly for the greater confirmation of his words; wherefore it was a most impudent thing in Porphyry to say, that the true Daniel never saw this vision; but what is here related was written after Antiochus's reign, and falsely ascribed to him. It being so clear a prophecy concerning Alexander, and the destruction of the Persian empire by him, this acute spiteful Heathen had no other way of evading the evidence of it in favour of true religion but by this false and lying assertion: *and I sought for the meaning*; that is, of the vision; for a more perfect, clear, and explicit meaning of it; something he had learnt concerning the latter part of it, relating to the desolation of the temple, and the continuance of it, from what passed between the two saints or angels; but he was desirous of knowing more; which he either signified by making application to the angel that stood near him; or rather by secret ejaculations in prayer to God; and he, who is afterwards described as a man, though the eternal God that knows all things, knew the secret desires of his soul, and immediately took care they should be answered: *then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man*; not really a man, but in form and appearance; not Gabriel, or any created angel in human form, in which angels sometimes appeared; but the eternal Son of God, who was to be incarnate, and was often seen in the form of a man before his incarnation; in like manner he was now seen by Daniel,

[g] לפלמוני illi qui occulta in numerato habet, Junius & Tremellius.
[h] ערב בוקר vespero matutino, Castalio; vespertina matutinaque tempora, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[i] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 12. c. 10. sect. 5.

right over-against [k] whom he stood; this is ... with the speaking saint, or Palmoni the wonderful One, in ver. 13. Jacchiades says, this is the holy blessed God; as it is indeed the Immanuel, God that was to be manifested in the flesh.

Ver. 16. *And I heard a man's voice between* the banks *of Ulai, &c.*] Near to which Daniel was, ver. 2. and it seemed to him as if the appearance of the man was in the midst of the river, between the banks of it, from whence the voice came; or between the arms of it, it bending and winding about; or rather between Shushan and the river; or between the prophet and that: this voice was the voice of the person that appeared as a man in the preceding verse: *which called, and said, Gabriel*; the voice was loud, audible, and commanding; even to an angel, one of great note, Gabriel, the man of God, the mighty one; and shews, that the person that made this appearance, and spoke in this authoritative way, was the Lord, and head of angels, even of all principalities and power, at whose beck and command they are: *make this man to understand the vision*; the above vision of the ram, he-goat, and little horn; give him a full explanation of it; tell him what the several figures mean, represented in it; that he may have a clear understanding of all things contained in it; the saints and people of God are sometimes instructed by angels, and particularly the prophets of old were; and which was more common in the times of the former dispensation than now; for God has not put in subjection to angels the world to come, or the Gospel dispensation, Heb. ii. 5.

Ver. 17. *So he came near where I stood, &c.*] The angel immediately obeyed the divine Person in human form, and came near the prophet, in order to instruct him, and carry on a familiar conversation with him: *and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face*; not being able to bear the glory that attended him; and especially when he considered him as the messenger of a divine Person sent to instruct him, and being conscious of his own frailty and weakness: *but he said unto me, understand, O son of man*; give attention in order to understand the vision, which the angel, by a divine command, was about to give him the full meaning of; and which he could not so well attend unto in his present circumstance and posture; and therefore suggests he should shake off his fear, and stand on his feet, and listen to what he was about to say: he calls him *son of man*, a title only given to him and Ezekiel; and so may be considered as a mark of honour and respect, as being one greatly beloved and honoured by the Lord; or to express his tender regard to him, and accommodating himself to him, considering he was a frail mortal man; or to put him in mind that he should so consider himself, though now among angels, and favoured with revelations of secrets, that so he might not be exalted with them above measure: *for at the time of the end* shall be *the vision*; or rather, *for a time is the end of the vision* [l]; there is a set, fixed, and determined time, when the vision shall end, and have its

Ver. 18. ...lishment; namely, when the 2300 days are ... dressing him in the above ... *on my face toward the ground*: *through me, &c.*] Ad... strate to the ground, and swooned away, which ... *sleep* in a deep sleep; and so was unfit to attend to the explanation of the vision the angel was sent to give him; and which was not through indifferency to it, or neglect of it; but through human weakness, his nature not being able to bear up under such circumstances, which struck him with such fear and dread: *but he touched me, and set me upright*; he jogged him out of his sleep, and took him, and raised him up, and set him on his feet; or, *on his standing* [m]; which Ben Melech explains, as he *was standing at first*; and so in a better posture to attend to what was about to be revealed unto him.

Ver. 19. *And he said, behold, I will make thee know, &c.*] Or, *make known unto thee* [n]; what he knew not, even things future: particularly *what shall be in the last end of the indignation*; the indignation of God against the people of Israel, in the sore affliction and persecution of them by Antiochus, which he suffered to be: here the angel suggests that that should not remain always, but should have an end; and he would inform the prophet what should be at the close; or rather, as Noldius [o] renders it, *what shall be unto the last end of the indignation*; all that should come to pass from the beginning of the Persian monarchy, signified by the *ram*, quite through the Grecian monarchy, designed by the *he-goat*, unto the end of the persecution by Antiochus; for, certain it is, the angel informed the prophet of more things than what concerned the last part and closing scene of these sorrowful times; even of all the abovesaid things, which intervened between the setting up of the Persian monarchy, and the sufferings of the Jews in the times of Antiochus; and so Aben Ezra interprets it, here "is declared the wrath "of God upon Israel in the days of wicked Greece, "and in the days of Antiochus, until the Hasmonæans "cleansed the temple:" *for at the time appointed the end* shall be; the end of that indignation or affliction, and so of this vision or prophecy: there was a time appointed by God for the fulfilment of the whole; and when that time was come all would be accomplished; the indignation would cease, and the persecution be at an end.

Ver. 20. *The ram which thou sawest having two horns, &c.*] Here begins the particular explanation of the above vision, and of the first thing which the prophet saw in it, a ram with two horns: which two horns, he says, are *the kings of Media and Persia*: Darius the first king was a Mede, and Cyrus, that succeeded him, or rather reigned with him, was a Persian: or rather the ram with two horns signifies the two kingdoms of the Medes and Persians united in one monarchy, of which the ram was an emblem; see the note on ver. 3. for Darius and Cyrus were dead many years before the time of Alexander; and therefore could not personally

[k] לנגדי ex adverso mei, Michaelis.

[l] לעת קץ החזון ad tempus, finis visionis, Munster, Montanus, Calvin.

[m] על עמדי super stare meum, Montanus, Gejerus; super stationem meam, Michaelis.

[n] מודיעך ego notum faciam tibi, Piscator; indicaturus tibi sum, Michaelis.

[o] Concord. Ebr. Partic. p. 180. No. 809.

be the two horns of the ram broken by him; nor is it to be understood of the kings of two different continued as the one of Cyrus, and the, as Theodoret.

in whose succ- the *rough goat is the king of Grecia*, till, including all the kings of it, from Alexander to the end of the Grecian monarchy; or rather the kingdom of Greece, which began in him, and continued until it was destroyed by the Romans: this was signified by the rough or hairy goat, especially when Alexander was at the head of it, for his strength and prowess, his swiftness in his marches over rocks and mountains, his majesty and grandeur, and also his lust and uncleanness; see the note on ver. 5: *and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king*: this is Alexander, who, though he was not the first king of Macedon, his father Philip, and others, were kings before him; yet was the first king of the Grecian monarchy, which took place on the Persian monarchy being destroyed by him.

Ver. 22. *Now that being broken*, &c.] That is, the great horn Alexander, the first king of the Grecian monarchy; whose death, either by drunkenness, or by poison, is here expressed by being *broken*. The sense is, he being dead, or upon his death, *whereas four stood up for it*: four horns rose up in the room and stead of the great one broken; see ver. 8. these signified that *four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation*; which were the kingdoms of Egypt, Asia, Macedonia, and Syria, into which the Grecian monarchy was divided after the death of Alexander; and the first kings of them were all of the Grecian or Macedonian nation, and not Egyptians, Armenians, Syrians, &c.: *but not in his power*: they did not rise and stand up in the power and strength, in the grandeur and magnificence, of Alexander; they were not equal, but greatly inferior to him, though they were notable horns, or famous kingdoms, as in ver. 8. Saadiah interprets it, not of his seed or offspring; these were not his sons that were the heads of these kingdoms; but his captains or generals.

Ver. 23. *And in the latter time of their kingdom*, &c.] Toward the close of the kingdom of the four kings that divided Alexander's kingdom; for though they were four distinct kings, and had four separate kingdoms, yet these all belonged to one kingdom or monarchy, the Grecian empire; and when that was decreasing, and coming into the hands of the Romans, there rose up, stood, and flourished awhile, King Antiochus, afterwards described, who began to reign in the hundred and thirty-seventh year of the Seleucidæ, 1 Maccab. i. 11. and above a hundred and sixty-six years before Christ, and the same year that he set up the abomination of desolation in the temple at Jerusalem, as Mr. Mede [p] has observed, Æmilius the Roman consul conquered Perseus king of Macedon, whereby all Greece came into the hands of the Romans; so that this king may be truly said to arise and stand ... the Grecian empire, when that was ... and the Roman empire was taking place: *when the transgressors are come to the full*; many among the Jews, who apostatized from their religion, turned Heathens, even some of the priests, when their number was completed, and they had filled up the measure of their iniquities; see 1 Maccab. i. 12, &c.: *a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up*; meaning Antiochus, as is generally agreed, both by Jewish and Christian interpreters, and to whom these characters agree: he was *hard of face*[q], as it may be rendered; an impudent brasen-faced man, who had no shame nor fear in him; regarded neither God nor man; committed the most atrocious crimes in the most public manner; and particularly was daring and impudent in his blasphemy against God and the true religion; and it may also signify that he was cruel, barbarous, and inhuman, especially to the Jews, as his persecution of them abundantly proves: and his *understanding dark sentences, or riddles*[r], which he could both propose and answer, shews him to be sagacious and cunning, well versed in wicked craft and policy; he had the art of inveigling and deceiving men; it was by deceit and cunning he got the kingdom from his nephew; and, by the wicked art of persuasion he was master of, he seduced many of the Jews to relinquish their religion, and embrace Heathenism; and so well skilled he was in wicked politics, that he could cover his own designs, and penetrate into the secrets of others; according to Jacchiades, he was skilful in the art of magic and astrology. This is the little horn that was to rise out of one of the four horns or kingdoms; as Antiochus did from that of Seleucus, and stood and reigned above 12 years.

Ver. 24. *And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power*, &c.] He should possess a large kingdom, and that should be increased by conquests: *but not in his power*[s], the power of Alexander; he should not arrive to that greatness he did, as in ver. 22. so Jacchiades: or, *in his own power*[t]: for it was not so much by his own courage and valour, by any heroic actions of Antiochus, he became so great, as by craft and deceit: through sedition he procured the death of his father and elder brother; and by fraud got the kingdom from his nephew; and through the perfidy of Menelaus and Jason, the high-priests of the Jews, and other apostates, he obtained what dominion he had over the Jews; and it was by the assistance of Eumenes king of Pergamus, and his brother Attalus, that he kept the kingdom he had usurped, who stood by him, in order to check the growing power of the Romans; and more especially it was by a power given him from above, or by the permission and providence of God, who suffered him to be so great, and to prevail particularly over the Jews; because of their sins, as Aben Ezra and Saadiah observe, to chastise them for them: so his antitype, antichrist, became great and powerful, through craft and policy, and by the help of the ten kings that gave their kingdoms to him:

[p] Works, B. 3. c. 11. p. 654.
[q] עז פנים durus facie, Calvin, Piscator; validus facie, Michaelis.
[r] חידות ænigmata, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Calvin, Piscator, Polanus.
[s] בכחו robore ipsius, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[t] In fortitudine sua, Pagninus, Montanus; per virtutem suam, Munster.

and he shall destroy wonderfully; or beyond all credit, countries, cities, towns, and their inhabitants; he slew fourscore thousand Jews in three days' time, bound forty thousand, and sold as many, 2 Maccab. v. 14. or, *he shall destroy wonderful things*[a]; the temple, and the wonderful things of worth and value in it, so Saadiah and Jacchiades; he took away the vessels of the temple, the golden lamps, the ark, and table of gold, &c. *and shall prosper and practise*: for a while do what he pleased, none being able to oppose and hinder him; see ver. 12: *and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people*. by the *mighty* may be meant the Egyptians, Parthians, and other nations he made war with; and by the *holy people* the Jews, who were sanctified and separated from other people by the Lord, to be a peculiar people; among whom were his holy temple, his holy priests, his holy word, ordinances, and worship; multitudes of these he destroyed, as before observed. Jacchiades interprets this of the sons of Aaron, the holy priests of the Lord, whom he slew.

Ver. 25. *And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand*, &c.] His schemes were laid in such deep policy, and he managed so artfully and craftily in the execution of them, that he commonly succeeded; as in getting the kingdom of Syria from his nephew; and, under a pretence of peace and friendship, and to defend Philometer king of Egypt, a minor, and by large promises to the nobles of the land, made himself master of it; and by deceitful methods he prevailed in Judea; see ch. xi. 21, 23, 24: *and he shall magnify himself in his heart*; swell with pride, on account of success, through his policy, craft, and cunning, and think himself above all mortals, and equal to God himself; yea, as his antitype antichrist, exalt himself above all that is called God; fancy that he could command the seas, weigh the mountains in scales, and reach heaven itself, 2 Maccab. ix. 8: *and by peace shall destroy many*; under a pretence of peace enter into countries, and destroy the inhabitants of them, as in Egypt and Judea; or, by leagues and treaties of peace, outwitting those he made peace with; so some politic princes do themselves more service, and their enemies more hurt, by treaties than by battles: or, *in peace*[b]; when at peace with them, or while they are in peace and tranquillity; coming upon them unexpectedly, at an unawares, when they did not so much as dream of war: *he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes*; not the high-priest, as Grotius; nor Michael, as Aben Ezra; but God himself, as Saadiah and Jacchiades; who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, the only Potentate, to whom all the princes above and below are subject; him Antiochus stood up against, when he profaned his temple at Jerusalem, forbid his worship, persecuted and destroyed his people, and set up the image of Jupiter in his house: *but he shall be broken without hand*; alluding to his being a horn; it is expressive of his death, and the manner of it; that he should not die by the hand of an enemy in battle, nor be assassinated by the hand of a ruffian, but be cut off by the immediate hand of God. Jacchiades says, that by the providence of God he fell ill of a bad disease, and at the cry of one of his elephants his chariot was overturned, and he fell on the ground, and his bones were broken. Of his death, and the manner of it, see 1 Maccab. vi. 8. 2 Maccab. ix. 5, 9. which was much like that of Herod's, Acts xii. 24. being stricken with a violent disorder in his bowels; his body covered with worms; his flesh flaked off, and emitted such a stench, as was intolerable to his army. Aben Ezra says, he fell from the roof of a house, and was broken, and died.

Ver. 26. *And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true*, &c.] That is, of the 2300 evenings and mornings, or natural days; unto which time the daily sacrifice was to cease, and the sanctuary and host trodden under foot; and then the sanctuary would be cleansed. This account is *true*, and not only to be believed, but is clear and plain, and to be literally understood of so many days, or such a term of time exactly, having no obscurity in it: *wherefore shut thou up the vision*; the whole vision of the ram and he-goat, and the little horn: the meaning is, that he should keep it to himself, and conceal it from men; not from his own people, for whose sake it was given, but from the Chaldeans, whose destruction was near; and who would be succeeded by the Persians, who might be disgusted with this prophecy, should they see it, it foretelling the destruction of their empire: or this order was given to suggest to Daniel that the fulfilment of it would be deferred some time, during which it would not be so easy to be understood as when it was near accomplishing and accomplished; and then prophecy and facts might be compared together: *for it* shall be *for many days*; it were three hundred years, or more, from the reign of Belshazzar to the death of Antiochus, in which this vision ends.

Ver. 27. *And I Daniel fainted and was sick* certain *days*, &c.] Or, *then I Daniel fainted*[c]; after he had seen the vision, and had thought upon it, and considered the afflictions that were to come upon the people of God, and the condition the temple, and the worship of it, would be in; these so affected his mind, that he not only fainted away, and was struck with a kind of stupor and amazement, but had a fit of illness upon him, which continued some days; such a nearness and sympathy there are between the soul and body: *afterwards I rose up*: from the bed in which he had laid some days ill: *and did the king's business*; by which it appears, that, upon the death of Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel was as yet continued in the service of the king of Babylon, though perhaps not in the same posts as before, and was not a favourite at court, and so much known as he had been; and also that he was not in reality at Shushan, when he had this vision, but at Babylon: *and I was astonished at the vision*; at the things contained in it, which were of so much importance, respecting the kingdoms of the earth, especially the Persian and Grecian empires, and the state of his own people the Jews: *but none understood it*; to whom he shewed it; none but himself, who was made to understand it by the angel, ver. 16, 17.

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[a] נפלאות mirabilia, Montanus, Pagninus.
[b] בשלוה in pace, Calvin, Vatablus; in tranquillitate, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis.
[c] So Noldius, Concord. Ebr. Part p. 309.

CHAP. IX.

THIS chapter contains a prayer of Daniel, and the answer to it. The time, occasion, and manner of his prayer, or circumstances of it, are observed, ver. 1, 2, 3. the parts of it, an address unto God, under various suitable epithets and characters, ver. 4. confession of sin, of his own, of the inhabitants of the land, kings, princes, and people, which are largely dwelt upon and exaggerated, ver. 5—15. and petitions for mercy, ver. 16, 17, 18, 19. then the answer follows; the time when it was ordered and given, and the person by whom it was sent, are expressed, ver. 20, 21, 22, 23. who delivered to him the vision of the seventy weeks to be considered by him; in which both the work of the Messiah, and the time of his coming, are clearly pointed out, ver. 24, 25, 26, 27.

Ver. 1. *In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes*, &c.] This is the same with Darius the Median, that took the kingdom after the death of Belshazzar; so called, to distinguish him from Darius the Persian; and yet Porphyry has the face to assert that this was Darius the Persian, under whom the temple was built, that Daniel might appear to live later than he did: Ahasuerus, whose son he was, is not he that was the husband of Esther, and was many years later than this; but the same with Astyages king of the Medes, and who is called Ahasuerus, Tobit xiv. 15. the father of Cyaxares, the same with this Darius, who was uncle to Cyrus that conquered Babylon, and made him king of it, and of the whole empire; for this was not the first year of his reign over Media, where he had reigned many years before, but over Chaldea, as follows: *which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;* by Cyrus his nephew: who having taken Babylon, and settled his affairs, undertook a journey to Persia, and made Media in his way; where he met with his uncle Cyaxares, the same with this Darius, and delivered the kingdom of Babylon to him, and married his daughter, with whom he had for her dowry the kingdom of Media, as Xenophon[f] relates. Now it was in the first year of his reign over the Chaldeans that Daniel had the following vision of the seventy weeks; which, according to Bishop Usher[g] and Mr. Whiston[h], was in the year of the Julian period 4177, and before Christ 537. Dean Prideaux[i] places it in the year 538; and Mr. Bedford[k] in the year 536.

Ver. 2. *In the first year of his reign*, &c.] Which was also the first of Cyrus, who was partner with him in the kingdom; in which year ended the seventy-years' captivity of the Jews, and proclamation was made to have their liberty to go up to Jerusalem, and build the temple, Ezra i. 1, 2. reckoning from the third, or the beginning of the fourth, of Jehoiakim king of Judah, when the desolation of the land began, and Daniel himself was carried captive; and which was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, during whose reign, and that of his son, and son's son, the Jews were to be detained captives, Dan. i. 1. Jer. xxv. 1. and xxvii. 7. *I Daniel understood by books;* the sacred Scriptures, which, though a prophet, he was not above reading; and, though a prime minister of state, yet found time to look into these divine oracles; which he read, studied, thoroughly considered, and well weighed in his mind; whereby he came to have knowledge of *the number of the years whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem:* Daniel might possibly have heard this prophecy of Jeremiah from his own mouth, before he went to Babylon; since the first intimation of it was in the first year of Jehoiakim, Jer. xxvii. 1, 7. and after this the prophecy might be sent to Babylon for the use of the captive Jews there; and indeed a copy of all his prophecies was no doubt brought thither at the last captivity of the people; so that it is easy to account for it how Daniel came by it; and it is plain it was now before him; for he uses the very word, חרבות, *desolations*, which Jeremiah does, ch. xxv. 9, 11. the prophecy of the seventy-years' captivity, and of deliverance from it at the expiration of that term, stands in ch. xxv. 12. and xxix. 10. which Daniel carefully read over, thoroughly considered, and as he full well knew what was the epocha of them, or when they begun, he found that they were just ready to expire; and this set him to the work of prayer, as in the following verses. From hence it is manifest that the law was not burnt, nor the Scriptures lost, in the Babylonish captivity; so that none knew what were or would be done by the Lord, as is falsely asserted in 2 Esdr. xiv. 21, &c.

Ver. 3. *And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications*, &c.] He set apart some time on purpose for this service, distinct from his usual stated times of prayer, as well as from his civil business and employment; and he not only set his face toward Jerusalem, as he used to do, ch. vi. 10. the more to affect his mind with the desolations the city and temple lay in; but towards the Lord God, the sovereign Lord of all, who does according to his will in heaven and in earth, the Governor of the universe, the one true God, Father, Son, and Spirit: and this denotes the intenseness of his spirit in prayer; the fixedness of his heart; the ardour of his mind; the fervency of his soul; his holy confidence in God; the freedom and boldness he used in prayer, and his constancy and continuance in it; which is a principal means, and a proper manner, of seeking God. The Septuagint version, agreeably to the Hebrew text[l], renders it, *to seek prayer and supplications:* such as were suitable and pertinent to the present case; most

[f] Cyropædia, l. 8. c. 36.
[g] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3467.
[h] Chronological Tables, cent. 10.
[i] Connexion, &c. part 1. p. 125, 128.

[k] Scripture Chronology, p. 711.
[l] לבקש תפלה ותחנונים τυ ἐκζητῆσαι προσευχὴν καὶ δεήσεις, Sept.; ad quærendum orationem & deprecationes, Montanus; ad quærendam orationem & supplicationem, Cocceius.

beneficial and interesting to him and his people, and most acceptable to the Lord: *with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes;* as was usual on extraordinary occasions, in times of public mourning; and this he did, to shew his sense of the divine Being, and of his own unworthiness to ask or receive any thing of him; his great humiliation for the sins of the people; and to distinguish this prayer of his from ordinary ones, and to affect his own heart in it, with the sad condition his nation, city, and temple were in; and therefore abstained from food for a time, put sackcloth on his loins, and ashes on his head, or sat in them.

Ver. 4. *And I prayed unto the Lord my God,* &c.] Not to idols, nor to angels or saints departed; but to the Lord God of heaven and earth, who is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, &c.; a God hearing and answering prayer; and to whom he directed his prayer, not only as the God of nature and providence, but as his own covenant God and Father; thereby encouraging his faith in him, and using his interest with him: *and made my confession:* of his own sins, and of the sins of his people; of the favours bestowed on him and them; of his justice in afflicting them, and his mercy in appointing a time for their deliverance; of his own faith in him, love to him, and submission to his will: *and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God;* great in his being and perfections, and in all his works of nature, providence, and grace; *and dreadful* in his threatenings and judgments, in his wrath and vengeance: or, *to be feared* *; and reverenced by all men, especially by his saints; and particularly when they draw near unto him, as Daniel now did; and that because of his greatness and goodness: this Daniel observes to raise in his mind a proper awe and reverence of God, whose presence he was now approaching: *keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments:* faithful to his word of promise; large and liberal in the distribution of his grace and mercy to such that love him sincerely and heartily; and, as an evidence of it, observe his precepts from a principle of love, and with a view to his glory: respect seems to be had to Exod. xx. 6. this is observed by the prophet, to encourage his own faith, and that of others, as to the fulfilment of the promise of their deliverance from captivity at the end of the seventy years; and to raise, in his mind and theirs, love to God, who was thus merciful; and to shew the obligations they lay under, in gratitude, to keep his commandments.

Ver. 5. *We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled,* &c.] Some think there is a gradation in these words; that they had committed some sins through error and ignorance; others through infirmity and obliquity, or in the perverseness of their spirits, and the crookedness of their ways; and others wilfully and in malice, in the wickedness of their hearts; and others were open acts of hostility against God, casting off his yoke, and refusing obedience to him, and obstinately persisting therein. Jacchiades refers them to sins of actions, words, and thoughts, which they proudly and presumptuously committed. This heap of phrases seems to be used to take in all kind of sin committed by them, and rather to exaggerate than to extenuate them, and to confess them with all their aggravated circumstances; and Daniel puts in himself among the body of the people, as being a member of it, and as well knowing he was not without sin; and therefore willingly took his part in the blame of it, in confession of it, and confusion for it: even by departing *from thy precepts, and from thy judgments;* both of a moral and positive nature, which were enjoined by the law of Moses, as the rule of their conduct; but from this they swerved.

Ver. 6. *Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets,* &c.] To their explanations of the laws and judgments of God; to their admonitions, reproofs, and counsels; these they did not attentively listen to, nor give credit to them, nor yield obedience to them; but despised and rejected them, though they were the true prophets and servants of the Lord; such as Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and others: *which spake in thy name;* they came by the authority of God, being sent by him; they delivered their message in his name, being his ambassadors; and which as it was an honour done to this people to have such men sent unto them, so it was an aggravation of their sin that they shewed no respect to them; since their words were not their own, but the Lord's, which they spoke to all sorts of persons: *to our kings;* one after another, as to Ahaz, Manasseh, Jehoiakim, Jechoniah, and Zedekiah; kings of the house of David, and over the land of Judah: *our princes;* princes of the blood, nobles, and courtiers: *and our fathers;* meaning not only their immediate ancestors, but their subordinate rulers, civil magistrates, judges or elders of the people, as Jacchiades interprets it: *and to all the people of the land;* of Judea; the common people, as distinguished from persons of rank and figure before expressed. These several persons are named, partly to observe how faithful the prophets were in delivering their message to all sorts of persons, high and low, not fearing the faces of any; and partly to shew that none could plead ignorance, or excuse themselves with that, since all had had sufficient warning and instruction: as also to observe, that the sin of rejecting the true prophets of the Lord was universal among them, all were guilty of it.

Ver. 7. *O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee,* &c.] It is essential to him, it is his nature, and appears in all his works; he is perfectly pure, holy, and righteous; he is just, and without iniquity; and there is no unrighteousness in him, nor any to be charged upon him, on account of any thing done by him: punitive justice belongs to him; nor is he to be complained of because of his judgments, which are righteous altogether; nor had the prophet, or any of his countrymen, just reason to complain of the evils brought on them; the desolations of their land, city, and temple, and their captivity in a strange land; by all which no injustice was done, nor could they charge the Lord with any: and with him also is righteousness wrought out by his Son, to justify sinners that believe in him; he has accepted of it, and imputes it without works. *But unto us confusion of face, as at this day;* both on account of their sins, which stared them in the face, loaded their consciences with guilt, and filled

* הנורא reverendus, Vatablus; summe reverende, Junius & Tremellius; metuende, Cocceius.

them with shame: and on account of their punishment, the miserable condition in which their country was, and they themselves were at that day; which declared to all the world what sinners they had been, and what sins they had committed, which had brought this ruin upon them, and them into such sad circumstances: *to the men of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem*; or, *man of Judah* [r]; to every man of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; who once dwelt in that land flowing with milk and honey, and now in a strange land for their sins; and to every inhabitant of that renowned city of Jerusalem, the metropolis of the nation, the seat of the kings of Judah; yea, the city of the great King, where the temple stood, and divine worship was performed, but now lay in ruins, through the iniquity of its inhabitants, and therefore had just reason to be ashamed: *and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are afar off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of the trespass that they have trespassed against thee*; shame and confusion of face also belonged to the ten tribes of Israel; to such of them as were mixed with the Jews in Babylon, or were in those parts of Assyria that lay nearest to it; and to those that were at a greater distance, in Media, Iberia, Colchis, and other places; yea, in all kingdoms and countries where they were dispersed for their trespass against the Lord; particularly in worshipping the calves at Dan and Beth-el, and other acts of idolatry and impiety.

Ver. 8. *O Lord, to us* belongeth *confusion of face, &c.*] Which is repeated, to shew how much the mind of the prophet was affected with it, and to fix a sense of it in the minds of others; as well as to suggest that he wanted words fully to express that shame that every one ought to take to themselves; and also in order to introduce what follows, and that to observe that all ranks and degrees of men were concerned in it: *to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee*; these had each of them sinned against the Lord, by not hearkening to his prophets, who reproved them for their sins, and warned them of their danger, ver. 6. and therefore had reason to be ashamed of them before him; as well as to observe the low estate in which the royal family, princes, elders, and people in Babylon, were, being exposed to shame and reproach before all the world.

Ver. 9. *To the Lord our God* belong *mercies and forgivenesses, &c.*] Mercy is his nature, and what he delights in; it is abundant, and he is plenteous in it; the fountain of mercy is with him, and numerous are the streams which flow from it, called *the multitude of his tender mercies*; all temporal favours spring from hence, and so do all spiritual blessings, the *sure mercies* of David; and particularly the forgiveness of sin, which is the Lord's prerogative, and is according to the tender mercies of our God, and the riches of his grace; and is of all sins, and of all sorts of sinners: he doth abundantly pardon all that apply to him for it, and forgives all trespasses*; see Psal. cxxx. 4, 7: *though we have rebelled against him*; there is mercy with the Lord, and forgiveness with him, even for rebellious ones; which is an exaggeration and illustration of his pardoning grace and mercy: or, *for we have sinned against him* [s]; so that it is a plain case that he is merciful, and has forgiven our iniquities, since he has spared us, and not destroyed us, and now is about to put an end to our captivity, according to his promise; and if he had not mercy on us, and did not forgive our sins, we must perish in them, and there would be no hope of salvation for us.

Ver. 10. *Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, &c.*] Speaking in the law, and by his prophets; for what was spoken there, and by them, should have been considered, not as the word of man, but as the word of God, and should have been attended to and obeyed; for despising that and them was interpreted a despising the Lord, and refusing to hearken to him, and obey his voice; which was a sin highly provoking to him, and resented by him: *to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets*; by Moses and others; for it seems to include the system of laws which were delivered by Moses, and were many; and the doctrines of the prophets, which were explications and enforcements of them: and these the Lord set before them by both, as a rule to walk by, and a path to walk in; and not to do this was very sinful in them, and greatly displeasing to him.

Ver. 11. *Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, &c.*] Even God's professing people, on whom he had bestowed distinguishing favours and blessings, and gave them such a law as no other people had, and yet they transgressed it; not a few, or the greatest part only, but the whole body of them: and indeed there is no man that lives without sin, or the transgression of the law, in thought, word, or deed; no, not a just man; but these transgressed the law in a very heinous manner, both the first as well as the second table of it, committing idolatry, and all manner of impiety, in which they continued: *even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice*; by departing from the law, and the precepts of it; from God and his worship; from the temple of God, and the service of it; and from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin: it seems to have some respect to the separation of the ten tribes under Jeroboam, who set up the calves at Dan and Beth-el, that the people might not obey the voice of the Lord, in going to worship at the solemn feasts in Jerusalem: *therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God*; that is, the just punishment of their sins was inflicted on them; or the curse the law threatened the transgressors of it with was come upon them in its large extent, and overflowed them like a flood; which God swore he would bring upon them, if they transgressed his law; or which they by an oath imprecated and pronounced upon themselves, should they not hearken to it, but transgress and disobey it: *because we have sinned against him*; and therefore this curse was not a causeless one; sin, the transgression of the law, was the cause of it.

Ver. 12. *And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, &c.*] That is, he hath made good his

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[r] לאיש יהודה viro Judæ, Cocceius. So Montanus.

[s] כי מרדנו quia rebellavimus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Polanus, Cocceius, Michaelis.

threatenings of wrath and vengeance, in case of disobedience to his law: *and against our judges that judged us*; kings, and inferior governors, that ruled over them, who perverted justice, and did not execute righteous judgment; and against them the Lord performed what he threatened: *by bringing upon us a great evil*; the desolation of the whole land, the destruction of Jerusalem; the death of many by the sword, famine, and pestilence, and the captivity of the rest; all which was a great punishment considered in itself, but, when compared with their offences, was less than they deserved: *for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem*; its walls broken down, its houses burnt with fire, even the palaces of the king and nobles, and the temple of the Lord itself; and all its inhabitants destroyed, dispersed, or carried captive; see Lam. i. 12. Ezek. v. 9, 10.

Ver. 13. *As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us*, &c.] As it is there threatened it should, and as it is there foretold it would come upon them, so it has; even the self-same things, in the same manner, and with the same circumstances, as there foretold; which is a proof of the omniscience, omnipotence, and faithfulness of God, and an evidence of the truth of divine revelation; see Lev. xxvi. Deut. xxviii: *yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God*: during the seventy-years captivity, they might have prayed, and doubtless did, in a lifeless, formal manner; but not sincerely and heartily, in faith and with fervency, under a sense of sin, with confession of it, and true repentance for it, and so as to forsake it, as follows: *that we might turn from our iniquities*: for since they did not pray against sin, and entreat the Lord to enable them to turn from it, and *forsake* it, but continued in a course of disobedience, their prayer was not reckoned prayer: *and understand thy truth*: either the truth and faithfulness of God, in fulfilling both his promises and his threatenings; or his law, which is truth, as Jacchiades interpets it; for, had they prayed aright, they would have had an understanding given them of divine truths, both with respect to doctrine and practice; of which they were ignorant, as prayerless persons usually are.

Ver. 14. *Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us*, &c.] The evil of punishment; he watched the fit and proper time to bring it upon them; indeed, he watches over the evil of sin, to bring upon men the evil of chastisement or punishment, Job xiv. 16. but the latter is here meant; see Jer. xxxi. 28. and xliv. 27. the word used has the signification of hastening; and so Jarchi and Saadiah explain it, *he hath hastened*[a]: the almond-tree, as the latter observes, has its name from hence, because it prevents other trees, and is quicker in putting out its blossom than they, Jer. i. 11, 12. and so this may denote the purity of the Lord; his displicency at sin; his strict justice in punishing it; and his diligence and activity in executing judgment for it, which slumbers not, as some imagine: *for the Lord our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth*: the prophet is all along careful to clear God from any imputation of injustice in any of his works, even in his strange work, punitive justice; though he watches over the evil to bring it, yet he is righteous in so doing; no charge of unrighteousness is to be exhibited against him on this account: *for we obeyed not his voice*; neither in his word, nor in his providences; neither by his prophets, nor by his judgments; and being guilty of the evil of fault, it was but just they should bear the evil of punishment.

Ver. 15. *And now, O Lord our God*, &c.] The Lord of the whole earth in general, the sovereign Ruler of the universe, and the God of Israel in a special and peculiar manner; which is used to encourage faith in prayer, and carries in it a tacit argument or plea with God to be heard, in what he was about to say in behalf of Israel; and to which purpose also is the following description of God, from an ancient benefit he had granted to that people: *that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand*; which though it may be considered as an aggravation of their sin, that after this they should behave so wickedly, as to be carried captive for their sins, out of the land they were brought into; yet it seems to be mentioned to put the Lord in mind of his former favours to them, and of his promise that he would bring them out of Babylon, as he had brought them out of Egypt, Jer. xvi. 14, 15, and xxiii. 7, 8: *and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day*; by the many wonders wrought in Egypt, and at the Red sea, when Israel was brought from thence; as particularly by slaying the first-born of Egypt, dividing the waters of the sea, and destroying the Egyptians in it, as Saadiah observes; the memory and fame of which continued to that day, and will continue throughout all ages: and the prophet suggests, that he would also get a name or renown in the world, and among his people, should he deliver them from their present captivity; but for this they had nothing to plead but his promise and mercy; for, as for them, they were obliged to confess themselves sinners, and unworthy of such a favour: *we have sinned, we have done wickedly*: the prophet knows not how to leave off confessing sin; there had been so much committed, and there was so much need of confessing it.

Ver. 16. *O Lord, according to all thy righteousness*, &c.] Or *righteousnesses*[b]; which he had been used to exercise in the world, in all ages of it; either in punishing wicked men according to their deserts, to which respect may be had here; since turning away wrath from his people would issue in turning it upon their enemies, which would be in righteous judgment: or in fulfilling his promises; and so it signifies his faithfulness, of which there had been so many instances in times past, and gave encouragement to believe the performance of those not yet accomplished: or this may be understood of his goodness and kindness, which is sometimes meant by his righteousness; see Psal. xxxi. 1. and cxliii. 1. and so the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, *in all thy mercy*; and Jacchiades paraphrases the words thus, "O Lord, according to all the multitude of thy righteousness, and of thy kindness, which thou dost in the world!"

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[a] וישקד festinavit, Pagninus, Vatablus.

[b] צדקתיך justitias tuas, Vatablus, Calvin, Gejerus, Cocceius, Michaelis.

I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem: the city of the great King, which he chose for his residence, in which the temple was, and where he was worshipped; and the prophet earnestly entreats, that the marks of divine displeasure, which were upon it, might be removed; that the punishments or judgments inflicted, as the effects of the anger and wrath of God, might cease, and the city be rebuilt, and restored to its former glory: *thy holy mountain*; the temple, devoted to the worship and service of God; or Mount Moriah, on which it stood: *because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people* are become *a reproach to all* that are *about us*; their neighbours, the Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, Tyrians, and Philistines; who rejoiced at their destruction, and jeered at them and their religion, and scoffingly said, where were their temple of which they boasted, and their God in whom they trusted? the cause of all this is owned to be their own sins, and the sins of their ancestors, which they their posterity continued in; and therefore don't lay the fault wholly upon them, but take the blame to themselves.

Ver. 17. *Now therefore, O our God*, &c.] This being our miserable case, and the seventy-years' captivity being at an end, and thou still our covenant-God, whom we profess and worship: *hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications*: which he had put up in an humble manner, consisting of various petitions for grace and mercy before expressed: *and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate*; the temple; its walls demolished, its altars thrown down, and the whole in ruins; a melancholy scene! the Lord, suffering these things, seemed to frown upon it, and upon his people, that used to serve him there; wherefore it is entreated that he would smile upon it again, and upon them, and cause it to be rebuilt, and his worship restored in it: and this is asked *for the Lord's sake*: that is, for Christ's sake, who is Lord of all, especially of his chosen people, by creation, redemption, and marriage, as well as by their own consent and profession; and for whose sake, and in whose name, all requests are to be made to God, he being the only Mediator between God and man; and for the sake of whose blood, righteousness, and mediation, all the blessings of goodness are given unto men; and who also was Lord and proprietor of the temple, and was to come into it, as well as was the antitype of it.

Ver. 18. *O my God, incline thine ear, and hear*, &c.] The petitions now put up, for Christ's sake: *open thine eyes, and behold our desolations*; the city and temple a heap of rubbish, and the whole land forsaken of its inhabitants, and lying waste and uncultivated, or, however, at most possessed by enemies; and things being thus, it seemed as if the Lord shut his eyes to them, and therefore is desired to open them, and look with pity and compassion on the case of his people, and deliver them out of all their troubles: *and the city which is called by thy name*; or, *on which thy name is called*[k]; as Jerusalem was, being called the city of our God, the city of the great King, Psal. xlviii. 1, 2. and in which also his name was called upon, both by the inhabitants of it in their private houses, and by the priests and Levites, and others, in the temple, which stood in it: *for we do not present our supplications before thee*; or, *cause* them *to fall before thee*[l]; expressing the humble and lowly manner in which they presented their petitions to God, and respecting the gesture they used in prayer, bowing themselves to the ground, and falling prostrate upon it; and as was the custom of the eastern people when they supplicated their princes: and this Daniel, in the name of his people, did; not, says he, *for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies*: not pleading their good works and righteous actions, and the merits of them, which had none in them, and were no other than as filthy rags, and could not recommend them to God, or be used as a plea and argument to obtain any good thing from him; but throwing themselves upon the abundant grace and mercy of God in Christ, mercy they pleaded, and not merit; and made mention of the righteousnes of Christ, and not their own; as all good men, who are truly sensible of themselves, and of the grace of God, will do.

Ver. 19. *O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive*, &c.] That is, hear the prayers and supplications that have been presented, and forgive the sins that have been confessed; shew both, by removing present calamities, and restoring to former prosperity and privileges: *O Lord, hearken, and do*; not only listen to what has been said, and give an answer by speaking, but work salvation and deliverance: *defer not, for thine own sake, O my God*; these words seem to be directed to Christ the Son of God, and who is the true God, and the God of his people; who is three times in this verse before called Adonai, for whose sake prayer and supplication were made, ver. 17. and here again, for his own sake, he is entreated not to *defer* the fulfilment of the promise of delivering the Jews from their captivity in Babylon, the seventy years being now up, or just expiring; and also that he would not defer his own coming for the redemption of his people, which no doubt Daniel had in his mind, and was wishing and waiting for: *for thy city and thy people are called by thy name*; Jerusalem, the city of the great King, Christ, and a type of his church and people, who are also called by his name, and call upon him.

Ver. 20. *And whilst I was speaking and praying*, &c.] Speaking to God in prayer; for it seems his prayer was vocal, and not mental only: *and confessing my sin, and the sin of my people Israel*: Daniel, though so holy and good a man, was not without sin, and thought it his duty to confess it before the Lord; and which he did in the first place, and then the sin of his people; which is the way to succeed with the Lord for the application of pardoning grace, and the enjoyment of other mercies and blessings: *and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God*: for the temple, and the service of God in it; which was the first and principal thing that lay upon the heart of the prophet, and he was most importunate and solicitous for.

[k] אשר נקרא שמך עליה super quam invocatum est nomen tuum, Vatablus, Pagninus, Calvin; super qua nomen tuum nuncupatum est, Cocceius.

[l] מפילים nos cadere facientes, Montanus; nos cadere facimus, Gejerus, Michaelis.

Ver. 21. *Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer*, &c.] Which is repeated, that it might be observed, that while he was in prayer, before he had finished it, or got off of his knees, an answer was sent him; see Isa. lxv. 24: *even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning*: either at the beginning of Belshazzar's reign, in the third year of it, ch. viii. 1. or rather *before*, as the Syriac version renders it; before this time, in the vision of the ram and he-goat, ch. viii. 16. when he saw this angel Gabriel that appeared in a human form, and he knew this to be his name, by a man's voice calling him by it; and now he knew him to be the same angel by his appearance and voice; at the sight of whom he does not seem to be terrified, as before, having had free conversation with him, and being made acquainted by him with many secrets; and no doubt inwardly rejoiced to see him again, as hoping and believing he had something to communicate to him: *being caused to fly swiftly*; having an order from the Lord, and being strengthened by him to make quick dispatch to Daniel, which is signified by flying swiftly; and for which reason angels are represented as having wings, to denote their celerity and quick dispatch of business: or *flying with weariness*[u], as some render it; he made such haste as to be weary with it; as he appeared in the form of a man, he looked like one out of breath, and panting for it, occasioned by his swift flight; and which expresses the haste he made, according to his orders, and his eagerness to bring to Daniel the welcome tidings of the coming of the Messiah, and the time of it, which angels desired to look into: *touched me about the time of the evening oblation*; the time of offering the evening sacrifice; which, though not now offered, the altar being destroyed, and the Lord's people in a foreign land; yet the time was observed by them, and which was the time of prayer, being about the ninth hour of the day, or three o'clock in the afternoon, see Acts iii. 1. and x. 3. as the time of the morning sacrifice was another hour of prayer; at which time very likely Daniel began, and continued till now, since he was fasting, ver. 3. and this was the time when Christ, the antitype of the daily sacrifice, was offered up; of the time of whose coming, sufferings, and death, the angel here brings an account: and, in order to excite the attention of Daniel to it, *touched* him; for he, being on his knees, and intent in prayer, might not at first observe him; and therefore gives him a gentle touch, to let him know he was present, and had something to say to him; and to suggest to him to break off his prayer, to which he had brought an answer, as well as to lift him up, and encourage familiarity with him.

Ver. 22. *And he informed me, and talked with me*, &c.] He informed him, by talking with him, of the will of God, to restore the captivity of his people, to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, and of the coming of the Messiah: or, *he caused me to attend*[w], *and talked with me*; he excited his attention to what he had to say, and caused him to advert to his discourse, in order to understand it: *and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth*; just now come from heaven, from the presence of God, and by his order: *to give thee skill and understanding*; or, *to instruct thee in understanding*[x]; to teach thee the knowledge and give thee the understanding of secret things, which otherwise could not be known; such as particularly the time of the coming of Christ, which the angels themselves knew not till it was revealed; and being made acquainted with it, one of them is employed to make it known to Daniel; who is the only prophet that fixes the exact time of it, and was favoured with this divine and heavenly skill of knowing it, and of being the publisher of it to others.

Ver. 23. *At the beginning of thy supplications*, &c.] As soon as ever he began to pray. This circumstance shews how ready the Lord is to hear the prayers of his people; and yet it was not owing to the prayers of the prophet, and to any intrinsic virtue or merit in them, that the Lord did what he afterwards declares should be done; and, besides, more is revealed and promised than Daniel asked for: *the commandment came forth*; either the order from the Lord to the angel, dispatching him on this errand to the prophet, to acquaint him with his mind and will; or the proclamation of Cyrus, to let the people of the Jews go free, and go up to Jerusalem to build their city and temple, published that morning, just about the time Daniel began to pray, the seventy-years' captivity being completely finished; see ver. 25: *and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved*; or, *art desires*[y]; all desire, exceedingly desired; very lovely, amiable, and delightful, in the sight of God, and all good men: or, *that thou art greatly beloved*[z]; thus the angel came from God, out of heaven, to shew it to him, to make it appear that he was highly in the favour of God, in that he made known his secrets to him: *therefore understand the matter*; or *word*[a]; attend to the word; advert to the form of speaking used, and labour to get the knowledge of it: *and consider the vision*; this vision, as Japhet; the following vision or prophecy of the seventy weeks; think of it well, as being a matter of great importance and consequence.

Ver. 24. *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city*, &c.] Or, *concerning thy people, and concerning thy holy city*[b]; that is, such a space of time is fixed upon; *cut out*[c], as the word signifies; or appointed of God for the accomplishment of certain events, relative to the temporal good of the city and people of the Jews; as the rebuilding of their city and temple; the continuance of them as a people, and of their city; the coming of the Messiah to them, to obtain spiritual blessings for them, and for all the people of God; who also were Daniel's people and city in a spiritual sense, to which he belonged; and likewise what was relative to the utter ruin and destruction of the Jews as a people, and of their city: and this space of *seventy weeks* is not to be understood

[u] מֻעָף בִּיעָף volans in lassitudine, Montanus; cum lassitudine, vel fatigatione, so some in Vatablus; cum lassitudine, as others in Michaelis.

[w] וַיָּבֶן attendere fecit, Michaelis.

[x] לְהַשְׂכִּילְךָ בִינָה ad imbuendum te intelligentiâ, Piscator; ad docendum te intelligentiam, Michaelis.

[y] חֲמוּדוֹת desideria, Michaelis; vir desideriorum, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator; so Ben Melech.

[z] כִּי quod dilectus tu sis, Cocceius; quod desideria tu sis, Michaelis.

[a] בַּדָּבָר in verbo, Montanus; verbum, Pagninus; ipsum verbum, Junius & Tremellius; sermonem, Cocceius.

[b] עַל עַמְּךָ de populo tuo, Helvicus.

[c] נֶחְתַּךְ decisæ, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis.

of weeks of days; which is too short a time for the fulfilment of so many events as are mentioned; nor were they fulfilled within such a space of time; but of weeks of years, and make up four hundred and ninety years; within which time, beginning from a date after mentioned, all the things prophesied of were accomplished; and this way of reckoning of years by days is not unusual in the sacred writings; see Gen. xxix. 27. Lev. xxv. 8. Ezek. iv. 4, 5. Rev. xii. 6. and xiii. 5. The verb used is singular; and, joined with the noun plural, shews that every week was cut out and appointed for some event or another; and the word, as it signifies to *cut*, aptly expresses the division or section of these weeks into distinct periods, as 7, 62, 1. The first events mentioned are spiritual ones, and are not ascribed to any particular period; but are what should be done within this compass of time in general, and were done toward the close of it; and are first observed because of the greatest importance, and are as follow: *to finish the transgression:* not the transgression of Adam, or original sin, which, though took away by Christ from his people, yet not from all men; nor the actual transgression of man in general, which never more abounded than in the age in which Christ lived; but rather the transgressions of his people he undertook to satisfy for, and which were laid on him, and bore by him, and carried away, so as not to be seen more, or to have no damning power over them. The word used signifies to *restrain*[u]; now, though sin greatly abounded, both among Jews and Gentiles, in the age of the Messiah; yet there never was an age in which greater restraints were laid on it than in this, by the ministry of John the Baptist, and of Christ in Judea, and by the apostles in the Gentile world: *and to make an end of sins:* so that they shall be no more, but put away and abolished by the sacrifice and satisfaction of Christ for them, as to guilt and punishment; so that those, for whose sins satisfaction is made, no charge can be brought against them, nor the curse of the law reach them, nor any sentence of it be executed, or any punishment inflicted on them; but are entirely and completely saved from all their sins, and the sad effects of them. Our version follows the marginal reading; but the textual writing is, *to seal up sins*[w]; which is expressive of the pardon of them procured by Christ; for things sealed are hid and covered, and so are sins forgiven, Psal. xxxii. 1: *and to make reconciliation for iniquity:* to expiate it, and make atonement for it: which was made by the sacrifice of Christ, by his sufferings and death; whereby the law and justice of God were fully satisfied, full reparation being made for the injury done by sin; and this was made for all kind of sin, expressed here by several words; and for all the sins, iniquities, and transgressions of the Lord's people; to do which was the grand end of Christ's coming into the world; see Heb. ii. 17: *and to bring in everlasting righteousness:* which is true only of the righteousness of Christ, by which the law is magnified and made honourable, justice satisfied, and all that believe in him justified from all their sins: this Christ, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, has wrought out, and brought into the world; and which phrase designs, not the manifestation of it in the Gospel; nor the act of imputation of it, which is Jehovah the Father's act; nor the application of it, which is by the Spirit of God; but Christ's actual working of it out by obeying the precept and bearing the penalty of the law; and this may be truly called *everlasting*, or *the righteousness of ages*[x], of ages past; the righteousness by which the saints in all ages from the beginning of the world are justified; and which endures, and will endure, throughout all ages, to the justification of all that believe; it is a robe of righteousness that will never wear out; its virtue to justify will ever continue, being perfect; it will answer for the justified ones in a time to come, and has eternal life connected with it: *and to seal up the vision and prophecy:* not to shut it up out of sight; rather to set a mark on it, by which it might be more clearly known; but to consummate and fulfil it: all prophecy is sealed up in Christ, and by him; he is the sum and substance of it; the visions and prophecies of the Old Testament relate to him, and have their accomplishment in him; some relate to his person and office; others to his coming into the world, the time, place, and manner of it; others to the great work of redemption and salvation he came about; and others to his miracles, sufferings, and death, and the glory that should follow; all which have been fulfilled: or, *to seal up the vision and prophet*[y]; the prophets were until John, and then to cease, and have ceased ever since the times of Jesus; there has been no prophet among the Jews, they themselves do not deny it; Christ is come, the last and great Prophet of all, with a full revelation of the divine will, and no other is to be expected; all that pretend to set up a new scheme of things, either as to doctrine or worship, through pretended vision or prophecy, are to be disregarded: *and to anoint the most Holy:* not literally the most holy place in the temple; but figuratively, either heaven itself, anointed, perfumed, and prepared for his people by the Messiah's ascension thither, and entrance into it; or rather most holy persons, the church and people of God, typified by the sanctuary, the temple of God; and in a comparative sense are most holy, and absolutely so, as washed in the blood of Christ, clothed with his righteousness, and sanctified by his spirit; and by whom they are anointed, some in an extraordinary and others in an ordinary way, and all by the grace of Christ: or it may be best of all to understand this of the Messiah, as Aben Ezra and others do; who is holy in his person, in both his natures, human and divine; sanctified and set apart to his office, and holy in the execution of it; equal in holiness to the Father and the Spirit; superior in it to angels and men, who have all their holiness from him, and by whom they are sanctified; and of whom the sanctuary or temple was a type; and who was anointed with the Holy Ghost as man, at his incarnation, baptism, and ascension to heaven; and Abarbinel owns it may be interpreted of

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[u] לכלא cohibendo, Junius & Tremellius; ad cohibendum, Piscator, Gejerus, Michaelis; ad coercendum, Cocceius.

[w] לחתם obsignando, Junius & Tremellius; ad sigillandum, Montanus; ut obsignet, Piscator.

[x] צדק עלמים justitiam seculorum, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Michaelis.

[y] ונביא & prophetam, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis.

the Messiah, who may be called the Holy of holies, because he is holier than all other Israelites.

Ver. 25. *Know, therefore, and understand, &c.*] Take notice and observe, for the clearer understanding of these seventy weeks, and the events to be fulfilled in them, what will be further said concerning them, the beginning of them, their distinct periods, and what shall be accomplished in them: *that from the time of the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem;* this commandment is the beginning of the seventy weeks or 490 years, and from it they are to be reckoned; and which designs not the proclamation of Cyrus in the first year of his reign, which was only to rebuild the temple, and not the city of Jerusalem, Ezra i. 1, 2, 3. nor the decree of Darius Hystaspes, which also only regards the temple, and is only a confirmation of the decree of Cyrus, Ezra vi. and for the same reasons it cannot be the decree in the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes; which only confirmed what his predecessors had granted concerning the temple, and provision for sacrifices, and exemption of the priests from toll, tribute, or custom, Ezra vii. 7, 13, 31. but has not a word of building the wall and streets of Jerusalem, as that has, which was made in the twentieth year of his reign; and seems therefore to be the commandment or decree here referred to, Neh. ii. 1, 6, 7, 8. and this is the general epoch of the seventy weeks, and where the first seven begin; though Gussetius [a] thinks that the word דבר does not signify any edict or decree, but a *thing;* and designs the thing itself, restoring and rebuilding Jerusalem; and that the following date is to be reckoned, not from any order to rebuild that city, but from the thing itself, from the moment when it first began to be rebuilt: and as singular is the notion of Tirinus [b], who is of opinion that this is to be understood of the going out, or the end of the word; not whereby the holy city was ordered to be built, but when it was really built; and so begins the account from the dedication of the new city, in the twenty-third year of Artaxerxes, Neh. xii. 27. There are others who suppose that not any human word, decree, commandment, or order, is here meant, but a divine one; either the word of the Lord to Jeremiah, foretelling the seventy-years' captivity of the Jews, and their deliverance from it; and reckon these 490 years from the destruction of the first temple, to the destruction of the second temple, as Jarchi, Saadiah, Jacchiades, and others; but between these two destructions was a course of 656 or 657 years: others take the beginning of the seventy weeks to be from the going forth of the commandment to the angel, at the beginning of Daniel's prayers, as Aben Ezra; and to end at the destruction of the second temple; but, for a like reason, this must be rejected as the other; since this space of time will outrun the seventy weeks near one hundred and twenty years: it is best therefore to interpret this of a royal edict, the order or commandment of a king of Persia to rebuild Jerusalem; and it seems rightest to reckon the number given, either from the seventh, or rather from the twentieth, of Artaxerxes Longimanus before mentioned; and either of these reckonings, as Bishop Chandler [c] observes, are sufficient for our purpose, to shew the completion of the prophecy in Christ: "the commencement of the "weeks (as he remarks) must be either from the "seventh of Artaxerxes, which falls on the 457th year "before A. D. or from the twentieth of Artaxerxes; "(add to 457 years before Christ, 26 years after "Christ, which is the number that 483 years, or 69 "weeks, exceeds 457 years); and you are brought to "the beginning of John the Baptist's preaching up the "advent of the Messiah; add seven years or one week "to the former, and you come to the 33d year of "A. D. which was the year of Jesus Christ's death; "or else compute 490 years, the whole seventy weeks, "from the seventh of Artaxerxes, by subtracting 457 "years (the space of time between that year and the "beginning of A. D.) from 490, and there remains 33, "the year of our Lord's death. Let the 20th of Ar-"taxerxes be the date of the 70 weeks, which is the "445th year before A. D. and reckon 69 weeks of "Chaldean years; 70 Chaldee years being equal to 69 "Julian; and so 478 Julian years making 483 Chaldee "years, and they end in the 33d year after Christ, or "the passover following [d];" the several particulars into which these 70 weeks are divided: *unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks;* by whom is meant, not Cyrus, as Jarchi and Jacchiades; who, though called Messiah or anointed, Isa. xliv. 28. and xlv. 1. cannot be intended; for this prince was to be cut off after seven, and 62 weeks, or 483 years; whereas Cyrus died ages before this, and even died before the expiration of the seven weeks, or 49 years; nor Joshuah the high-priest, or Zerubbabel, as Ben Gersom, and others; nor Nehemiah, as Aben Ezra; nor Artaxerxes, which R. Azariah [e] thinks probable; for to none of these will this character agree, which denotes some eminent person known by this name; nor the work ascribed to him, ver. 24. nor can it be said of either of them that they were cut off, and much less at such a period as is here fixed: it is right to interpret it of the promised and expected Saviour, whom the Psalmist David had frequently spoken of under the name of the Messiah, and as a King and Prince; see Psal. ii. 2, 6, 12. and xviii. 50. and lxxxix. 27, 51. and cxxxii. 17. and who is David, the Prince Ezekiel before this had prophesied of, Ezek. xxxiv. 24. and xxxvii. 25. and is the same with the Prince of peace in the famous prophecy of him in Isa. ix. 6. The Syriac version, though not a literal one, gives the true sense of the passage, rendering it, "unto the "coming of the King Messiah;" unto which there were to be seven, and 62 weeks, or 69 weeks, which make 483 years; and these being understood of eastern years, used by the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Persians, consisting of 360 days, reckoning 30 days to a month, and 12 months to a year, there were just 483 of these from the 20th year of Artaxerxes to the 33d of the vulgar era of Christ, and the 19th of Tiberius Cæsar, in which he suffered. Sir Isaac Newton [f] thinks the seven

[a] Ebr. Comment. p. 177, 339.
[b] Chronolog. Sacr. p. 44.
[c] Answer to the Grounds and Reasons, &c. p. 139.
[d] See these seventy weeks more largely considered, in a Treatise of mine, concerning the prophecies of the Old Testament respecting the Messiah, &c. p. 64—78.
[e] Meor Enayim, c. 41. fol. 134. 2.
[f] Observations on Daniel, p. 132, 133, 134.

weeks unto Messiah, which he detaches from the sixty-two, respects the second coming of Christ, when he shall come as a Prince, and destroy antichrist, and that it takes in the compass of a jubilee; but when it will begin and end he does not pretend to say; but the true reason of the 69 weeks being divided into seven, and 62, is on account of the particular and distinct events assigned to each period, as follows: *the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times*: that is, within the space of seven weeks, or 49 years, reckoning from the 20th of Artaxerxes; when the Jews had a grant to rebuild their city and wall, and were furnished with materials for it; and which was done in very troublesome times; Nehemiah, and the Jews with him, met with much trouble from Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, whilst they were setting up the wall of the city, and filling the streets with ranges of houses, Neh. iv. and vi. for which the space of seven weeks, or 49 years, were cut out and appointed; and that this event belongs solely to this period is clear from the Messiah's coming being appropriated to the period of the 62 weeks; which leaves this entirely where it is fixed.

Ver. 26. *And after threescore and two weeks*, &c.] To be reckoned from the end of the seven weeks, or 49 years, which, added to them, make 483 years: *shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself*: by whom is designed the same with Messiah the Prince in ver. 25, not Onias the high-priest, as a late writer[g] would have it, an upright person, and of great holiness, taken off by an unjust death; since he was dead many years before the expiration of these weeks; nor Hyrcanus the high-priest, slain by Herod, as Eusebius[h] thinks; in whom the succession of the ancient priests terminated, and with whom the priestly unction perished; which indeed bids fairer than the former; but he was not a person of so much note as to be pointed at in such a prophecy; besides, the priesthood continued much longer: nor is King Agrippa intended, as Jarchi and Abarbinel, who, they say, was the last king of the Jews, and was slain by Vespasian at the destruction of Jerusalem; which is not true; he was not properly king of the Jews, having only Galilee for his jurisdiction; was not slain by Vespasian; was a confederate of the Romans, lived some years after the destruction of the city, and at last died in peace; but Jesus the true Messiah is intended, with whom the character, dates, and death, and the manner of it, entirely agree: now to his death were to be 483 years; which years ended, as we have observed, in the 33d year of the vulgar era of Christ, and the 19th of Tiberius; when Jesus the true Messiah was cut off in a judicial way; not for any sins of his own, but for the sins of his people, to make satisfaction for them, and to obtain their redemption and salvation; see Isa. liii. 8: or *he is not*, as Jarchi, no more in the land of the living, is dead; see Jer. xxxi. 15. or *there is*, or *will be, none for him*, or *with him*[i], to help and assist him in his great work, Isa. lxiii. 5. The Vulgate Latin version is, *they shall not be his people*; the Jews rejecting him shall have a *lo-ammi* upon them, and be no more the people of God. Gussetius[k] better renders it, *he hath not*; or he has nothing, so Cocceius; all things were wanted by him, that is, by Christ; he had neither riches, nor clothes, nor any to stand by him, or to accompany him: *and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary*; that is, the people of the Romans, under Vespasian their prince, emperor, and general, should, in a little time after the cutting off of the Messiah, enter into the land of Judea, and destroy the city of Jerusalem, and the temple that stood in it; though some understand this of Messiah the Prince that should come in his power, and in a way of judgment upon the Jewish nation, and destroy them for their rejection of him; whose people the Romans would be, and under whose direction, and by whose orders, all these judgments should be brought upon the Jews; but many of the Jewish writers themselves interpret it of Vespasian, as Aben Ezra, Jarchi, Abarbinel, and Jacchiades: *and the end thereof shall be with a flood*; the end of the city and temple, and of the whole nation, should be by the Roman army, which, like a flood, would overspread the land, and carry all before it. It denotes the number, power, and irresistible force of the enemy, and the sad devastation made by them: *and unto the end of the war desolations are determined*; from the beginning of the war by the Romans with the Jews, to the end of it, there would be nothing but continual desolations; a dreadful havoc and ruin everywhere; and all this appointed and determined by the Lord, as a just punishment for their sins.

Ver. 27. *And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week*, &c.] Sixty-nine of the seventy weeks being accounted for, and the several events observed to be fulfilled in them; the angel proceeds to take notice of the remaining *one* week, or seven years, and what should be done within that space of time: a covenant should be confirmed with many; which is not to be understood of the Messiah's confirming the covenant of grace with many, or on account of all his people, by fulfilling the conditions of it, and by his blood and sacrifice, through which all the blessings of it come to them; for this is not for one week only, but for ever; but this is to be interpreted of the Roman people, spoken of in the latter part of the preceding verse; who, in order to accomplish their design to destroy the city and temple of Jerusalem, made peace with many nations, entered into covenant and alliance with them, particularly the Medes, Parthians, and Armenians, for the space of one week, or seven years; as it appears they did at the beginning of this week[l]: *and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease*; the daily sacrifice of the Jews, and all their other offerings; and which was literally fulfilled *in the half-part*[m] of this week, as it may be rendered; towards the close of the latter half of it, when the city of Jerusalem, being closely besieged by Titus, what through the closeness of the siege, the divisions of the people, and the want both of time and men, and beasts to offer, the daily sacrifice ceased,

[g] Scheme of literal Prophecy, &c. p. 182.
[h] Demonstrat. Evangel. l. 8. p. 396, 397.
[i] ואין לו & non *erit* ei, Pagninus; & nullus *erit* pro eo, Vatablus.
[k] Comment. Ebr. p. 33.

[l] See Marshall's Chron. Treat. p. 271.
[m] וחצי השבוע & in dimidio hebdomadis, Montanus, Michaelis; dimidio septimanae, Cocceius.

as Josephus [n] says, to the great grief of the people; nor have the Jews, ever since the destruction of their city and temple, offered any sacrifice, esteeming it unlawful so to do in a strange land: *and* at the same time, in the same half-part of the week, *for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate*: that is, the Roman people shall make the land of Judea desolate, for the overspreading of their abominations or idolatries in it. The words may be rendered, as by some, *upon the wing*, the battlements of the temple, *shall be the abominations*, or *idols of the desolator*, or *of him that makes desolate* [o]; so Bishop Lloyd; meaning either the ensigns of the Roman army, which had upon them the images of their gods or emperors; and being set up in the holy place, and sacrificed to, nothing could be a greater abomination to the Jews; or else the blood of the zealots slain on these battlements, by which the holy place was polluted; see Matt. xxiv. 15. Luke xxi. 20: *even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate*: that is, either these abominations shall continue in the place where they are set until the utter destruction of the city and temple; or the desolation made there should continue until the consummation of God's wrath and vengeance upon them; until the whole he has determined is poured out on this desolate people; and which continues unto this day, and will till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, Luke xxi. 24. Some, as Bishop Lloyd, render it, *upon the desolator* [p]; meaning the Romans; and the sense they take to be is, that this vengeance shall continue upon the Jews until it is turned upon the head of those who have made them desolate: now this *one week*, according to the sense given, must begin in the 63d year of the vulgar era of Christ, about 30 years after the expiration of the 69 weeks; since it ends in the 70th year of the same era, in which was the destruction of Jerusalem, the grand event assigned to it in this famous prophecy; when it might have been expected it should have begun at the end of the 69 weeks, and run on in a direct line from them. The true reason of its being thus separated from them is the long-suffering and forbearance of God to the people of the Jews, who gave them, as to the old world, space to repent; but his grace and goodness being slighted, things began to work at the beginning of this week towards their final ruin, which, in the close of it, was fully accomplished: from the whole of this prophecy it clearly appears that the Messiah must be come many hundred years ago. The Jews are sensible of the force of this reasoning; so that, to terrify persons from considering this prophecy, they denounce the following curse, *let them burst, or their bones rot, that compute the times* [q]. R. Nehemiah, who lived about fifty years before the coming of Christ, declared the time of the Messiah, as signified by Daniel, could not be protracted longer than those fifty years [r]. The Jews also say the world is divided into six parts, and the last part is from Daniel to the Messiah [s].

CHAP. X.

THIS chapter is an introduction to the prophecies contained in the two following chapters; and begins with an account of Daniel's mourning and fasting, preparatory to the vision he had, ver. 1, 2, 3. and of the appearance of Christ to him, with the time and place of it; who is described by his clothing, and the several parts of his body, which were very glorious, he appearing in a human form, ver. 4, 5, 6. then follows an account of the effects it had upon him, ver. 7, 8, 9. and of what encouragement and strength he received from him, by words and touches, to listen to what he said; and to expect a discovery and an understanding of things of moment and importance, which should be in future times, ver. 10—21.

Ver. 1. *In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia*, &c.] Not of his being king of Persia only, but of the Medo-Persian empire, after he had subdued the Babylonian empire, and annexed it to his dominions; and this is not to be reckoned from the time of his taking Babylon, and putting the government of it into the hands of his uncle Darius, with whom he jointly reigned; but from the time of his uncle's death, when he was sole monarch of the whole empire: he reigned thirty years, as Cicero [t], from a Persian writer, relates; which is to be reckoned from the time of his being appointed by his uncle commander-in-chief of the Persian and Median armies; for from his taking of Babylon to his death were but nine years; and so many years the canon of Ptolemy assigns to his reign, taking in the two years he reigned with his uncle; for from his being sole monarch, after the death of Cyaxares, or Darius the Mede his uncle, were but seven years; which, according to Xenophon [u], is the whole of his reign, who reckons it from thence; and it was in the third of these that Daniel had the visions contained in this and the two following chapters; which, according to Bishop Usher [w], and Dean Prideaux [x], was in the year of the Julian period 4180, and before Christ 534. Mr. Bedford [y] places it in the year 533: how long Daniel lived after this is not certain; very probably he died quickly after, since he must be in a very advanced age; for the third year of Cyrus being the seventy-third of his captivity, as Dean Prideaux [z] observes; and if he was eighteen years of age, as that learned man thinks is the least that can be supposed at the time of his carrying into Babylon, he must have been

[n] De Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 2.
[o] ועל כנף שקוצים משמם desolator, Piscator, Gejerus; desolans, Cocceius; stupefaciens, Montanus.
[p] על שמם super obstupescentem, Montanus; in stupentem, Cocceius.
[q] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 2.
[r] Apud Grotium de Ver. Rel. Christ. l. 5. sect. 14.
[s] Cephtor Uperah, fol. 17. 2.
[t] De Divinatione, l. 1.
[u] Cyropaedia, l. 8. c. 43.
[w] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3470.
[x] Connexion, &c. par. 1. p. 161, 162.
[y] Scripture Chronology, p. 718.
[z] Ut supra.

in the ninety-first year of his age at this time; or if he was but fifteen years of age at that time, which is the opinion of Aben Ezra on ch. i. 4. he must be in the third year of Cyrus eighty-eight years of age. The Dutch annotators observe, that Daniel lived in the court of Babylon above seventy-seven years, which will carry his age to a greater length still. Jarchi on Dan. i. 21. asserts Daniel to be the same with Hatach in Esth. iv. 5. and so the Targum on that place, who lived in the times of Ahasuerus, supposed to be Xerxes: now between the third of Cyrus, and the beginning of Xerxes's reign, is mentioned a space of seventy-one years, which, added to the least number eighty-eight before given, will make Daniel now to be one hundred and fifty-nine years old, when Ahasuerus or Xerxes began his reign; which is not only an age unfit for such business Hatach was employed in; but agrees not with the period in which Daniel lived, when it was not usual for men to live so long, and must be exploded as fabulous: *a thing was revealed unto Daniel;* a secret, which he otherwise could never have known; and which was a singular favour to him, and shewed him to be a friend of God, a favourite of his; and this respected the Persian and Grecian monarchies; the several kings of Egypt and Syria, and what should befall them; and the times of Antiochus, and the troubles the Jews would have through him: *(whose name was called Belteshazzar);* a name given him by the prince of the eunuchs; see ch. i. 7: *and the thing was true;* was not a false vision, a mere fancy of the brain, an empty conjecture, a delusion of the mind, like the divination and soothsaying of the Gentiles, but a real thing, that was sure and certain, and would be fulfilled, and might be depended upon: *but the time appointed was long;* ere the whole would be accomplished; for it reached to the times of Antiochus, three hundred years after this, yea, to the resurrection of the dead, and the end of all things: or, *a great host,* or *army*[a]; a vast appearance of things were represented to him; not a host of angels, as Saadiah; but a vast number of facts, like an army of them, and which respected armies and battles; or it may denote the force, power, and efficacy of the word that was true, which should not fail, but be certainly fulfilled: *and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision;* that is, Daniel understood *the word*[b], or words of the prophecy, in which it was expressed; they were clear and plain, and not obscure, dark, and doubtful; and he had a clear view of the several parts of it, of the whole series of things, the connexion of facts, and their dependence on one another, and their certain accomplishment; he saw them in their order, as they were presented to him in vision and prophecy; and was not at any loss about the meaning of any part of them, or the words by which they were signified.

Ver. 2. *In those days I Daniel was mourning,* &c.] Either on account of what had been revealed to him in the last vision or prophecy of the seventy weeks; by which it appeared what wickedness the people of the Jews would be guilty of in cutting off the Messiah; and what desolations would come upon their land, city, and temple, for such usage of him: as also because of the present case of his people; many of them continuing in the country of Babylon, when they had liberty to return to their land: or because of the hinderance the Jews met with in rebuilding their city and temple, who had returned thither; of which Daniel had an account, and which caused him to mourn in secret: and so he continued *three full weeks;* or, *three weeks of days*[c]: so called, to distinguish them from weeks of years, mentioned in the preceding chapter.

Ver. 3. *I ate no pleasant bread,* &c.] Or, *bread of desires*[d]; such as was made of the finest of the wheat, and was eaten in the courts of princes where Daniel was: according to some Jewish Rabbins in Ben Melech, hot bread is meant; but in general it means the best of bread, such as had good qualities to make it desirable; and this Daniel refrained from, whilst he was humbling and afflicting himself on this sorrowful occasion, but ate coarse bread, black and branny: *neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth:* not delicate meat, as of fish, fowl, deer, and the like, as Saadiah observes; but contented himself with meaner fare; nor did he drink generous wine, as he had used to do, living in a king's court, and which his old age made necessary for him, since he could come at it; but he abstained from it, and other lawful pleasures of nature, the more to give himself up to acts of devotion and contemplation: *neither did I anoint myself at all, until three whole weeks were fulfilled;* which was wont to be frequently done by the Jews, especially at feasts; and by the Persians every day, among whom he now was; but this he refrained from, as was usual in times of fasting and humiliation; see Matt. vi. 17.

Ver. 4. *And in the four-and-twentieth day of the first month,* &c.] Of the third year of Cyrus, as Jacchiades; or rather of the Jewish year, the month Ab or Nisan, which answers to part of our March and April; so that Daniel's fast began on the third day of the month, and lasted to the twenty-fourth, in which time was the Jewish passover; and by this it seems it was not now kept; and perhaps in those times was not used to be observed by the Jews in a foreign land: *as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel;* the same with the Tigris, called by both names from the swiftness and rapidity of its motion, *hiddekel* signifying both sharp and swift; and *tigris,* in the Persian language, a dart; see Gen. ii. 14. This is the same river the Targum of Jonathan on Gen. ii. 14. calls Diglath; and is by Pliny[e] called Diglito, who observes that it has the name of Tigris from its swiftness; so he says the Medes call an arrow; likewise Curtius[f] takes notice of the same, and says that it is named Tigris from the celerity with which it flows; for in the Persian language they call a dart *tigris:* so חד signifies in the Hebrew language *sharp* or *polished,* as an arrow is;

[a] וצבא גדול & militia magna, Pagninus, Montanus, Gejerus; militia seu belligeratio ingens, Michaelis.

[b] את הדבר verbum, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster.

[c] שלשה שבעים ימים tribus hebdomadibus dierum, Munster, Calvin, Tigurine version; trium hebdomadarum diebus, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, so Junius & Tremellius, Medus.

[d] לחם חמדות panem desideriorum, Pagninus, Montanus; desiderabilium, Junius & Tremellius; desiderabilem, Vulg. Lat. Vatablus, Piscator.

[e] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 27.

[f] Hist. l. 4. c. 9.

and קל, *swift*, as an arrow flies, and both make Hiddekel: now this river was near Shushan, where Daniel resided: nay, Benjamin of Tudela[g] says, that the river Hiddekel divides the city of Shushan, over which is a bridge, on one side of which Jews dwelt at the time he was there; unless he means that it cuts and divides the province of Elam in Persia, he had before been speaking of; and so Diodorus Siculus[h] says, that both Euphrates and Tigris pass through Media into Mesopotamia; wherefore it is no wonder to hear of Daniel by the side of the river Hiddekel or Tigris: here Daniel was, not in vision, but in person, having others with him, as appears from a following verse; by it he was walking, contemplating, praying, or conversing.

Ver. 5. *Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked*, &c.] Being excited to it, by an object presented, of an unusual appearance, which engaged his attention, and caused him to look wistly at it: *and, behold a certain man clothed in linen*; not Gabriel, but the Son of God, the Messiah; who, though not as yet incarnate, yet was so in the counsel and purpose of God; had agreed in covenant to be man, was promised and prophesied of as such; and now appeared in a human form, as he frequently did before his incarnation, as a pledge of it, and shewing his readiness to assume human nature: he appears here *clothed in linen*, in the habit of a priest; which office he sustains, and executes by the sacrifice of himself, and by his prevalent intercession; and may denote his purity and innocence, as well as direct us to his spotless righteousness he is the author of, which is like fine linen, clean and white, Rev. xix. 8: *whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz*: or of Fez, which is the best gold. Some take it to be the same with the gold of Ophir, often spoken of in Scripture; so the Targum on Jer. x. 9, renders Uphaz by Ophir. Ptolemy[i] makes mention of a river called Phasis in the island of Taprobane or Zeilan, where Bochart[k] seems to think Ophir was, from whence the gold of that name came; and the same geographer[l] takes notice of a city and river of the same name in Colchis; perhaps the same with Pison, which encompassed Havilah, where was good gold, Gen. ii. 11, 12. and both Srabo[m] and Pliny[n] say that much gold was found in that country, and taken out of rivers there; and was so plentiful, that even chambers were made of gold. Some think that this was an island in India called Paz or Topaz, and might with the Jews go by all three names, Paz, Topaz, and Uphaz[o]; however, it is certain, that very fine gold, even the finest gold, is here designed: and the loins of this illustrious Person being girded with a girdle made of it, as it may be expressive of his royal dignity, so likewise of his readiness to do any service he was employed in, as man and Mediator; and especially the great work of man's redemption and salvation, for the sake of which he would really become man, as he has, as well as now he appeared as one; see Rev. i. 13. where Christ is said to be *girt with a golden girdle*: and such an one was this; and which is to be understood, not of his girdle as a King, which is a girdle of faithfulness and righteousness, Isa. xi. 5. all his administrations of government being just and true; though such a girdle well suits him, and his character in the discharge of every office, as well as his kingly office; nor of his girdle as a Prophet, which is the girdle of truth, which all his faithful ministers are girt with, Ephes. vi. 14. and he in a more eminent manner, who is full of grace and truth, and by whom both came, and who is truth itself; but of his girdle as a Priest; for as such is he here habited, and such a girdle the priests used to wear, even the girdle of the ephod, made of gold, blue, purple, and fine twined linen, Exod. xxviii. 8. and this is the girdle of love, which constrained Christ to become the surety and substitute of his people; to take upon him their nature, and their sins; to offer himself a sacrifice for them, and to be their advocate with the Father; and the form and matter of this girdle being round about him, and of gold, may denote the perfection, duration, and eternity of his love.

Ver. 6. *His body also was like the beryl*, &c.] That is, that part of it which was not covered with the linen garment, and was seen, was like such a precious stone, said to be of an azure and sky colour, signifying he was the Lord from heaven; though, according to its name, it should be of a sea-colour, greenish; and so, according to some, the beryl is. Cocceius thinks the sardonyx is meant, which is of a flesh-colour, and so more fit to express the comeliness of a human body; the beryl, being of a different colour, seems not so apt to set forth the agreeable colour of a man. Braunius[p] is of opinion that the chrysolite is meant, a stone of a golden colour; and takes the sense to be, that such was the lustre of the golden girdle about his loins, that the rest of the parts of the body about it appeared as if all of gold: *and his face the appearance of lightning*; exceeding bright, very dazzling to the eye, and striking terror to the mind; expressive of something very awful and majestic; and agrees well with Christ the sun of righteousness, whose face or countenance at his transfiguration on the mount, and when John saw him in a visionary way, was as the sun shineth in his strength, in the summer-soltice, or at noon-day, Matt. xvii. 2. Rev. i. 16. from whom is all the light of knowledge and truth, of joy, peace, and comfort, of grace and glory; and which darts as swiftly and as powerfully from him as the rays of the sun, or as lightning from one end of the heaven to the other; and irradiates and illuminates as brightly and clearly: *and his eyes as lamps of fire*; denoting his omniscience of all persons and things; and how piercing and penetrating his eyes are into the affairs of men and states, by whom they are clearly seen, and to whom they are exactly known; and how fierce and terrible his wrath is towards his enemies, and whose looks must inject dread and terror into them; see Rev. xix. 12: *and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass*; denoting his great strength for action, his stability and firmness, and the

[g] Itinerarium, p. 86.
[h] Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 93.
[i] Geograph. l. 7. c. 4.
[k] Phaleg. l. 2. c. 27. col. 141.
[l] Ptolem. Geograph. l. 5. c. 10.
[m] Geograph. l. 11. p. 343.
[n] Nat. Hist. l. 33. c. 3.
[o] Hiller. Onomastic. Sacr. c. 8. p. 141.
[p] De Vestitu Sacerdot. Hebr. l. 2. c. 17. sect. 10, 11. 12. p. 721, 722.

glory of his power, in trampling upon his enemies, and subduing them; especially as displayed in the redemption of his people, when his own arm wrought salvation for them; when he came travelling in the greatness of his strength, and trod the wine-press of his father's wrath alone; when he set his feet on the necks of his and his people's enemies, and got an entire victory over sin, Satan, and the world, under whose feet they are, and ever will be subject: *and the voice of his words:* not of the law, which was a voice of words, which they that heard entreated they might hear no more, and were very sonorous and dreadful; but rather of the Gospel, of the words and doctrines of grace and truth, which proceeded out of the mouth of Christ, and were such as were wondered at; which is a voice of love, grace, and mercy, sweet, charming, and alluring, powerful and efficacious; and the words of it are the words of peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation; yea, this voice of Christ may take in his voice and words of commands, his ordinances and institutions, which he requires an obedience unto; and even his threatenings of wrath and ruin to wicked men, as well as his gracious and precious promises to his people: and this voice of his is said to be *like the voice of a multitude;* of a great many men together; whose voice is heard a long way off, and is very strong and powerful: or, *as the voice of noise*[q]; which may be understood either of the noise of a multitude of men, or of the sea, or of many waters; see Rev. i. 15. and may intend the power and efficacy of his words, whether in his doctrines, or in his judgments, in a way of grace and comfort, or of wrath and vengeance.

Ver. 7. *And I Daniel alone saw the vision,* &c.] The object or person described; though he was not alone when he saw it, yet he alone saw it; the eyes of his body and mind being quicker than the rest, the Lord strengthening and enlightening both; for this was a peculiar and distinguishing favour granted to him: *for the men that were with me saw not the vision;* at least not so clearly and distinctly as Daniel did; they might have some confused sight of an object that appeared very terrible; but, being struck with consternation, they had not presence of mind to look at it; and so could neither form nor retain scarce any idea of it: or their eyes might be held, and their sight clouded; or be stricken with a kind of blindness, or want of sight for a time, as the men of Sodom were; or the object was of such a nature, that without special illumination it could not be seen: the like happened to Elisha's young man, who saw not the chariots and horses of fire the prophet did, and to the men that were with the Apostle Paul, 2 Kings vi. 17. Acts ix. 7. who these men were, that were with Daniel, is not material to know; whether they were his three companions, who had been cast into the fiery furnace; or the Prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, as Jarchi and Saadiah say from their Rabbins[r]; neither of which are likely, since these, being good men and prophets, would doubtless have been favoured with the same vision: but rather they were the servants of Daniel, who waited upon him, he being now a great man in the Persian court; and these men being very likely Heathens, profane and unregenerate men, were not fit and prepared to see such a vision: *but a great quaking fell upon them;* or *for,* so Noldius; giving a reason why they saw not, because of the great fear and trembling upon them; either at the glimmering sight of this strange appearance, which they knew not what to make of; or rather at the sound of his voice, which was so very loud and terrible: *so that they fled to hide themselves;* among the trees that grew upon the banks of the Tigris, as Adam among the trees of the garden; or in some wood or forest hard by; or in some caves and dens, which might be near at hand: this not only shews the confusion and consternation they were in, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, *they fled with terror:* or *through it,* as the Syriac version; but serves to confirm the truth of the vision, that it was not a mere fancy and imagination of Daniel.

Ver. 8. *Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision,* &c.] Which was great indeed, both with respect to the object now seen, and with respect to the subject-matter, the things afterwards revealed, the nature, use, and importance of them; and it was so wisely ordered by the Lord, that the men with Daniel should be seized with a panic, and flee and leave him alone; that they being removed from him, he might have the secrets of the Lord revealed to him as a peculiar favourite of his, and hear and see the things he did: *and there remained no strength in me;* either through the intenseness of his mind upon the object before him, and to what he said; or through the awe he was struck with at the sight of him; his blood running back to the heart to secure that; his nerves loosened; his hands weak and hanging down; his knees feeble, and spirits faint, just ready to sink and swoon away: *for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption:* the form of his countenance was marred; his forehead wrinkled; his eyes sunk; the sprightliness and vivacity of them gone; his cheeks turned pale; his lips quivering; his joints trembling; his vigour and health impaired; all nature convulsed; and he lifeless and spiritless, like a dead carcass: *and I retained no strength:* or, *restrained*[s] it not; his strength; could not keep it from going out of him, either of body or mind; he could not rally the powers of nature, so depressed was he with the vision: all which is observed, both to exaggerate the greatness of the vision, and the favour and goodness of God after shewn him; as well as to observe the weakness of human nature, not being able to bear the sight of a divine Person, or such discoveries the Lord is sometimes pleased to make, without being strengthened and supported in an extraordinary manner.

Ver. 9. *Yet heard I the voice of his words,* &c.] Though he was struck with so much awe, and his spirits so greatly depressed, and his body reduced to so low a condition; yet he was capable of attending to the voice, and of bearing the articulate sounds pronounced, and of understanding what was said: *and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground;* as soon as he

[q] כקול המון ut vox tumultus, Montanus; *vel* strepitus, Piscator, Michaelis.

[r] ℞. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 2.

[s] לא עצרתי non cohibui, Gejerus.

heard his words, he fell upon his face to the ground, either in a way of worship and adoration, of prayer and supplication, as the Arabic version suggests; or through awe and reverence of the speaker, as well as through faintness of spirits; and these being quite exhausted, as it were, might be the reason of his falling into a deep sleep; unless it can be thought he was lulled into it, through the sweetness of the voice he had heard.

Ver. 10. *And, behold, an hand touched me*, &c.] Not the hand of the man clothed with linen, whose voice he heard, and whose hand was like polished brass, ver. 6. but the hand of one distinct from him, one of his attendants, ch. xii. 5, 6. that had the similitude of the sons of men, ver. 16. and whose hand was softer, and nearer a human one; very probably the hand of the Angel Gabriel in human form, who had touched him before, when in the like circumstances, ch. viii. 16, 18: *which set me upon my knees, and* upon *the palms of my hands*; or, which *caused* him *to move*[1]; from the prostrate condition in which he was, and raised him up a little upon his hands; so that, with a little difficulty, he might be able to raise himself to stand upright.

Ver. 11. *And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved*, &c.] Or, *a man of desires*[2]; a most desirable man, lovely to God and men; the same epithet Gabriel gives him, ch. ix. 22, 23. which confirms the sentiment, that it is he that touched Daniel, and is here speaking, distinct from the glorious Person before described: *understand the words that I speak unto thee*; attend unto them, in order to understand them; and which he was sent to give him an understanding of, as in ch. viii. 16. which is a further confirmation that this is Gabriel: *and stand upright*; being upon his hands and knees, ver. 10. but now is bid to *stand on* his *standing*[3], or his station; upon his feet, in an erect posture, which was fittest for attention, and most decent and becoming a hearer and learner of the mind of God, from one of his messengers: and therefore, the more to excite him to such a posture, he adds, *for unto thee am I now sent*: of God, and particularly to the prophet, and that after three weeks' fasting and mourning: this is another proof that not the glorious Person before described, but an angel of his, is meant, since he is said to be *sent* to Daniel: *and when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling*; he got up and stood upon his feet, as the angel had bid him, but trembling and tottering, not yet recovered from his fainting-fit; like a man that has been ill, and got upon his legs again, trembles and totters as he goes or stands: and also, though the angel was kind and serviceable to him, set him on his knees and hands, and spoke to him in a tender manner; yet the appearance of such a divine messenger had such an effect upon him, as we find such appearances used to have on good men.

Ver. 12. *Then said he unto me, fear not, Daniel*, &c.] Perceiving him to shake and tremble, and to be intimidated at his presence, he speaks comfortably to him, and encourages him to lay aside his fears, that he might be more capable of attending to what he was about to say to him; and which had a tendency of themselves to remove his fears, and increase his confidence in the Lord: *for from the first day thou didst set thine heart to understand*; not so much the former visions which he had an understanding of, as the future state of his people; or rather, the reason of their present distressed condition, being hindered by their enemies in rebuilding their city and temple: *and to chasten thyself before thy God*; to humble himself in prayer, and to afflict himself by fasting: *thy words were heard*; his prayers were heard, and an answer ordered to be given, the very first day he began to pray, and fast, and mourn, though it was now full three weeks since; just as, at the beginning of his former supplications, Gabriel had a commandment to go and shew him that they were heard, ch. ix. 23: *and I am come forth for thy words*; on account of his prayers, to bring an answer to them; the reason why he came no sooner, when it was three weeks since he received his order, is as follows:

Ver. 13. *But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one-and-twenty days*, &c.] Which was just the time Daniel had been mourning and fasting, ver. 2. and the angel had had his instructions to acquaint him with the Lord's answer to his prayers: by *the prince of the kingdom of Persia* is not to be understood the then reigning king of Persia, Cyrus, or his son Cambyses; who either of them would have been called rather king of Persia; nor were they able to withstand an angel, and such an one as Gabriel; nor is a good angel meant, the tutelar one of this kingdom; for it cannot be reasonaby thought that good angels should militate against one another; but an evil angel, either Satan, the prince and god of this world, or one of his principal angels under him, employed by him to do what mischief he could in the court of Persia, against the people of God, the Jews; and with this sense agree the contests ascribed to Satan and the Angel of the Lord concerning Joshua, Zech. iii. 1, 2, 3. and to Michael and the devil disputing about the body of Moses, Jude, ver. 9. and to Michael and his angels, and the devil and his angels, warring in heaven, Rev. xii. 7, 8. now Gabriel's business in the court of Persia was to work upon the minds of the king of Persia and his nobles, and to influence their counsels, and put them on such measures as would be in favour of the Jews, and be encouraging to them to go on in the rebuilding of their city and temple: in this he was withstood and opposed by an evil spirit that counterworked him; by exasperating the spirit of Cambyses against them; by stirring up the Samaritans to corrupt the Persian courtiers with gifts, to take their part against the Jews; and by influencing them to accept of their gifts, and act in their favour; and this business on the angel's hands, to oppose these measures, detained him at the Persian court for the three weeks Daniel had been fasting and praying: *but, lo, Michael one of the chief Princes, came to help me*; called in the New Testament an Archangel, the Prince of angels, the Head of

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[1] תניעני movere fecit me, Pagninus, Montanus; commovit me, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius; movit me, Tigurine version, Michaelis.

[2] איש חמדות vir desideriorum, V. L.

[3] עמד על־עמדך sta super stare tuum, Montanus, Calvin; sta in statione tua, Piscator; super statione tua, Michaelis.

all principality and power; and is no other than Christ the Son of God, an increated Angel; who is *one*, or *the first of the chief Princes*[x], superior to angels, in nature, name, and office; he came to *help* Gabriel, not as a fellow-creature, but as the Lord of hosts; not as a fellow-soldier, but as General of the armies in heaven and earth, as superior to him in wisdom and strength; and he helped him by giving him fresh counsels, orders, and instructions, which he following succeeded: *and I remained there with the kings of Persia*: with the king of Persia and his nobles, putting into execution the orders Michael had given him, and so baffled the designs of the evil spirit; and this retarded him from being with the prophet one-and-twenty days. The Septuagint and Arabic versions very wrongly render the words, *and I left him there with the kings of Persia*: as if Michael was left there by Gabriel, whereas it was just the reverse.

Ver. 14. *Now I am come to make thee to understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days*, &c.] The contest being over with the prince of Persia, and having got an advantage, and carried his point in favour of the Jews; he came directly to Daniel, to inform him of what should befall the people of the Jews in the succeeding monarchies, especially in the times of Antiochus; and even of all that should befall them until the Messiah came, as Aben Ezra rightly interprets it; for the last days generally design the days of the Messiah; see Gen. xlix. 1. Isa. ii. 2: *for yet the vision is for many days*; before it will be accomplished; reaching not only to the times of Antiochus, three hundred years after this, but even to the times of antichrist, of whom he was a type; and to the resurrection of the dead, and the end of time, as the two next chapters shew; see Hab. ii. 3.

Ver. 15. *And when he had spoken such words unto me*, &c.] As before related, concerning the contest between him and the prince of Persia; and especially concerning what would befall the people of the Jews in the latter day: *I set my face toward the ground*; not being able to look up; his eyes were fixed upon the earth like one confounded and thunderstruck, filled with amazement and wonder: *and I became dumb*; not able to speak a word, as is the case of persons sometimes in surprise, or through excess of any of the passions: this arose either from the majesty of the angel; or rather from the nature and importance of the things he said; or from a consciousness of his own impurity, and so of his unworthiness to converse with so exalted a creature, and to be favoured with such secrets. The Arabic version is, *and I supplicated*; very wrongly.

Ver. 16. *And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men*, &c.] Not the man clothed with linen, or Christ; but either the same angel, Gabriel, who appeared more manifestly to him in a human form; or another of the attendants of Christ, who also had the similitude of a man: *touched my lips*; with his hand, as the Prophet Isaiah's were, by a seraph, with a live coal from the altar, Isa. vi. 7. thereby restoring him to his speech, and giving him freedom and boldness to make use of it; and removing from him his impurity, and a sense of it, which occasioned his silence: *then I opened my mouth, and spake*; freely, and yet with all becoming modesty: *and said unto him that stood before me, O lord*; the angel that appeared in the likeness of a man, and stood before the prophet, and touched his lips, whom he calls *lord*; not because of sovereignty and dominion over him, which belong to Christ, as the Creator of all things, and Head of the church; but for honour's sake, being a noble and exalted creature: *by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me*; on sight of the glorious object represented to him in the vision, pains seized his body in all parts of it, sharp and pungent, like those of a woman in travail. Gussetius[y] interprets it of the knuckle-bones, which turned in the pan of them, like the hinges of a door, of which the word is used, Prov. xxvi. 14. and this through the tendons being loosed by the dissipation of the spirits; and this sense the Vulgate Latin version gives countenance to, *my joints are dissolved*: the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, are, *my inward parts* or *bowels are turned in me*: *and I have retained no strength*; see the note on ver. 8.

Ver. 17. *For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord?* &c.] Or, *talk with that my lord*[z]? pointing to the man clothed in linen, who appeared so glorious, and whom Daniel knew to be more than a man; and therefore he, who was a mere mortal sinful man, and reckoned himself a servant of the angel of the Lord that was now before him, and had touched him, and was conversing with him, and to whom he was greatly inferior, must be very unfit and unworthy to have conversation with one that was infinitely above him; *with such an one*, his Lord, as Noldius[a] renders it, as Christ the Son of God, the Head of angels, King of kings, and Lord of lords; what was he, dust and ashes, that he should speak unto him, or be admitted to any discourse with him? so sensible was he of the greatness of Christ, and of his own frailty, sinfulness, and nothingness: *for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me*; as soon as ever he saw this great and glorious person; see the note on ver. 8: *neither is there breath left in me*; when he fainted away, and became like a dead man; and though he was raised up again, and set upon his feet, and had a little recovered his speech, yet it was with great difficulty that he breathed and spoke; as it is with men when their spirits are greatly oppressed, it is as if their life and soul were gone out of them, and they move more like dead than living men.

Ver. 18. *Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man*, &c.] Or one like a man again touched him; the same that touched him before, ver. 16. perhaps Gabriel, since he uses the same language in the following verse as he does ver. 11: *and he strengthened me*; both in body and mind, by his free and familiar conversation with him, and the comfortable words he spoke to him, a divine power accompanying them for that purpose.

Ver. 19. *And said, O man, greatly beloved*, &c.] Or,

[x] אחד primus, Junius & Tremellius.
[y] Comment. Ebr. p. 713.

[z] עם אדני זה cum domino meo illo, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Junius & Tremellius.
[a] Concord. Ebr. Part. p. 353.

man of desires, as before, ver. 11. which shews it to be the same here speaking as there, and probably Gabriel: *fear not*; for a man has nothing to fear, from men or devils, that is beloved of the Lord; and especially from good angels, how glorious and majestic soever they are: *peace be unto thee*: all prosperity of body and soul; inward peace of mind, a freedom from all hurry of thought, and commotion of the passions, and eternal peace and joy in the world to come: *be strong, yea, be strong*; take heart, pull up the spirits, be of good courage, play the man; be strong in the Lord, and in his grace, and fear nothing: the word is repeated for the greater encouragement: *and when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened*: divine power going along with his word; the prophet found his bodily strength renewed, his spirits revived, his heart cheerful, and his soul comforted, and all fear and dread removed from him; which was owing to the energy of divine grace; for otherwise not only men, but angels too, would speak in vain: *and said, let my lord speak, for thou hast strengthened me*; and so was able to bear the sight of him, support in his presence, and hear his words, and take in what he said, which before he was unfit for; so an angel may be an instrument of strengthening a saint, yea, a prophet, and even our Lord Jesus Christ himself as man, Luke xxii. 43.

Ver. 20. *Then said he, knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee?* &c.] He had told him before, ver. 12, 14. that it was on account of his prayers, and to bring an answer to them; and particularly to inform him what would befall his people in the latter day; and now, lest, through the hurry of his spirits, he had not observed it, or had forgot it, he reminds him of it, to stir up his desire the more after the knowledge of particulars, which he was now about to relate unto him: *and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia*: the evil spirit, in the court of Persia, he had been contesting with before, and had got the better of by the help of Michael; but since this good angel had been with Daniel, the evil one had been working upon the king and counsellors of Persia, and had wrought them up to an indifference unto, or carelessness about, the affairs of the people of the Jews, and to listen to their adversaries, whereby the building of the city and temple went on heavily and slowly; and so things were, through the evil influence of Satan, more or less, until the twentieth year of Artaxerxes Longimanus: and, indeed, Satan was continually soliciting mischief against the Jews, and stirring up enemies to them in the court of Persia, as long as that monarchy lasted, though he had not always the wished-for success: the times of Esther and Mordecai are a proof of this: *and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come*; meaning, when he was gone forth from the court of Persia, having done his business he was sent about; confounded the schemes and baffled the designs of the evil spirit, conquered him, and obliged him to give way, and cease from being troublesome any more, and obtained peace and rest for the Jews, and settled their affairs: the Persian monarchy being translated to the Grecians, the evil spirit began to work among them, to put them on doing mischief to the people of God; as in Alexander himself, who set out against them, but was pacified by the meeting of the high-priest; and more especially in his successors; and above all in Antiochus, who was a violent persecutor of them; which this clause, as well as the following prophecy, has a respect unto.

Ver. 21. *But I will shew that which is noted in the Scripture of truth*, &c.] Not in the written word, though there are many things relating to what should befall the Jews in the latter day, especially in Deut. xxviii. but in the decrees and purposes of God, which are sometimes signified by a book, and things written in it; because so particular and distinct, and so sure and certain, and which will be most truly, infallibly, and punctually performed: these are *noted*, marked, engraven, in the eternal mind of God; they are *in writing*, and they are *truth*[b], as it may be rendered, since there is a distinguishing accent between *Scripture* and *truth*: they are written in the book of God's decrees, and are his true and faithful words and sayings, and will most surely be accomplished: now these are the deep things of God, which angels themselves know nothing of, till they are revealed unto them: the angel here having a revelation of such of them as concerned the future monarchies of the earth, and the case of the Jews under them, promises to shew them to Daniel; which was the work he was appointed to do: *and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your Prince*; Christ the Prince of the kings of the earth, he was the Prince, Protector, and Guardian of the people of the Jews; he is the Angel that went before them in the wilderness, and guarded them in it, and guided them into the land of Canaan; he is the Angel of God's presence, that bore, carried, and saved them all the days of old, and was their King and their God, their Defender and Deliverer, still; he took their part, and was on their side; yea, he was on the side of, and took part with, them that were for them, the holy angels; and there was none but him that exerted his power, and strengthened Gabriel to act for them in *these things* relating to their peace and prosperity: or, *against these*[c], as it may be rendered; against the princes of Persia and Greece, the evil spirits that worked in these kingdoms, in the children of disobedience there: and had it not been for him, and the exertion of his mighty power, it would have been soon all over with the people of the Jews; as it would be now with the church of Christ, of which they were typical, but the Lord is on their side; Michael the Archangel, and his angels under him, fight for it, protect and defend it; and since he is for his people, who shall be against them? or to what purpose will an opposition be? the gates of hell cannot prevail against the church of God, the saints of the most High.

[b] את הרשום בכתב אמת quod exaratum est in Scripto, *in Scripto veritatis*, Piscator.

[c] על אלה contra illos, Piscator, Gejerus.

CHAP. XI.

IN this chapter the angel makes good his promise to Daniel, that he would shew him what was written in the Scripture of truth, concerning the monarchies of the earth, and what would befall his people the Jews in the latter days; and after he had observed that he had strengthened and confirmed Darius the Mede, who was the first king of the then present flourishing monarchy, ver. 1. he foretels the number of the kings of Persia, and particularly describes the fourth, ver. 2. predicts the rise of the Grecian monarchy under Alexander the great, and the disposition of it after his death, ver. 3, 4. and then proceeds to give an account of the two principal kingdoms of that monarchy, into which it was divided, the Seleucidæ and Lagidæ; and of their kings, the king of Egypt, and the king of Syria, under the names of the king of the south, and the king of the north, and of their power and agreement, ver. 5, 6. and then of their various wars between themselves and others, and the success of them, ver. 7—20. and particularly of Antiochus, his character and manner of coming to the kingdom, and of his wars with the king of Egypt, and the issue of them, ver. 21—29. and of his persecution of the Jews, and the distress he should bring on them, and the use it should be of to the godly among them, ver. 30—35. and then his antitype, antichrist, is described; the western antichrist, his character and actions, ver. 36—39. then the eastern, his power, wealth and riches, fall and ruin, ver. 40—45.

Ver. 1. *Also I, in the first year of Darius the Mede, &c.*] These words more properly belong to the preceding chapter, and should have concluded that, and the *eleventh* chapter should have begun in the next verse; and they are not the words of Daniel, as Jerom and others; but of the angel telling Daniel, not only what he had been lately doing, and would do in the court of Persia for his people; but what he had done in the beginning of that monarchy, the very first year that Darius the Mede became king of Babylon, and head of the whole monarchy; see ch. v. 30, 31. the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, *in the first year of Cyrus:* which was the same time; for Darius and Cyrus reigned together. *Even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him;* not Michael your Prince, as Jarchi; for he being no other than the Son of God, an increated Angel, needed not the help and assistance of a created one, nor could receive any strength and confirmation from such an one; unless this is to be understood, not with respect to Michael himself abstractly considered, but as in relation to the people of the Jews, on whose side Michael was; and so this angel took part with him and them, and as his minister served them both, in defending them, and taking care of their affairs at this time; so Jacchiades paraphrases it, to confirm and strengthen Israel: but it seems rather to design Darius, and the sense to be, that this angel strengthened Darius and Cyrus in their good intentions to let the people of Israel go free, and give them full liberty and encouragement to go into their own land, and rebuild their city and temple; about which some doubts and hesitations might arise in their minds, and objections be made by some of their nobles and courtiers to it, being moved and influenced by an evil spirit, the adversary of this good angel; but he attended them so closely, and so strongly suggested to them what they should do in this case, that he carried his point on behalf of the Jews; for this respects not so much the destruction of the Chaldean monarchy, and the establishing the Persian monarchy on the ruins of it, and settling Darius on the throne, and strengthening his kingdom and interest, as the confirmation of him and Cyrus in their designs in favour of the Jews. The Syriac version is, *from the first year of Darius the Mede, he rose up to help me, and assist me;* as if the angel was still speaking of Michael, who came to his help against the prince of Persia, and was the only one that held with him, and had done so from the beginning of the Persian empire; but the Hebrew text will not admit of such a translation.

Ver. 2. *And now will I shew thee the truth, &c.*] And nothing but the truth; what will most certainly come to pass, and may be depended on, even what is written in the book of God's decrees, *the Scripture of truth*, and which would appear in Providence in after-times; and this he proposed to deliver to him, not in figurative, dark, and obscure expressions, but clearly and plainly, in language easy to be understood: *behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia;* which were Cyrus, who reigned alone after the death of Darius the Mede, his uncle; Cambyses, the son of Cyrus; and Darius Hystaspes. There was another between Cambyses and Darius, called Smerdis the magician, who reigned but seven months, and being an impostor is left out, as he is in Ptolemy's canon; not that these were all the kings of Persia after Darius the Mede; for, according to the above canon, there reigned six more after them; but because these kings had a connexion with the Jews, and under them their affairs had different turns and changes, respecting their restoration and settlement, and the building of their city and temple; as also because these kings *stood*, and the monarchy under them was strong and flourishing, whereas afterwards it began to decline; and chiefly it is for the sake of the *fourth* king that these are observed, who laid the foundation of the destruction of the Persian monarchy by the Grecians. *And the fourth shall be far richer than they all;* this is Xerxes, who exceeded his predecessors in wealth and riches; enjoying what they by their conquests, or otherwise, had amassed together, to which he greatly added; Cyrus had collected a vast deal of riches from various nations, especially from Babylon; God gave him *the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places*, Isa. xlv. 3. Cambyses increased the store by his victories, and the plunder of temples wherever he came; out of the flames of which were saved 300 talents of gold, and 2300 talents of silver,

which he carried away, together with the famous circle of gold that encompassed the tomb of King Ozymandias[d]: and Darius, the father of Xerxes, laid heavy taxes upon the people, and hoarded up his money; hence he was called by the Persians κάπηλος[e], the huckster or hoarder: and Xerxes came into it all, and so became richer than them all; of whom Justin says[f], "si regem spectes; divitias, non ducem laudes: quarum "tanta copia in regno ejus fuit, ut cum flumina multi-"tudine consumerentur, opes tamen regiæ super-"essent." *And by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia*; through his vast riches, which are the sinews of war, he collected a prodigious army out of all provinces, which he raised to make war against the Grecians; being moved to it by Mardonius, a relation of his, who was very ambitious of being at the head of a large army[g]; three years were spent in preparing for this expedition, and forces were gathered out of all parts of the then known habitable world; out of all the west, under Hamilcar, general of the Carthaginians, with whom he made a league; and out of all the east, under his own command: his army, according to Justin[h], consisted of seven hundred thousand of his own, and three hundred thousand auxiliaries; Diodorus Siculus[i] makes it much less, to be about three hundred thousand men; but Dr. Prideaux[k], from Herodotus and others, computes, that putting all his forces together, by sea and land, by the time he came to the straits of Thermopylæ the number of them were two millions, six hundred forty-one thousand, six hundred and ten men; and Grotius, from the same writer, reckons them five millions, two hundred and eighty-three thousand, to which others add two hundred and twenty[l]; with these he marched into Greece, where, after having done much mischief, he was shamefully defeated, and obliged to retire, and was murdered by Artabanus the captain of his guards. The words may be rendered[m], *he shall stir up all, even the realm of Grecia*; by the preparation he made, and the vast army he brought into the field, he raised all the cities and states of Greece to combine together to withstand him; and this step of his is what irritated the Grecians, and put them upon after-attempts to avenge themselves on the Persians for this attack upon them; and which they never desisted from, till they had ruined the Persian empire, which they did under Alexander; and so he, in his letter to Darius, says[n], "your ancestors entered into Mace-"donia, and the other parts of Greece, and did us "damage, when they had received no affront from us "as the cause of it; and now I, created general of "the Grecians, provoked by you, and desirous of "avenging the injury done by the Persians, have "passed over into Asia." And it is for the sake of this, the destruction of the Persian empire by Alexander, that this expedition of Xerxes is here hinted at; and to pave the way for the account of Alexander and his successors, in the following part of this prophecy.

Ver. 3. *And a mighty king shall stand up, &c.*] Not in Persia, but in Greece; Alexander the great, who rose up a hundred years after the above expedition of Xerxes, and *stood* and flourished, and conquered all he attacked, none being able to resist him; and is rightly called a *mighty king*, a very powerful one: this is the notable horn in the he-goat, which being exasperated by the *ram*, the Persians, and their invasion of Greece, pushed at them, and destroyed them, ch. viii. 5, 6, 7: *that shall rule with great dominion*; not in Greece only, but in the whole world, at least as he thought, and really did over a very great part of it; for, as Jerom says, having conquered the Illyrians, Thracians, Greece, and Thebes, he passed into Asia; and, having put to flight the generals of Darius, he took the city of Sardis, and afterwards India. *And do according to his will*; not only in his own army, sacrificing his best friends at his pleasure; but with his enemies, conquering whom he would, none being able to withstand him; all things succeeded to his wish; whatever he attempted he performed. His historian[o] says of him, "that it "must be owned he owed much to virtue, but more "to fortune, which alone of all mortals he had in "his power;" since, by the benefit of it, he seemed to do with nations whatever he pleased; he was sovereign in all things, and set himself to be worshipped as a deity.

Ver. 4. *And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, &c.*] When Alexander was risen up to his highest pitch of grandeur, was sole monarch of the world, in the height of his ambition, in the prime of his days, he was cut off by death; his kingdom remained no more one, but became many, was seized by different persons, his generals, and so broke to pieces: *and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven*; which seem to have respect to the four horns or kings, which came up in his room, ch. viii. 8. and among whom his kingdom was parted; Ptolemy reigned in Egypt to the south; Antigonus in Asia to the north; Seleucus in Babylon and Syria to the east; and Cassander in Macedonia to the west: *and not to his posterity*; for though he had two sons, one by Barsine, whose name was Hercules, who was living at his death; and another by Roxane, born after his death, whose name was Alexander; yet they were both destroyed by Cassander, or his means, that he might enjoy Macedonia[p]: *nor according to his dominion which he ruled*; their dominion was not so large and powerful as Alexander's was, being divided into several parts; see ch. viii. 22: *for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others besides those*; either besides his posterity, who had no share in it, and so, with respect to his family, was like a tree plucked up by the roots, and, as to their concern in it, withered away at once: or, besides the four governors before mentioned, there were others that had, at least for a while, some lesser shares in the kingdom, as Eumenes, Philotas, Leonnatus, and others; but, at length, all were reduced to the kings of Egypt and

[d] See the Universal History, vol. 5. p. 194.
[e] Herodot. l. 3, sive Thalia, c. 89.
[f] E Trogo, l. 2. c. 10.
[g] Diodor. Sicul. Bibliothec. l. 11. par. 2. p. 3. Ed. Rhodoman.
[h] E Trogo, l. 2. c. 10.
[i] Ut supra, par. 2. p. 2.
[k] Connexion, &c. part 1. B. 4. p. 233, 234.

[l] See the Universal History, vol. 5. p. 233.
[m] יעיר הכל את מלכות יון excitabit universum, nempe regnum Græciæ, Michaelis.
[n] Apud Arrian. Exped. Alexand. l. 2.
[o] Curtius, l. 10. c. 5.
[p] Diodor. Sicul. Bibliothec. l. 19. p. 739. & l. 20. p. 761.

Syria, the Lagidæ and Seleucidæ, which the following part of the prophecy chiefly concerns; and, besides these, for the Romans also, to whom this kingdom came.

Ver. 5. *And the king of the south shall be strong, &c.*] That is, the king of Egypt, which lay south to Syria, as Syria lay north to Egypt: and therefore the king of the one is called the king of the south, and the other the king of the north, throughout this prophecy; and by the king of the south, or Egypt, is here meant Ptolemy Lagus, one of Alexander's generals, who had Egypt for his share; and a very powerful king he was; for he reigned over Egypt, Lybia, Cyrene, Ethiopia, Arabia, Phœnicia, Cœlesyria, Cyprus, and several isles in the Ægean sea, and many cities in Greece: *and one of his princes:* not of Ptolemy king of Egypt, but of Alexander the great; and this is Seleucus Nicator, afterwards called king of the north, having Syria for his part, which lay to the north of Egypt, as before observed: *and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion;* that is, be a greater and more powerful prince than Ptolemy king of Egypt: *his dominion shall be a great dominion;* even greater than the others; for he reigned over Macedonia, Greece, Thrace, Asia, Syria, Babylonia, Media, and all the eastern countries as far as India; even from Taurus to the river Indus, and so likewise from Taurus to the Ægean sea: these two are only mentioned, who shared the Persian monarchy, because the Jews were only affected by them, for the sake of whom this prophecy is delivered.

Ver. 6. *And in the end of years they shall join themselves together, &c.*] The two kings of Egypt and Syria; not the two former kings, but their successors: the second king of Egypt was Ptolemy Philadelphus, the second king of Egypt, the son of Ptolemy Lagus; this is the king of Egypt who collected such a vast number of books into his library at Alexandria, and got the law of Moses translated into Greek: the king of Syria was Antiochus, surnamed Theos; this name was first given him by the Milesians, upon his delivering them from the tyranny of Timarchus governor of Caria; he was the third king of Syria; Seleucus Nicator the first, Antiochus Soter the second, and this the third: there had been very great wars between these kings for many years; and now, being weary of them, they entered into confederacies and alliances with each other, and which were designed to be strengthened by a marriage next mentioned; this is thought to be about seventy years after the death of Alexander[q]: *for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement;* this was Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus king of Egypt, who carried her to Pelusium, and from thence sailed with her to Seleucia in Syria; where he met with Antiochus king of Syria, to whom he gave her in marriage, with a vast dowry of gold and silver; hence she was called φερνοφορος; and the marriage was celebrated with great solemnity[r]: and this was *to make agreement,* or *to make things right* or *straight*[s]; that were wrong and crooked before; to put an end to wars and discords; to make peace and cultivate friendship; to strengthen alliances, and confirm each other in their kingdoms; *but she shall not retain the power of the arm;* unite the two kingdoms, and secure the peace of them, which was the thing in view; nor retain her interest in her husband, nor her power at court; for, as soon as her father was dead, Antiochus dismissed Berenice from his bed, and took Laodice his former wife again, by whom he had had two sons, Seleucus Callinicus, and Antiochus Hierax[t]: *neither shall he stand, nor his arm;* neither Antiochus; for Laodice, knowing that by the late treaty the crown was settled upon the children of Berenice, who already had a son by him, and sensible of his fickleness, and fearing he might divorce her again, and take to Berenice, got him poisoned by his servants: nor Berenice his queen, called *his arm;* who fleeing to Daphne for shelter, on hearing what was done, was there slain; or it may be his son he had by her, so it follows: *but she shall be given up;* into the hands of Seleucus Callinicus, the son of Laodice; whom she placed on the throne after the death of his father; and who sent to Daphne to slay Berenice, which was accordingly done[u]: *and they that brought her;* into Syria; that attended her from Egypt at her marriage, and continued with her in the court of Syria, and fled with her to Daphne: *and he that begat her:* or, *whom she brought forth;* as in the margin; her little son, who was murdered at the same time with her; for her father died before: *and he that strengthened her in these times;* either her husband, or her father, who were both dead before, and so stood not, and could not help her; unless this is to be understood of her brother, and the cities of the lesser Asia, who, hearing of her distress at Daphne, set out for her relief, but came too late; she and her son were both slain first[w].

Ver. 7. *But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate, &c.*] Or, *out of a branch of her roots a shoot thereof shall stand* or *rise up*[x]; by *her roots* are meant her ancestors, particularly Ptolemy Lagus; by a *branch* from thence, Ptolemy Philadelphus her father; and by the *shoot* out of that, or its plantation, as the Vulgate Latin version, is designed her brother, Ptolemy Euergetes; who succeeded her father in the kingdom, and stood firm in it: *upon his basis*[y], as some render it: *which shall come with an army;* or, *to an army*[z]; as soon as he heard of his sister's case, he put himself at the head of an army, and marched to her relief; but coming too late, he, and the forces of the lesser Asia, which came for the same purpose, joining him, resolved to revenge the death of his sister and her son, went with his army into Syria, as next foretold: *and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north;* the king of Syria, Seleucus Callinicus: Ptolemy entered into Syria itself, as Polybius[a] says, into the fortified cities of it, and took them, the singular being

[q] See the Universal History, vol. 9. p. 384.
[r] Ibid. p. 196. & Jerom. in loc.
[s] לעשות מישרים ad faciendum rectitudines, Pagninus, Michaelis; ut faciat rectitudines, Montanus; recta, Calvin.
[t] Universal History, vol. 9. p. 196, 197.
[u] Ibid.
[w] Justin, l. 27. c. 1.
[x] כנו plantatio ejus, V. L.
[y] Super basi sua, Pagninus, Gejerus.
[z] אל החיל ad exercitum, Pagninus, Montanus, Coccejus, Michaelis.
[a] Hist. l. 5.

put for the plural; unless Seleucia itself is particularly designed, which Ptolemy seized, and put a garrison of Egyptians in it, which held it twenty-seven years[b]: *and shall deal against them*: besiege and take them at his pleasure; the king of Syria not being able to stand against him and defend them: *and shall prevail*: over the king of Syria, and conquer great part of his dominions, as he did: he took Syria and Cilicia, and the superior parts beyond Euphrates, and almost all Asia, as Jerom relates; and had it not been for a sedition in his own kingdom, which called him home, he had made himself master of the whole kingdom of Seleucus, as Justin[c] says.

Ver. 8. *And shall also carry captive into Egypt their gods, with their princes*, &c.] Jerom relates, from the historians he conversed with, that Ptolemy carried captive with him into Egypt two thousand five hundred images; among which were many of the idols which Cambyses, when he conquered Egypt, carried from thence; and Ptolemy replacing them in their proper temples, gained him the affection of his people the Egyptians, who were much addicted to idolatry; hence they gave him the name of Euergetes, that is, *the benefactor*: *and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold*; the same writer reports, that he brought with him out of Syria, and the places he conquered, forty thousand talents of silver, and precious vessels; vessels of gold and silver, a prodigious number: *and he shall continue* more *years than the king of the north*: according to the canon of Ptolemy, this king of Egypt reigned twenty-five years; and, as Dr. Prideaux[d] observes, outlived Seleucus king of Syria four years.

Ver. 9. *So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom*, &c.] Into his own kingdom, the kingdom of Egypt; or into the kingdom of Syria, the kingdom of Seleucus, and conquer great part of it, and ravage and spoil it: *and shall return into his own land*; the land of Egypt; he shall go and come with ease, and as he pleases, none to hinder him; and come back with a great spoil, as before related: Cocceius renders it, and something *shall come in the kingdom of the king of the south, and he shall return to his own land*; and thinks this refers to the sedition raised there, before mentioned, which obliged him to return sooner than he intended. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, *and he shall enter into the kingdom of the king of the south, and he shall return to his own land*: that is, Seleucus should attempt to enter into the kingdom of Ptolemy king of Egypt, in revenge of his having entered into his country and spoiled it; but shall be obliged to return to his own land without any success: and so Justin[e] says, that he fitted out a great fleet, which was destroyed by a violent storm; and after this he raised a great army to recover his dominion, but was defeated by Ptolemy, and fled in great terror and trembling to Antioch; and this suits well with what follows.

Ver. 10. *But his sons shall be stirred up*, &c.] Not of the king of the south, or Egypt, but of the king of the north, or Syria; the sons of Seleucus Callinicus, who died, as Justin[f] says, by a fall from his horse; these were Seleucus Ceraunus and Antiochus, who was afterwards called the great: these being irritated and provoked by what Ptolemy Euergetes had done in revenge of his sister, taking part of their father's kingdom from him, and carrying off so rich a booty, joined together, and exerted themselves to recover their dominions from him: *and shall assemble a multitude of great forces*; or, *a multitude* of men, even *large armies*[g]; which they put themselves at the head of, in order to make war with the king of Egypt: *and one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through*; this is to be understood of Antiochus; for Seleucus dying in the third year of his reign, being slain in Phrygia, through the treachery of Nicator and Apaturius, as Jerom relates; or, as others, poisoned; Antiochus succeeded him, and alone headed the armies they had collected; and with which, like an inundation of water, to which armies are sometimes compared, he attacked Seleucia, and took it; and entered into Coelesyria, and overran it, being delivered into his hands by the treachery of Theodotus, who governed there for Ptolemy, whom he had offended: after this he came to Berytus, entered the province by a place which the countrymen called *the face of God*; and which Grotius, not improbably, takes to be Phanuel; took the town of Botris, and set fire to Trieres and Calamus, or Calene: he next invaded Palestine, and took several places in it; went as far as Rabata Massane, or Rabatamana, a city in Arabia, the same with Rabbath-ammon, which surrendered to him[h]: *then shall he return, and be stirred up even to his fortress*; the spring following he returned with a numerous army, and came to Raphia, a fortified city in Egypt, which lay between that and Palestine; where, as Strabo[i] says, Ptolemy the fourth (i. e. Philopator) fought with Antiochus the great.

Ver. 11. *And the king of the south shall be moved with choler*, &c.] This is Ptolemy Philopator, who succeeded Ptolemy Euergetes in the kingdom of Egypt; so called ironically, because of his murder of his father and mother, as Justin[k] relates; the same, though naturally sluggish and slothful, was provoked and exasperated at the proceedings of Antiochus, retaking Coelesyria, invading Palestine, and coming up to the borders of his kingdom: *and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north*; he assembled an army, and marched with them, from the interior part of his kingdom, to the border of it, to Raphia, a city between Rhinocorura and Gaza; where he met with Antiochus, and a battle was fought, as before observed: *and he shall set forth a great multitude*; this is true of both kings, their armies were very large; that of Ptolemy king of Egypt consisted, according to Polybius[l], of seventy thousand foot, five thousand horse, and seventy-three elephants;

[b] See Prideaux, Connexion, part 2. B. 2. p. 100.
[c] Ut supra.
[d] Connexion, part 2. B. 2. p. 81.
[e] Ut supra, c. 2.
[f] Ibid. c. 3.
[g] המון חילים רבים multitudinem, copias amplas, Junius & Tremellius.

[h] Vid. Polybium, l. 5. p. 256, 260, 261, 262. and Universal History, vol. 9. p. 216, 218, 219.
[i] Geograph. l. 16. p. 522.
[k] E Trogo, l. 29. c. 1.
[l] L. 5. p. 266.

and that of Antiochus king of Syria consisted of sixty-two (some say seventy-two) thousand foot, six thousand horse, and a hundred and two elephants: the former army, that of the king of Egypt, seems rather designed, if the preceding clause is consulted; though the latter, that of Antiochus, best agrees with what follows: *but the multitude shall be given into his hand*: that is, the multitude of the army of Antiochus should be delivered into the hands of Ptolemy Philopator, and so it was; for Antiochus lost ten thousand foot, and three hundred horse; four thousand foot were taken, three elephants slain, and two wounded, which afterwards died, and most of the rest were taken [k]: this victory is ascribed to Arsinoe, the sister and wife of Ptolemy, who ran about the army with her hair dishevelled, and by entreaties and promises greatly encouraged the soldiers to fight; of which see 3 Maccab. i. and with which Polybius [l] agrees.

Ver. 12. *And when he hath taken away the multitude, &c.*] That is, when Ptolemy king of Egypt had defeated the large army of Antiochus, killed great numbers of them, and taken many: *his heart shall be lifted up*: with pride, through the victory he obtained; and so he gave himself up to sensuality and luxury, judging himself now safe and secure in the possession of his kingdom: or this may refer to his insolence, when he entered into Judea, went to Jerusalem, and forced his way into the holiest of all to offer sacrifice upon his victory; of which see 3 Maccab. i: *and he shall cast down many ten thousands*; or *many thousands*, as the Vulgate Latin version; or rather *ten thousand* [m], either of the Jews, when he went into their country; or of the army of Antiochus the king of the north, as Jacchiades: and it may be rendered, *though he shall cast down many thousands* [n]; that is, cast them down to the earth, slay them, as he did, even ten thousand of them, the number here mentioned: *yet he shall not be strengthened by it*: for Antiochus escaped out of his hands, nor did he pursue his victory, and take all the advantages of it, as he might have done; for, as the historian [o] says, had he added valour to his fortune, he might have spoiled Antiochus of his kingdom; but, content with the recovery of the cities he lost, made peace, and greedily took the advantage of ease, and rolled himself in luxury, uncleanness, and intemperance.

Ver. 13. *For the king of the north shall return, &c.*] As Antiochus king of Syria did, upon the death of Ptolemy Philopator, who was succeeded by his son Ptolemy Epiphanes, a minor of five years of age: Antiochus took the advantage of this minority, and entered into a league with Philip king of Macedon, to divide the kingdom of Egypt between them; and marched an army into Cœlesyria and Palestine, and made himself master of those countries: *and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former*: bring a larger army into the field than he had done before, which Jerom says he brought out of the upper parts of Babylon: some say it consisted of three hundred thousand foot, besides horse and elephants: *and shall certainly come (after certain years) with a great army, and with much riches*: with all manner of provisions to supply his numerous army, and all proper accommodations for it, money to pay his soldiers, and beasts of burden to carry their baggage from place to place: this was about fourteen years after the former battle, as Dr. Prideaux [p] observes; and, according to Bishop Usher's annals, thirteen years.

Ver. 14. *And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south, &c.*] The king of Egypt, Ptolemy Epiphanes being a minor; and while he was such, Antiochus king of Syria, and Philip king of Macedon, joined in alliance together, as before observed, to seize upon his kingdom, and divide it between them; and accordingly Antiochus began the war in Cœlesyria and Phœnicia, and Philip went against Egypt and Samos, or Caria, according to Polybius [q]. Agathocles and Agathoclea, favourites of the former king of Egypt, laid a scheme of taking the regency into their hands during the minority of the young king; and these, being persons of dissolute lives, were hated by the Egyptians, which caused insurrections and seditions among themselves; and Scopas, a principal general in the army of the king of Egypt, formed a design of taking the government to himself: *also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision*: this is directed to the Prophet Daniel, and respects the Jews his countrymen, at least some of them, refractory persons that broke through all laws of God and men; seditious men, disturbers of the public peace, and who lived upon the spoil and plunder of others; these either took the advantage of the disturbances in Egypt, and went thither, and plundered what they could, in a bold and audacious manner, and so helped to fulfil this prophecy; or during the troubles in their own land, through the kings of Egypt and Syria, took the opportunity of committing thefts and robberies in a very daring manner, whereby they brought upon them those evils threatened in the law to such persons; and particularly when the Egyptians prevailed, they sided with them against Antiochus, especially such who apostatized from their religion to please the king of Egypt; but were afterwards punished by Antiochus, as it follows: *but they shall fall*: be cut off and destroyed, as those apostates that were of Ptolemy's party were by Antiochus, when he invaded Judea, and became master of Jerusalem; see 3 Maccab. i. Some understand this of the apostate Jews, who fled with Onias the high-priest to Egypt, and were there honourably received by Ptolemy, and obtained leave to build a temple there, under pretence of fulfilling the vision or prophecy in Isa. xix. 19, which continued many years to the times of the Romans, by whom it was destroyed; but this does not agree with the reign of this king of Egypt; for it was in the times of Ptolemy Philometor that this affair happened, as Josephus [r] relates. Sir Isaac Newton interprets it of the Samaritans [s].

Ver. 15. *So the king of the north shall come, and cast*

[k] Polybius, l. 5. p. 409.
[l] Ibid. p. 258.
[m] רבואות decem millia, Pagninus, Montanus, so Ben Melech.
[n] והפיל etiamsi dejiciet, Gejerus; quamvis prostraverit, Michaelis.
[o] Justin, l. 30. c. 1.

[p] Connexion, par. 2. B. 2. p. 140.
[q] Hist. l. 3. in initio.
[r] Antiqu. l. 13. c. 3. sect. 1.
[s] Vid. Joseph. Antiqu. l. 12. c. 4. sect. 1.

up a mount, and take the most fenced cities, &c.] That is, Antiochus the great, king of Syria, should come into Cœlesyria and Phœnicia, which was the part of the kingdom of Egypt he was to have by the league with Philip king of Macedon; and this is a prophecy of his expedition into those parts, and the success of it. Scopas, a general of Ptolemy, being sent by him into Cœlesyria, had took many of the cities of it, and the land of Judea; but Antiochus, coming into those parts with his army, beat Scopas at the fountains of Jordan, and destroyed great part of his forces, and retook the cities of Cœlesyria Scopas had made himself master of, and subdued Samaria; upon which the Jews voluntarily submitted to him, and received him into their city, as Josephus [t] relates; and Polybius [u], as quoted by him, says, that Scopas being conquered by Antiochus, he took Batanea, Samaria, Abila, and Gadara, and that the Jews in a little time surrendered to him; and so Livy says [w], that Antiochus reduced all the cities that Ptolemy had in Cœlesyria into subjection to him; and these are the most fenced cities pointed at in this prophecy, against which the king of Syria cast up mounts, in order to take them; or placed battering-engines before them, as the word also signifies, as Kimchi observes [x], by which stones were cast into the besieged cities: *and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand;* all the forces of the king of Egypt mustered together would not be able to withstand the power of Antiochus, who would, as he did, carry all before him; not their most powerful armies, nor most courageous generals, nor valiant soldiers, the choicest of them, nor any auxiliaries called in to their assistance; for when Scopas was beat by Antiochus at Jordan, he fled to Sidon with ten thousand soldiers, where he was shut up in a close siege; and though Ptolemy sent his famous and choicest commanders to his relief, Eropus, Menocles, and Damoxenus, as Jerom relates; yet they were not able to raise the siege, but by famine were forced to surrender; and he and his men were dismissed naked.

Ver. 16. *But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him,* &c.] Antiochus the great, who came against Ptolemy king of Egypt, would do in those parts where he came as he pleased; take cities, and dispose of them at his pleasure; the army of the king of Egypt not being able to oppose him, and stop his conquests in Cœlesyria and Phœnicia: nor should they hinder his entrance into Judea: *and he shall stand in the glorious land:* Judea, so called, not only because of its fertility, but chiefly because of the worship of God in it; here Antiochus stood as a victorious conqueror; the Jews readily submitting to him, and received him into their city, and assisted him in reducing the castle where Scopas had placed a garrison of soldiers: *which by his hand shall be consumed:* by his numerous army, and the foraging of his soldiers, eating up and destroying the fruits of the earth wherever they came; otherwise the land of Judea, and the inhabitants of it, were not consumed and destroyed by him at this time; but rather brought into more flourishing circumstances, having many favours and privileges bestowed on them by him, on account of the respect they shewed him; for, on his coming to Jerusalem, the priests and elders went out to meet him, and gladly received him and his army, and furnished him with horses and elephants, and helped him in reducing the garrison Scopas had left [y], as before observed: hence some render the words, *which by his hand was perfected* [z]; restored to perfect peace and prosperity, which had been for some years harassed and distressed by the Egyptians and Syrians, in their turns being masters of it; the elders, priests, and Levites, he freed from tribute, gave them leave to live according to their own laws, granted them cattle and other things for sacrifice, and wood for the repairing and perfecting of their temple. The letters he wrote on this account are to be seen in Josephus [a].

Ver. 17. *He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom,* &c.] Antiochus, having conquered Cœlesyria, Phœnicia, and Judea, should set his face towards the land of Egypt, having a greedy desire after it, and bend his mind and forces that way; form a design of invading it, and for that purpose determine to bring all the forces he could muster together throughout his dominions. So Justin [b] says, that upon the death of Ptolemy Philopator, Antiochus king of Syria determined to seize on Egypt. The Vulgate Latin version is, *that he might come to lay hold on his whole kingdom;* to seize the whole kingdom of the king of Egypt: *and upright ones with him;* meaning, as many think, the Jews, so called to distinguish them from the Heathens, and even from those Jews who had took on the side of Ptolemy, and had changed their religion; but these persevered in it, which Antiochus approved of; and had now a great opinion of them, and had bestowed many favours upon them, as before observed; wherefore he might take some of them, and they might choose to go with him on this expedition, and especially to assist in his intended agreement with the king of Egypt, and the marriage of his daughter to him; in bringing about which they were to have a concern, as being reckoned men of probity and uprightness: or rather the sense is, according to the Vulgate Latin version, *and he shall do right things;* in shew and appearance: or *he shall make agreement,* or peace, as Aben Ezra; enter into covenants of alliance and marriage, upon securing just conditions, with a great shew of sincerity and uprightness: *thus shall he do:* in the following manner: or, *and he shall do* [c]; that is, succeed in his proposals: *and he shall give him the daughter of women, corrupting her;* this was the stratagem he used; finding he could not obtain the kingdom of Egypt by force of arms, for fear of the Romans, who were the guardians of the king of Egypt, he proposed to give his daughter Cleopatra to him in marriage, a beautiful virgin; and therefore called the *daughter of women:* or rather because she was as yet

[t] Antiqu. l. 12. c. 3. sect. 3.
[u] Histor. l. 16. apud Joseph. ib.
[w] Hist. l. 33.
[x] Sepher Sharash. rad. סלל.
[y] Josephus, ut supra.

[z] ונכלה בידו & perficietur per eum, Grotius.
[a] Josephus, ut supra.
[b] E Trogo, l. 31. c. 1.
[c] ועשה & faciet, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Gejerus; efficietque, Junius & Tremellius.

under the care of the women she was first committed to, as Gussetius [d] observes; and so he did marry her, and gave for her dowry Cœlesyria, Samaria, Judea, and Phœnicia [e]: this was done at Raphia [f], a fortified city of Egypt, where the famous battle had been fought between him and Ptolemy Philopator; see ver. 10. and if the former clause is rendered, as I think it may, *he shall also set his face to enter into the fortress of the whole kingdom;* this is the place intended, where he was desirous of going to meet the king of Egypt, and execute this scheme of his; which, though done under a plausible pretence of peace, and of putting an end to their quarrels, was with a view to get his kingdom into his hands; *corrupting* his daughter to betray the counsels of her husband; or to put him to death by poison, or otherwise, that he might seize the kingdom on her behalf: or it may be rendered, to *corrupt* or *destroy it* [g], the kingdom; he married his daughter to the king of Egypt with this view, to obtain the kingdom from him: *but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him;* being married, she forgot her own people, and her father's house, and cleaved to her husband; took his part, and not her father's, yea, took part with her husband against her father; for ambassadors were sent out of Egypt by both her husband and herself, congratulating the Romans on the victory Acilius gained over Antiochus her father, and that he had drove him out of Greece, exhorting them to carry their army into Asia [h]; and thus he was disappointed of his design in this marriage: and this may be the meaning of the expression here; for it may be rendered, *it shall not stand* [i]; his counsel shall not stand, his scheme shall not take place, but fall to the ground, and come to nothing: *and it shall not be for him;* the kingdom shall not be his, he shall never possess it, as he did not.

Ver. 18. *After this he shall turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many,* &c.] Finding himself disappointed in his design on the kingdom of Egypt, he turned his face, and steered his course another way, and with a large fleet sailed into the Ægean sea; and, as Jerom relates, took Rhodes, Samos, Colophon, and Phocea, and many other islands; and also several cities of Greece and Asia, which lay on the sea-coasts; it being usual with the Jews to call such maritime places islands: *but a prince for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease;* the reproach that Antiochus cast upon the Romans, by seizing on their provinces, taking their cities, doing injuries to their allies, and treating their ambassadors with contempt: this the Romans wiped off by taking up arms against him, and gaining victories over him both by sea and land. The *prince* here may design the Romans in general, who, on their own behalf, or for their own honour, sent out armies and fleets against him, to put a stop to his insults over them; or some particular leader and commander of theirs, not a king, but a general or admiral, as Marcus Acilius, who beat him at the straits of Thermopylæ; also Livius Salinator, who got the victory over his fleet about Phocea, where he sunk ten of his ships, and took thirteen; likewise Æmilius Regillus, who got the better of his fleet at Myonnesus, near Ephesus; and especially Lucius Scipio, who, in a land-fight, beat him at Mount Siphylus, with an army of thirty thousand against seventy thousand, killed fifty thousand foot of Antiochus's army, and four thousand horse, and took fourteen hundred prisoners, with fifteen elephants and their commanders [k], and so drove him out of lesser Asia: *without his own reproach he shall cause it to turn upon him;* without any reproach to the Roman general; the reproach which Antiochus cast upon the Roman nation was turned upon his own head, by the many victories obtained over him by sea and land, and especially by the last and total defeat of him; for no other terms of peace could he obtain, but to pay all the expenses of the war, quit all Asia on that side Taurus, and give hostages, and his own son was one, 1 Maccab. i. 11.

Ver. 19. *Then he shall turn his face towards the fort of his own land,* &c.] After his defeat he fled with a few to Sardis, and from thence to Apamea, so Livy; and to Susa, and to the further parts of his dominions, as Jerom; or rather he betook himself to Antioch his capital city, called here *the fort of his own land,* where he was obliged to continue: *but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found;* the expenses of the war which Antiochus agreed to pay being reckoned at fifteen thousand Eubœan talents, five hundred talents were to be paid down; two thousand five hundred at the ratification of the treaty by the senate of Rome; and the other twelve thousand to be paid yearly, at a thousand talents each year: now, being either in want of money, or through covetousness, he attempted to rob the temple of Jupiter Elymæus, and went by night thither with his army for that purpose; but the thing being betrayed, the inhabitants got together, and slew him, with all his soldiers, as Justin [l] relates. Strabo [m] says, that Antiochus the great endeavouring to rob the temple of Bel, the barbarians near to (Elymais) rose of themselves, and slew him; and so never returned to Syria any more, but died in the province of Elymais, being slain by the Persians there, as related, and was never found more, or was buried; and this was the end of this great man, of whom so many things are said in this prophecy, and others follow concerning his successors. He died in the thirty-seventh year of his reign, and the fifty-second of his age [n].

Ver. 20. *Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom,* &c.] This was not Antiochus Epiphanes, as Theodoret, he is designed in the next verse; nor Ptolemy Epiphanes; as Porphyry, for he did not succeed Antiochus the great; nor Tryphon, tutor to Antiochus, as some Jewish writers; but Seleucus Philopator, the eldest son of Antiochus the great; who succeeded him, and was settled in his kingdom in his father's room, and stood upon his basis; and might well be called a raiser of taxes, being not only a covetous man, and a lover of money above all things; and therefore laid heavy taxes on his subjects, to gratify

[d] Ebr. Comment. p. 548.
[e] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 12. c. 4. sect. 1.
[f] Liv. Hist. l. 35. c. 13. p. 597.
[g] להשחיתה ad corrumpendam illam, Montanus, Gejerus.
[h] Liv. ibid. l. 37. c. 3. p. 632.
[i] לא תעמוד & non succedet hoc, Grotius.
[k] See Liv. Hist. l. 36. & 37.
[l] E Trogo, l. 32. c. 2.
[m] Geograph. l. 16. p. 512.
[n] See the Universal History, vol. 9. p. 270.

his avarice; but was indeed obliged to it, to raise the thousand talents yearly to pay the Romans, which his father had laid himself under obligation to do; and this took up the whole life of this his successor; for as there were twelve thousand talents to pay, a thousand each year, and Seleucus reigned in all but twelve years at most, he did nothing but raise taxes yearly to pay this tribute. It may be rendered, *then shall stand upon his basis*: or, *in his room*, as the Vulgate Latin version, in the room of Antiochus the great, *one that causes the exactors to pass through the glory of the kingdom*[*]; that causes tax-gatherers to go through the kingdom, and collect the tax of the people, who are the glory of the kingdom, especially the rich, the nobility, and gentry; or money, which is the glory of a nation: or, *shall cause the exactors to pass over to the glory of the kingdom*; that is, cause a tax-gatherer to go over from Syria to the glorious land, or the glorious part of his dominion, the land of Judea; and so may have respect particularly to Heliodorus his treasurer, whom he sent to Jerusalem to demand the treasure of money he heard was laid up in the temple there; see 2 Maccab. iii. 7: *but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle*: or, *within a few years*, as Grotius and Prideaux render it; *days* being often put for years. Seleucus reigned but twelve years at most, which were but few in comparison of the long reign of his father, which was a reign of thirty-seven years; and he died not through the rage of the populace, or through the sedition and rebellion of his subjects, nor in war, with a foreign enemy; but through the treachery of Heliodorus his treasurer, by whom he was poisoned, as is supposed; either for the sake of Antiochus Epiphanes, who was at that very time returning from Rome, where he had been an hostage ever since the defeat of his father, the money being now paid, which was stipulated; or rather on his own account, having a design to seize the kingdom for himself.

Ver. 21. *And in his estate shall stand up a vile person*, &c.] Upon his basis or stand, in the same place where Seleucus Philopator stood, succeeded Antiochus Epiphanes his brother, called *vile*, being a very immoral man, given to drunkenness, lasciviousness, uncleanness, and unnatural lusts, and a violent persecutor of the church of God. The word signifies *despicable*[†]; he was a vile person, and justly contemned for his vices, and also for that mean and ignoble life he had lived at Rome, having been an hostage there for eleven or twelve years; and though the other hostages were changed at three years' end, yet he remained; which shews what little account he was of even with his father; and was in no esteem with the people, among whom, by his freaks and frolics, he made himself very ridiculous; by rambling about streets with a servant or two; conversing with tradesmen about their trades; drinking with strangers, and people of low life; revelling at merry bouts with young people; putting on strange habits; throwing away his money among the rabble, and stones at those that followed him; washing at public baths among the common people; all which, and many others, are reported[‡] of him by historians; hence he was called by some Epimanes the madman; though he took to himself the title of Epiphanes the *illustrious*, the reverse of his character. This is the little horn in ch. viii. 9. and who was an eminent type of antichrist, with whom his character agrees, as well as other things: *to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom*; neither his father, nor his brother, nor the peers and people of the land of the kingdom of Syria; they never once thought of making him king; they neither chose him, nor called him, nor crowned him: *but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries*; pretending to take it, not for himself, but for his nephew Demetrius, the son of his brother Seleucus, now an hostage at Rome, in his stead; so that the states opposed him not, but quietly admitted him, thinking all was safe for the rightful heir and successor; and when he had got possession for his nephew, he obtained it for himself by his flattering speeches to the nobles, and his gifts among the citizens, and his great pretensions to clemency and humanity; or these *flatteries* may refer to the artifices he used to gain Eumenes king of Pergamus, and Attalus his brother, to assist him against Heliodorus the usurper; and the promises of friendship and assistance against the Romans he made to them, and by whose help he came peaceably to the kingdom.

Ver. 22. *And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflown from before him, and shall be broken*, &c.] That is, by the help of the forces of Eumenes and Attalus, which were like an inundation of water, the party that were on the side of Heliodorus the usurper were bore down, crushed, and destroyed; and thereby Antiochus had a peaceable settlement in the kingdom: or, *the arms of a flood shall be overflowed from before him, and be broken*[§]; either the arms of Heliodorus, the forces he had got together; or the armies of the Egyptians, which, like an overflowing flood, had used to run over Judea, Cœlesyria, Phœnicia, and other places, and carry all before them, now should be overflowed, and bore down themselves; of which see more on ver. 25: *yea, also the prince of the covenant*; which some understand of Judas Maccabæus, as Jerom and Jacchiades; others more probably of Onias the high-priest, whom Antiochus deposed in the first year of his reign, and sold the priesthood to Jason his younger brother for 440 talents of silver; and who also promised to give him 150 more for a licence to erect a place of exercise for the training up of youth, according to the fashion of the Greeks; which Antiochus greedily embraced, the public treasury being empty through the large tribute paid to the Romans the last twelve years; see 2 Maccab. iv. 7, 8, 9, 34, 35. Others think Seleucus Philopator his brother is meant, which is not probable, his death being before described; rather Demetrius his nephew, with whom he covenanted to hold the kingdom for him, or through whom the co-

[*] ועמד על כנו מעביר נוגש הדר מלכות stabit autem super basi illius, qui transire faciet exactorem per decus regni, Michaelis.

[†] נבזה despectus, Pagninus, Montanus; contemptus, Vatablus, Piscator, Tigurine version.

[‡] See Prideaux's Connexion, par. 2. B. 3. p. 153, 154, out of Athenæus, Diodorus, &c. and the Universal History, vol. 9. p. 276, 277, 289, 290.

[§] וזרעות השטף ישטפו & brachia inundationis inundabuntur, Cocceius, Michaelis; brachia inundantia, Piscator.

venant and peace with the Romans was continued so long, he being an hostage at Rome; though others are of opinion that Trypho, a peer of the realm of Egypt, is designed, who was the principal person concerned in a covenant made between Antiochus and Ptolemy Philometor king of Egypt; though it is more likely that Ptolemy himself is the person pointed at.

Ver. 23. *And after the league made with him,* &c.] The prince of the covenant; either Demetrius his nephew, or Ptolemy Philometor king of Egypt, with whom a league was made in the life-time of Cleopatra, the sister of Antiochus, and mother of Ptolemy: *he shall work deceitfully;* either with the princes and people of Syria, by good words and fair speeches, and by gifts and presents, to get the kingdom for himself, though he had covenanted with his nephew to hold it for him, and resign it to him at his return; and with the Romans, and among his friends in the senate, he artfully worked to detain him at Rome: or else with the king of Egypt, pretending great friendship to him, and to take the care and tuition of him during his minority; and at his coronation he sent one Apollonius to be present at it, and to congratulate him upon it; see 2 Maccab. iv. 21: *for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people;* either he went into the heart of Syria with a small number of men at first, and gathered together a large army; or into Phœnicia with a handful of men, where he ingratiated himself into the affections of the people by words and gifts, and became strong; or he went up into Egypt accompanied only with a few, lest the Egyptians should be suspicious of him; but these 'tis said were valiant men, whom he placed in the forts of Egypt, and so became master of it, which is an instance of his deceitful working: and Sutorius, an ancient historian, as quoted by Jerom, says that he subdued Egypt to himself with a very small number of people.

Ver. 24. *He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province,* &c.] Or, *into tranquillity, and the fattest places of the province*[s]; that is, into such places as were in great tranquillity, and men thought themselves safe and secure, and had no suspicion of his designs upon them, and which abounded in wealth and riches: these were either the principal cities in the kingdom of Syria, which he visited in order to establish himself in their good opinion of him; or the chief places of the province of Phœnicia, where he endeavoured to make himself acceptable by his munificence; or it may be the best parts of the kingdom of Egypt are meant, the richest of them, such as Memphis, and the places about it; where, as Sutorius in Jerom says, he went; and which places being fat, producing a large increase, and abounding in wealth, invited him thither; and which wealth he took, and scattered among his friends and soldiers, as in a following clause: *and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers;* none of his ancestors, more near or more remote; not Antiochus the great, nor Seleucus Ceraunus, nor Seleucus Callinicus, nor Antiochus Theos, nor Antiochus Soter, nor Seleucus Nicator, the founder of the Syrian empire; for, however greater these might be in power or riches, they were inferior to him in success; though they all, or most of them, however, had their eye upon Egypt, and would gladly have been masters of it; yet none of the kings of Syria prevailed over it, as Antiochus did; and this may also refer to what follows: *he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches:* which he took from the fat places or rich cities he entered into; and these he plentifully and liberally dispersed among his followers, his soldiers, *the small people* he became strong with, ver. 23. whereby he gained their affections, and attached them to his interest; and in this his liberality and munificence he is said to abound above all the kings that were before him, 1 Maccab. iii. 30. and the character Josephus[t] gives of him is, that he was a man of a large and liberal heart: *yea, and he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds;* the fortresses of Egypt; as he got into the fat and richest parts of it, and distributed the wealth of them among his favourites and followers, which answered a good purpose; so he had his eye upon the fortified places of the kingdom, and contrived ways and means to get them into his possession, as Pelusium, and other places; and how to keep them when he had got them, which he did: *even for a time;* till Ptolemy Philometor was at age, and freed himself from him; or till the Romans[u] put a stop to his power.

Ver. 25. *And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army,* &c.] That is, Antiochus shall arouse himself, and exert his courage, and gather a large and powerful army, and set out with them to fight with Ptolemy Philometor, king of Egypt; this is his second expedition into Egypt, as is observed, 2 Maccab. v. 1. before he went into Egypt more privately, with a few men, under a pretence of friendship; but now more openly as an enemy, with a large army; so it is said in 1 Maccab. i. 18. *and he entered into Egypt with a great multitude, with chariots, and with elephants, and with horses, and with a great fleet;* which account exactly agrees with this prophecy, and serves to illustrate it: *and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army;* this is Ptolemy Philometor, king of Egypt, who, hearing of the preparations of Antiochus, and of his design to enter his kingdom, gathered a large army together to give him battle: *but he shall not stand;* the king of Egypt could not stand against Antiochus; the two armies met beween Mount Casius and Pelusium, where they came to a battle, and Antiochus got the victory: upon his second victory over the forces of Ptolemy, he took Pelusium, and led his army into the very heart of the kingdom, and had it in his power to have cut off all the Egyptians, to a man; he made himself master of Memphis, and all the rest of Egypt, except Alexandria, which held out against him[w]: *for they shall forecast devices against him;* Antiochus, and those that assisted him with their counsels, formed schemes against Ptolemy, which succeeded: the loss of the battle was not owing to want of the necessary preparations for it; or to an insufficient number of men; or to a defect of military skill and

[s] בשלוה ובמשמני in quietem & in pinguia, Montanus; in tranquillitatem & opima, Cocceius; in tranquillitatem & in pinguissima, Michaelis.

[t] Antiqu. l. 12. c. 7. sect. 2.

[u] Vid. Joseph. Antiqu. l. 12. c. 5. sect. 2.

[w] See the Universal History, vol. 9. p. 280, 281.

courage; but to the treachery of his own courtiers and commanders, particularly Eulæus and Lennæus, to whom the blame was laid, and to the desertion of Ptolemy Macron: which is more clearly expressed in the following verse.

Ver. 26. *Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him*, &c.] Those of his own household, his familiar friends, his courtiers and counsellors, and the generals of his army; his destruction, or the loss of the battle, was owing either to the bad counsels they gave him, or to their desertion of him, being corrupted by Antiochus: *and his army shall overflow*; that is, the army of Antiochus, like a mighty inundation of water, which carries all before it, should overflow, or bear down and destroy, the army of Ptolemy, and overrun all Egypt, as it did, as before related; no more resistance being to be made to it than to a rapid flood of water: *and many shall fall down slain*: of the army of the king of Egypt. The account given of this affair in 1 Maccab. i. 19, is, *that Ptolemy was afraid of him* (Antiochus), *and fled, and many wounded fell: and they seized the fortified cities in the land of Egypt, and took the spoils of the land of Egypt*. Josephus says*, that Antiochus, "being with a great army at Pelusium, and "circumventing Ptolemy Philometor by fraud, seized "on Egypt; and being in the parts near to Memphis, "and taking it, he hastened to Alexandria to besiege "it, and got Ptolemy, reigning there, into his hands."

Ver. 27. *And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief*, &c.] Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, and Ptolemy Philometor, king of Egypt, the latter being now in the hands of the former; whether he was taken by him, or voluntarily came to him, is not certain; but though they seemed to carry it very friendly to one another, yet at the same time they were contriving in their minds to do as much mischief to each other as they could: *and they shall speak lies at one table*; at an entertainment at Memphis, where they met to eat food together, which shews great familiarity; or at the council-table, where they pretended to consult each other's good, and to secure the peace of both kingdoms, but imposed on each other with lies. Antiochus pretended a great respect for Ptolemy, and that he had nothing more at heart than to take care of his affairs, and defend him against his brother Euergetes, whom the Alexandrians had set up for king; when his design was no other than to seize the kingdom of Egypt for himself: on the other hand, Ptolemy seemed greatly satisfied with his uncle's protection, and to place great confidence in him; when his view was to disappoint his scheme, and come to an agreement with his brother; neither of them meant what they said: *but it shall not prosper*; the consultations they held, the schemes they laid, succeeded not; the peace made between them did not last: *for yet the end shall be at the time appointed*: by the Lord, by whom all events are predetermined; whose counsel shall stand, notwithstanding all the devices in the hearts of men, and of kings themselves: the end of this peace between these two kings, and the end of the wars between them, yea, the end of the two kingdoms, when they should cease, and come into other hands; all was fixed to a time appointed of God, and should surely come to pass, as he had decreed.

Ver. 28. *Then shall he return into his land with great riches*, &c.] That is, Antiochus, with the spoils of Egypt, and the gifts and presents he had received there; so the author of the first book of Maccabees says, ch. i. 20, 21. *he took the spoils of the land of Egypt, and Antiochus returned after he had smote Egypt, in the hundred and forty-third year*; that is, of the era of the Selucidæ, and the fifth or sixth year of his reign: *and his heart shall be against the holy covenant*; not the covenant he had made with Ptolemy, which was a fraudulent one; but the covenant between God and the Jews; whereby they became a distinct and peculiar people, having a religion, laws, and ordinances, different from all others; for which reason they were hated by other nations, and particularly by Antiochus; and his heart was the more enraged against them at this time, for the following reason; a false rumour being spread in Judea that Antiochus was dead, Jason took the opportunity to recover the office of high-priest from his brother Menelaus; and, with a thousand men, took the city of Jerusalem, drove his brother into the castle, and slew many he took for his enemies. Antiochus, hearing of this, concluded the whole nation of the Jews had revolted from him; and therefore took Judea in his way from Egypt, in order to suppress this rebellion; see 2 Maccab. v. 5, 6, 11. *and he shall do exploits*; in Jerusalem, very wicked ones indeed! he ordered his soldiers to slay all they met, without mercy, old and young, women and children, virgins and young men; and in three days' time eighty thousand were slain, forty thousand bound, and no less sold: he went into the temple, and took all the vessels in it, and all the gold and silver, and hidden treasures of it, to the value of a thousand and eight hundred talents, 2 Maccab. v. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 21. 1 Maccab. i. 23, 24, 25: *and return to his own land*; having done these exploits, he made what haste he could to Antioch, with the spoils of Egypt, and the plunder of the temple at Jerusalem, 1 Maccab. i. 24. 2 Maccab. v. 21.

Ver. 29. *At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south*, &c.] At the time appointed of God, he should return from Syria again to Egypt; which was his third expedition thither, and was occasioned by the Alexandrians setting up the brother of Ptolemy Philometor for king; wherefore he hastened to Egypt with a large army, under a pretence of restoring the deposed king; but in reality to seize the kingdom for himself[f]: *but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter*; this expedition should not succeed so well as the two former, as it did not; he could not carry his point, neither subdue Egypt, nor get any of the two brothers into his hands, as he had done before; the reason of which follows:

Ver. 30. *For the ships of Chittim shall come against him*, &c.] Ptolemy king of Egypt, and his brother, being come to an agreement, sent an embassy to the senate of Rome, to implore their help and assistance against Antiochus, who was preparing to besiege them in Alexandria; upon which they sent their am-

* Antiqu. l. 12. c. 5. sect. 2.

[f] See the Universal History, vol. 9. p. 267, 409.

bassadors Caius Popilius Lænas, Caius Decimus, and Caius Hostilius, in ships from Macedonia [z], or Greece, to Antiochus, to require him to desist from making war upon Ptolemy, and that he quit the land of Egypt; see Numb. xxiv. 24. Macedonia is called the land of Cittim, 1 Maccab. i. 1. and viii. 5. Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Saadiah, and Jacchiades, interpret it of the Romans; and, according to Gorionides [a], Cittim are the Romans; and Jerom here interprets them of them; and Bochart has proved at large [b] that they are meant. The word seems to be used both of Grecians and Romans, and here of Romans in Grecian ships: *therefore he shall be grieved, and return;* being obliged to it, sore against his will: as soon as he saw Popilius, with whom he had contracted a friendship whilst he was an hostage at Rome, he offered his hand to kiss; but Popilius refused it, and observed that private friendship should give way to public interest; and then produced the decree of the senate, and delivered it to him, and required his answer; but Antiochus delaying, telling him he would consult his friends, Popilius, with a rod in his hand, drew a circle round him, and bid him consult his friends directly; adding that he should not stir from that circle till he had given a positive answer; which roughness struck him, and, hesitating a little, he replied he would obey the senate, as Justin [c], Livy [d], Velleius Paterculus [e], and other historians, relate; and upon which he at once departed with his army, though fretted and vexed to the last degree: *and have indignation against the holy covenant;* the Jews, God's covenant-people; on whom he gratified his revenge, sending Apollonius, with an army of twenty-two thousand men, to whom he gave orders to slay the men, and sell the women and children; and who committed many outrages in the city and temple: now it was the daily sacrifice was made to cease, and the abomination of desolation set up, as in the following verse, and all that done predicted in ch. viii. 10, 11, 12. this was two years after his former expedition into Egypt, and the havoc he made upon his return from thence, and in the eighth year of his reign, and 145th of the Seleucidæ; see 1 Maccab. i. 30. 2 Maccab. v. 24: *so shall he do;* such wicked deeds as before declared, in his wrath and fury against the Jews, being provoked at his disappointment in Egypt: *he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant;* apostate Jews, who had renounced their religion, forsook the law of God, and the ordinances of his worship, and turned Heathens; of whom it is said, agreeably to the language of this prophecy, and seemingly with a view to it, that *they made themselves uncircumcised, and departed from the holy covenant,* 1 Maccab. i. 16. with these Antiochus kept an intelligence, and held a correspondence, in order not only to know the affairs of the Jews from time to time, but to draw them off from their religion, and propagate Heathenism among them; such as Jason, Menelaus, and others; see 1 Maccab. i. 12, 13, 14, 15, 43, 44, 45.

Ver. 31. *And arms shall stand on his part, &c.*] Powerful armies sent by him into Judea; garrisons of soldiers placed in Jerusalem; mighty generals and commanders who fought for him, as Lysias, Philip the Phrygian, Andronicus, Apollonius, Bacchides, and others: *and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength;* the temple, which stood in Jerusalem, a fortified city, and was itself a building strong and stable; and especially it was so called, because here the mighty God had his residence, the symbol of which was the ark of his strength, and here he gave strength unto his people: this holy place, sacred to his worship and service, the commanders and soldiers of Antiochus defiled by entering into it, who were men unholy and unclean; by making it a place of luxury and rioting, of whoredom, and all manner of uncleanness; by bringing things into it which were not lawful, and filling the altar with what was abominable, 2 Maccab. vi. 4, 5. particularly by erecting a high place upon the altar, and sacrificing swine upon it, as Josephus [f] relates; with which agrees what is said of Antiochus, 1 Maccab. i. 49, 50. he ordered "the holy place and holy people "to be defiled, and to build altars, temples, and places "for idolatry, and to offer swine's flesh and unclean "cattle:" *and shall take away the daily sacrifice;* the sacrifice of the lamb in the morning, and in the evening, which the priests were hindered from offering, by the crowds of Heathens in the temple; or prohibited by the order of Antiochus; for he forbad burnt-offerings, sacrifice, and libation, to be made in the temple, 1 Maccab. i. 47. and Josephus [g] expressly says, that he forbad the daily sacrifices to be offered, which were used to be offered to God, according to the law: *and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate;* either a garrison of Heathen soldiers in the temple, which drove the priests and people from it, and made it desolate; or rather an idol in it, it being usual in Scripture to call idols abominations, as they are to God and all good men; the image of Jupiter Olympius, as is thought, which was placed upon the altar of God by Antiochus, on the fifteenth day of the month Cisleu, in the hundred and forty-fifth year of the Seleucidæ, and is called the abomination of desolation, 1 Maccab. i. 57. and the temple itself was ordered to be called the temple of Jupiter Olympius, 2 Maccab. vi. 2. and what with this and other things that were done, the temple and city were left desolate; for it is said, "Jerusalem was un-"inhabited as a desert; there were none that went "in or out, of its children; and the holy place was "trodden down; and the sons of strangers were in the "tower, and it became a habitation for Gentiles," 1 Maccab. iii. 45. it may be rendered, *the abomination that maketh astonished* [h]; for it struck the people of the Jews with astonishment; it amazed and stupified them, when they saw such an idol placed in their temple. The Karaite Jews, who by the others are called Sadducees, give a very foreign interpretation of this passage, which Aben Ezra observes: "it is marvellous "(says he) that the wise men of the Sadducees should

[z] Vid. Liv. Hist. l. 45. c. 10.
[a] Heb. Hist. l. 1. c. 1. p. 7.
[b] Phaleg. l. 3. c. 5.
[c] E Trogo, l. 34. c. 2, 3.
[d] Hist. l. 45. c. 12.
[e] Roman. Histor. l. 1.
[f] Antiqu. l. 12. c. 5. sect. 4.
[g] Ibid.
[h] השקוץ משומם abominationem obstupefacientem, Montanus; quæ obstupefaciet, Calvin.

" explain this of future time, and say that this sanc-" tuary is Mecca, where the Ishmaelites or Turks keep " a feast; *the daily sacrifice*, to be removed, their " five prayers; and the *abomination* set up is their " idolatrous worship." Sir Isaac Newton understands all this of the Romans, and their building a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus, where the temple in Jerusalem had stood.

Ver. 32. *And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall be corrupted by flatteries*, &c.] That forsook the law of God, the book of the covenant, and did things contrary to it; and particularly violated the covenant of circumcision, drawing on the foreskin, and becoming uncircumcised; as well as rejected other ordinances of religious worship the Jews by covenant were obliged to observe: these apostates Antiochus corrupted by good words and fair speeches, by gifts and presents; and they became his tools, to do his pleasure, and were his instruments to seduce the Jews to renounce their religion, and give in to his idolatry; such as Jason, Menelaus, and others; see 1 Maccab. i. 16. 2 Maccab. iv. 13. and v. 15. and vi. 21: *but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits*; such who knew the Lord God of Israel to be the true God, and owned and acknowledged him as such; and not only professed him, but served and worshipped him, having a spiritual knowledge of him, and communion with him; and therefore could not be drawn off from him and his worship by flatteries or frowns, by promises or menaces: these were strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; they held fast their religion, and the profession of it, and were proof against all allurements or threatenings, and endured racks and tortures, all sorts of punishment, and death in every shape, with the greatest constancy and courage; such as Eleazar, the mother and her seven sons, and others; as well as others did many valiant actions in the defence of themselves and country, as Mattathias, Judas Maccabæus, and his brethren: to which heroic actions the apostle refers in Heb. xi. 34—37. so Josephus[1] says, " that many of the Jews " indeed, some willingly, and others through fear of " punishment, obeyed the king's commands; but the " more approved, and those of generous minds, had " a greater regard to the customs of their country " than to the punishment threatened to the disobe-" dient; and for this being continually harassed, and " enduring grievous punishments, died; some were " scourged, and their bodies mutilated, and being yet " alive and breathing, were crucified; women and " their children, whom they crucified, were by the " king's orders strangled, and hanged about the necks " of their parents that were crucified;" see 1 Maccab. i. 63, 64, 65, 66.

Ver. 33. *And they that understand among the people shall instruct many*, &c.] Such as had a better understanding of divine things than others, had more light and knowledge in the sacred Scriptures, in the law of God, and in his mind and will, and were capable of teaching others; and such as these the Lord raises up among his people in the worst of times, in the times of the greatest apostacy and declension; and these are enabled to perform their duty, to instruct the people in theirs, teach them what they should do, and how they should behave; exhort them to retain the doctrines and ordinances of their holy religion, and not embrace the doctrines and inventions of men, will-worship, superstition, and idolatry; and so they instructed the ignorant, strengthened the weak, and established the wavering; such were Mattathias the priest of Modin, and Eleazar, one of the chief scribes, 1 Maccab. ii. 1. 2 Maccab. vi. 18. Cocceius applies this to the times of the apostles, who he thinks are here meant; so Sir Isaac Newton: *yet they shall fall by the sword*; by the sword of Antiochus and his soldiers; as multitudes of the Jews did, even both the instructors and the instructed, who would not comply with his orders: *and by flame*; some were burnt alive in caves, where they fled for shelter; and others, as the mother and her seven sons, were cast into heated caldrons of brass; see 2 Maccab. vi. 11. and vii. 3, 5: *by captivity*; so it is expressly said of Antiochus, that he carried captive women and children; and at another time ordered the women and children to be sold for slaves, 1 Maccab. i. 33. 2 Maccab. v. 24: *and by spoil* many *days*; being plundered of their substance, their houses rifled, and their goods carried away; and this distress lasted *days*, a short time only; Josephus[2] reckons it at three years and a half. All this Cocceius interprets of the persecutions of the Christians by the Romans; and likewise Sir Isaac Newton.

Ver. 34. *Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help*, &c.] When the Jews shall be thus harassed and distressed by Antiochus and his armies, to the ruin of many, by the several sorts of punishments inflicted on them; they should be helped and eased a little by Mattathias, a priest of Modin, and his five sons, commonly called the Maccabees; Porphyry himself interprets this of Mattathias: now the help and assistance which he and his sons gave to the Jews was but *little*; if we consider they were persons of a small figure, began with a handful of men, and could do but little, especially at first; and though great exploits were done by them, considering their number and strength, yet they were not able to restore the land to its former glory and liberty; nor did this help of theirs last long, but the enemy returned with great fierceness and cruelty, and sadly afflicted the people of the Jews. Cocceius understands this of the help the Christians had under Constantius Chlorus, and Constantine the great; and so does Sir Isaac Newton, who agrees with him in interpreting this and the preceding verse: he interprets *arms*, in ver. 31, of the Romans, and so Jacchiades; and makes this to be the beginning of the fourth kingdom that should *stand*, ממנו, *after him*; that is, after Antiochus; so the particle, he observes, is used in ver. 8. and it must be owned this is the sense in which it is sometimes used, of which Noldius[1] has given *instances*: and this seems to agree with the thread of history, and introduces the Romans, who must have a place in this prophecy,

[1] Antiqu. l. 12. c. 5. sect. 4.
[2] De Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 1. sect. 7.

[1] Concord. Part. Ebr. p. 527.

in a very proper manner; and carries on the account of things, through the times of Christ, his apostles, the first ages of Christianity under persecution, until the rise of antichrist, ver. 36. and throws light upon the text in Matt. xxiv. 15. the language of which seems best to agree with ver. 31. and, if so, must respect something to be done, not in the times of Antiochus, but after the times of Christ. *But many shall cleave to them with flatteries;* seeing Mattathias and his sons succeed, some of those, who had been apostates from their religion, or not heartily friends to it, joined them, but not sincerely; pretended to be on their side, and commended their bravery and courage; and being ambitious of honour and fame, took with them, in order to share the glory of their actions; such were Joseph the son of Zachariah, and Azarias, 1 Maccab. v. 56, 57. and those under whose clothes were found idols, or what belonged to them, at Jamnia, when they were slain, 2 Maccab. xii. 40. and Rhodocus, a soldier of the Jewish army, who betrayed their secrets, 2 Maccab. xiii. 21. Cocceius applies this to antichrist and his followers pretending to be for Christ and his church, but were not.

Ver. 35. *And* some *of them of understanding shall fall,* &c.] Not into sin, or from the religion they profess, and the doctrines they have an understanding of, and have instructed others in; but into distresses and calamities for their steadfast adherence to the word, worship, and ordinances of God: *to try them, and purge and make* them *white;* to try their faith, patience, and other graces, and whether they would hold fast their profession, and persevere in the good ways of God; and to purge and separate them from others, that were like chaff, hypocrites, that so they might be manifest, both the one and the other; and these good men appear to be sincere and upright: moreover, the best of men have their dross, and chaff, and spots, to be removed from them; and this is one way of doing it, even by afflictions: the allusion, in the first word, is to the melting, purifying, and refining of metals, gold and silver; the second to the winnowing of a corn-floor, and separating the chaff from the wheat; and the third to the cleansing and whitening of cloths, and taking the spots out of them by the fuller. Afflictions are the furnace in which the Lord refines and purifies his people; the fan with which he purges his floor; and the fuller's soap with which he makes his people white; *by* all *this the iniquity of Jacob is purged,* and *the fruit* of it is *to take away sin,* Isa. xxvii. 9. so that afflictions are not hurtful, but beneficial to the saints, even those more violent ones, severe persecutions. Even *to the time of the end: because* it is *yet for a time appointed;* these distresses, calamities, and persecutions, would have an end, and the time for it was appointed of God; as yet it was not come, but quickly would, and then an end would be put to the third or Grecian monarchy; a hint of the Roman power over that being given, ver. 30. hence we have no further account of Antiochus or his sons. Very remarkable are the words of Æmilius Sura[m], "the Assyrians first "were possessors of monarchy; then the Medes; af- "terwards the Persians; then the Macedonians; from "that time the kings, Philip and Antiochus, who "sprung from the Macedonians, being conquered, not "long after Carthage was subdued, the supreme power "of empire came to the Roman people;" of whom, under one character or another, the following part of the prophecy is chiefly to be understood. So another historian says[n], Antiochus being drove out of Asia, the Romans first set footing there: and another[o] observes, that Antiochus being defeated by L. Cornelius Scipio, he took the name of Asiaticus, because he had conquered Asia; as his brother was called Africanus, from his subduing Africa: wherefore Asia and Africa being now in the hands of the Romans, the supreme power might well be said to be with them: and therefore, henceforward, are only spoken of, and particularly the Roman antichrist.

Ver. 36. *And the king shall do according to his will,* &c.] Not Antiochus, for he could not do as he would, being curbed by the Romans, as has been observed; and there are many things which follow that cannot be applied to him; rather the Roman people, under the name of a king or kingdom, rising up to universal monarchy, upon the decline of the Grecian empire, are meant; and who did what they would, subdued kingdoms at pleasure, and gave laws to the whole world; and particularly in the little horn, or Rome Papal; antichrist, ch. vii. 8, 20, 21, 25. of which Antiochus was a type, and is called by the same name, ch. viii. 9. and the transition is easy from the type to the antitype, with whom every thing said agrees: for the pope of Rome, claiming infallibility, does, or has done, whatsoever he pleases; regarding neither the laws of God nor man, but dispensing with both at his pleasure; coining new doctrines; appointing new ordinances; setting himself up above councils and princes; taking upon him a power to depose kings and set them up as he pleases; with many other things done by him in an arbitrary and despotic way, both civil and religious; and with none does the character agree as with him, as well as what follows: *and magnify himself above every god;* that is so called, whether angels whom he commands, or the kings of the earth he claims an authority over, those gods in heaven, and gods on earth; which is the exact description of antichrist, as given by the apostle, who has manifestly a reference to this passage, 2 Thess. ii. 4. see the note there: *and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods;* the true God, to whom angels and civil magistrates are subject, being his creatures, and acting under him; but such is the arrogance of the man of sin, that he takes upon him to speak against God, and such things as are astonishing; and it may be extremely wondered at that he should dare to speak them, as to call himself God on earth; to take such things to himself, which only belong to God, as by claiming all power in heaven, earth, and hell; power to bind the consciences of men, and impose what he pleases on them; to make new articles of faith; to pardon the sins of men; to open and shut the gates of heaven when he pleases; with other blasphemies against God,

[m] De annis populi Romani apud Velleii Paterculi Hist. Roman. l. 1. c. 6.

[n] Festi Breviarium, prope initium.

[o] Eutropii Hist. Rom. l. 4. So Plutarch. in Vita Scipionis Africani.

his mouth, given him to speak, utters; see Rev. xiii. 5, 6: *and shall prosper until the indignation be accomplished*; the wrath of God upon the Jewish nation for their rejection of the Messiah; until the time of their conversion is come; and then antichrist shall be destroyed, to make way for it; till that time he shall prosper and flourish, more or less, until the 1260 days or years are ended, the date of his reign, Rev. xi. 2, 3. and xiii. 5: *for that that is determined shall be done*; all the decrees and purposes of God shall be accomplished; all respecting the state and condition of the people of God under antichrist, particularly the people of the Jews, and concerning the reign and ruin of antichrist.

Ver. 37. *Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers*, &c.] Of the apostles of Christ, from whom he pretends to descend, and whose successor he would be thought to be: now their God was the Lord Jesus Christ, whom they worshipped and adored, believed in, embraced, professed, and preached; but whom antichrist disregards, though he would be thought to be his vicar on earth; yet slights him, yea, opposes and acts contrary to him, in his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, and therefore is rightly called antichrist: *nor the desire of women*; or, *wives*[y]; not desirous of having wives, or enjoying women in lawful marriage; but forbidding his priests to marry, as is notoriously a tenet of antichrist, and foretold by the apostle, in agreement to this prophecy, 1 Tim. iv. 3. otherwise, none more lustful or desirous of women in an unlawful way than the Romish priests: *nor regard any god*; either the true God, and his laws, or any god in a metaphorical sense, any king or potentate on earth; shewing no respect to any authority, or to any laws divine or human: *for he shall magnify himself above all*; above all gods, real or nominal, as in 2 Thess. ii. 4.

Ver. 38. *But in his estate shall he honour the god of forces*, &c.] Or god Mahuzzim[z]; departed saints and their images, whom the Papists make their protectors, defenders, and guardians: the word signifies towers, strong holds, fortresses; and by these titles the martyrs, saints departed, are called by the ancient fathers, who first introduced the worship of them. So Basil[a], speaking of the forty martyrs, says, "these are they, "who obtaining our country, like certain *towers*, afford "us a refuge against the incursion of enemies:"—and a little after thus addresses them, "O ye common keep- "ers of mankind, the best companions of our cares, "the suffragans of our prayers and wishes, *most power- "ful* ambassadors with God," &c.; and elsewhere[b] he prays, "that God would keep the church unmoved, "and fortified with the *great towers* of the martyrs;" so Chrysostom[c] calls them patrons and protectors. Or, *with God he shall honour*[d]; these along with him, or besides him; these shall be the objects of religious worship and honour, as they are: and that *in his estate*; or in his room and stead, that is, of the true God, our Lord Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and man; and yet angels and departed saints are set up as mediators in his stead: *and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour*; the host, the wafer, the breaden god, made a god by the words of a muttering priest; this is such a god as the apostles, and Peter particularly, from whom the popes of Rome pretend to derive their succession, never knew, nor once dreamed of; and yet this is received as a god, bowed unto, and worshipped, and honoured: *with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things*; with rich and costly ornaments, with which the pyxis or box, in which it is carried in procession, is adorned.

Ver. 39. *Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god*, &c.] Or, *in the strong holds of Mahuzzim*[e]; that is, in the temples, churches, and chapels, dedicated to angels and departed saints; deck and adorn their images with gold, silver, precious stones, and with desirable things, which is notorious; as well as commit the grossest idolatries with this strange breaden god; which they hold up in such places, cringe and bow to, and pay all religious worship and adoration to it: *whom he shall acknowledge, and increase with glory*; as really God; the wafer being transubstantiated into the very body and blood of Christ, as is said; and own it as such, as very God, and heap religious honour and glory upon it, which is due to Christ: *he shall cause them to rule over many*: that is, the Mahuzzim, the departed saints; one shall rule over England, and be the patron and defender of it, as St. George; another over Scotland, as St. Andrew; another over Ireland, as St. Patrick; another over France, as St. Dennis; another over Spain, as St. James: *and shall divide the land for gain*; or *price*[f]; the whole Romish jurisdiction, all antichristian states, which are divided among those tutelar saints; each of them have their proper country assigned them they are to defend; but this is not done without gain arising to the pope of Rome from those countries, as by first-fruits, annates, Peter's pence, &c.

Ver. 40. *And at the time of the end*, &c.] At the end of the time appointed of God, when antichrist is arrived to the height of his power and authority: *shall the king of the south push at him*; not Philometor king of Egypt; nor is Antiochus meant in the next clause by the king of the north; for, after he was required by the Romans to quit the land of Egygt, there was no more war between him and the king of Egypt; rather therefore the Saracens are meant by the king of the south, as Mr. Mede[g] and Cocceius think, who came from the south, from Arabia Felix: and so Gravius interprets it of the king or caliph of the Saracens, and his successors; who, extending their empire through Asia and Africa, repressed the attempts of the Roman antichrist affecting primacy in the east; and this way goes Mr. Mede, who takes them to be the same with the locusts in Rev. ix. 3. that distressed antichrist: *and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind*: not Antiochus, as before observed; but either

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[y] נשים conjuges, Gejerus.
[z] ולאלוה מעזים deum Mahuzim, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus.
[a] Homil. in 40 Martyr. p. 151.
[b] Homil. de Martyr. Mamant. p. 167.
[c] Sermo in Berenice, Homil. 1. in 1 Thess. See Mede's Works, B. 3. p. 673, 674.

[d] Ad, vel juxta deum Mahuzzinos in sede ejus honorabit, Medus, p. 667, 671.
[e] למבצרי מעזים munitionibus Mahuzim, Pagninus, Montanus.
[f] במחיר pro pretio, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[g] Works, B. 3. p. 674.

emperors, kings, and Christian princes, the chief of which was Godfrey of Bullain, who was crowned king of Jerusalem, as Cocceius: or the Turks, as Jacchiades, so Mr. Brightman on the place, and Mr. Mede; who were originally Tartars or Scythians, and came from the north, the same with the horsemen at Euphrates, Rev. ix. 15, 16, who also came against antichrist; for he seems to be the *him* they both came against; both the king of the south, and the king of the north, the two woes that came upon Christendom; the Saracens are the first wo, and the Turks the second; and who chiefly afflicted the antichristian states, and came like a whirlwind upon them, suddenly, swiftly, and with great rapidity and force: *with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships*; which well agrees with the Turks, whose armies chiefly consist of horse: *and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow, and pass over*; into the countries belonging to antichrist: particularly the Greek or eastern empire; which they overran like a flood, seized it for themselves, and set up an empire for themselves, which still continues; as well as entered into some parts of Europe, and did much damage.

Ver. 41. *He shall enter also into the glorious land,* &c.] The land of Israel, as the Syriac version expresses it; or the land of Judea, which the Turk entered into, and got possession of, and still retains, notwithstanding all the attempts made by the European princes to get it out of his hand: *and many countries shall be overthrown*; of which the eastern empire consisted, as Bithynia, Mysia, Lycaonia, Phrygia, and Caria, and to the Hellespont and the Euxine sea, conquered by Ottoman and his son Urchenes; Callipolis, Hadrianople, by Amurath; Thessalia, Macedonia, Phocis, Mysia, and Bulgaria, by Bajazet; and at last Constantinople itself by Mahomet the second, which put an end to the eastern empire: though perhaps those countries and places may be here more especially meant which lay near Judea, and fell into the hands of the Turk when that did; as Comagene of Syria, Antioch, Damascus, Tripolis, Berytus, Sidon, and all Palestine, and all the sea-coast to Egypt: *but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon*: by which, according to Jerom, is meant Arabia, left untouched by him; so Mr. Mede interprets them of Arabia and Petræa, which some of the above people formerly inhabited, as Jacchiades observes; and which Arabians were never subdued by the Turks, but are independent of them to this day; yea, the Turks pay a yearly tribute to them for the passage of their pilgrims to Mecca, as well as pay for the caravans that pass through their country, as is affirmed [z] by modern travellers; and yet it may be observed that these countries did not escape Antiochus, who particularly took Rabbath, the metropolis of Ammon.

Ver. 42. *He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries,* &c.] Before mentioned, and take possession of them, and rule over them, as the Turk does to this day: *and the land of Egypt shall not escape*; the hands of the Turk, by whom it was taken from the Mamalucs; and is now a province of the Turkish empire, and governed by a Turkish basha, with twenty-four princes under him [a]. This was not true of Antiochus, who, after he had been checked by the Romans, never entered into Egypt, and much less became master of it, as the Turk now is.

Ver. 43. *But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt,* &c.] The land of Egypt, as it is a very large, so a very rich country, abounding with gold, silver, and precious things; all which came into the hands of the Turk along with it; for when Selim, the ninth emperor of the Turks, conquered the Mamalucs, he caused five hundred of the chiefest Egyptian families to be transported to Constantinople; as likewise a great number of Mamalucs' wives and children, besides the sultan's treasure, and other immense riches [b]. *And the Lybians and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps*; at his command and pleasure; shall follow him, being taken captive, or go where he orders them; that is, in all things shall be obedient to him. So we find that these very people will be in the army of Gog or the Turk, when he shall march against the land of Judea, to recover it from the Jews, when possessed of it, Ezek. xxxviii. 5. These people, the Africans and Ethiopians, are near to Egypt, and therefore mentioned with it, and never were under the power of Antiochus, as Jerom observes; but are now subject to the Ottoman empire, and make a part of it; which is a very strong evidence of the Turk being the king of the north here spoken of.

Ver. 44. *But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him,* &c.] This and the following verse respect times and things yet to come, and the interpretation of them is not so certain: perhaps this clause may have a regard to the news brought to the Turk, of the Jews, upon their conversion, being about to return to their own land, from the eastern and northern parts of the world, where they chiefly are at this day; which will greatly alarm him, since their land is part of his dominions: or it may be, out of the east may come tidings of some commotions and disturbances in the eastern part of the world, as Tartary, &c. which he may fear would be of bad consequence to the Ottoman empire; and news out of the north, of the northern Christian princes preparing to assist the Jews in the repossession of their country; all which may give him great uneasiness. *Therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many*; hearing the Jews are preparing to return to their own country, or that they have got possession of it, he will be enraged and provoked to the last degree, and raise a prodigious army, and march out of his own land with them to Judea; and will *come like a storm*, with the utmost rage and fury, and *like a cloud* for number, and threaten utter ruin and destruction to the nation of the Jews; this will be his end in view in coming out, but he will not be able to accomplish it; of all which see Ezek. xxxviii. 2—12. where the Turk, and this expedition of his, are prophesied of, and where he goes by the name of Gog.

Ver. 45. *And he shall plant the tabernacles of his pa-*

[z] See Dr. Newton's Dissertations on the Prophecies, p. 53, 54, &c.
[a] Ibid. p. 394.
[b] See Dr. Newton's Dissertations on the Prophecies, p. 393.

lace, &c.] Or *pavilion* [c]; the tents for his princes and generals that come with him; which shall be placed about his own, and where he will think himself safe and secure, and sure of victory. Symmachus renders the words, *the tents of his cavalry* [d]; or the stables of his horses: which agrees well enough with the Turks, whose cavalry is usually very large, their armies chiefly consisting of horse; such he shall bring into the land of Judea, and place them as after mentioned, as if he had got the day, and had obtained a settlement. The word used has the signification of covering and clothing; hence some translate it, *the tents of his curtain* [e]; tents covered with curtains or veils, such as the tents of kings, generals, and principal officers, were covered with, distinguished from others by the splendour and magnificence of them. It seems to be derived from the same root as the ephod, a curious garment wore by the high-priest among the Jews; hence Saadiah interprets it here a covering figured and wrought very artificially; and it is by some rendered *the tents* or *tabernacles of his tunic* or *clothing* [f]. And it is an ingenious conjecture of a learned man of our own country [g], that it may refer to an ancient custom of the Roman emperors, who used before a battle to have a scarlet coat spread over their tents, or hung up upon a spear, to give notice of it, as appears from Plutarch, Isidore, and others; and so this furious enemy of the church of God is here represented as setting up his bloody flag or ensign, and preparing for battle, threatening with utter desolation and destruction. And this will be *between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain*: in the mountain or mountains of the land of Israel, upon which it is certain Gog or the Turk shall come, and there he shall fall, Ezek. xxxix. 2, 3, 4, 5. particularly the mountains about Jerusalem, and more especially Mount Zion, or Moriah, as Jacchiades; on which the temple was built formerly, and was glorious and holy on that account, and for which reason the epithets may be retained; though it will now be glorious and holy, through a glorious and holy people, the Jews, become Christian, residing and worshipping in Jerusalem; whose situation is between two seas, the Mediterranean sea to the west, and the sea of Sodom, or the Syrian or Persian sea, to the east, called the hinder and the former seas in Zech. xiv. 8. Some take the word אפדנו, *Apadno*, translated *palace*, for the proper name of a place. Theodoret takes it to be a place near Jerusalem; and Jerom says it was near Nicopolis, which was formerly called Emmaus; where the mountainous parts of Judea begin to rise, and lay between the Dead sea on the east, and the great sea on the west, where he supposes antichrist will pitch his tent: and Porphyry, as he relates, who interprets the whole of Antiochus, places it between the two rivers Tigris and Euphrates; he says that Antiochus went on an expedition against Artaxias king of Armenia, and, having slain many of his army, pitched his tent in the place Apadno, which is situated between two large rivers, Tigris and Euphrates; and that he afterwards went to the top of a mountain, in the province of Elymais, the further part of Persia to the east, with a design to rob the temple of Diana; but being discovered by the people was obliged to flee, and that he died with grief in Tabes, a town in Persia: and Father Calmet is of opinion that a place between those two rivers before mentioned is meant, and translates the words thus, "he shall pitch his tents in Apadno of "the two seas;" or in Padan of two rivers, Mesopotamia, situated between the Euphrates and the Tigris, two large rivers, and justly compared with the sea, particularly for their inundations. Dr. Goodwin [h] expresses his fears that our British isles are here intended, which so eminently stand between the seas, and which God has made the eminent seat of the church in these latter days; and his fears would seem to be too well grounded, were the Romish or western antichrist here designed; but the Turk, or the eastern antichrist, is manifestly spoken of, as appears by the context: and the reason why he is so much observed, and so many things said of him, is, because the Jews have, and will have, the greatest concern with him, their country being in his hands; and it is for their sakes chiefly that the whole of this prophecy is delivered out; however, both antichrists, the one and the other, shall come to utter destruction, as follows: *yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him*; he shall fall upon the mountains of Israel, he and his princes, his generals, and captains, and mighty men; the whole Ottoman empire shall be destroyed, signified by the drying up of the river Euphrates, which is in his dominions, Rev. xvi. 12. and of the vast multitudes that shall come with him, Persia, Ethiopia, Lybia, Gomer, and Togarmah, Ezek. xxxviii. 5, 6. and the numerous provinces he is master of; none shall be able to help him, or save him from ruin: of the destruction of the Turk, under the name of Gog, see Ezek. xxxix.

CHAP. XII.

THIS chapter begins with an account of a time of exceeding great trouble to the people of God, who are comforted with the consideration of Michael the great Prince being on their side, and with a promise of deliverance, with the resurrection of the dead, and the glorious state of wise and good men upon that, ver. 1, 2, 3. and Daniel is ordered to shut up and seal the book of the prophecy, until a time when it should be better understood, ver. 4. next follows a question put by an angel to Christ, and his answer to it, with respect to the time of the fulfilment of those wonderful events, ver. 5, 6, 7. Daniel, not understanding what he heard, asks what would be the end of those things, ver. 8. in answer to which he is bid to be content with what he

[c] אפדנו praetorii sui, Vatablus. So Aquila in Drusius.
[d] Τας σκηνας τα ιππαρχειας αυτε, Symm.; papiliones equitatus sui, interpr. Hieronymo; vel potius tentoria equilis sui, seu stabuli equorum suorum, Fuller.
[e] Tentoria aulaei sui, Schindler, col. 122.
[f] Tentoria tunicae suae, Fuller; tentoria hujus amictus, Cocceius, Lex. col. 57.
[g] Fuller. Miscell. Sacr. l. 5. c. 18. So Lydius, De Re Milit. l. 4. c. 2. p. 155, 156.
[h] Exposition of the Revelations, part 2. p. 166.

knew; no alteration would be among men; things would be neither better nor worse with them, ver. 9, 10. a time is fixed for the accomplishment of all, ver. 11, 12. and it is promised him that he should have rest after death, and rise again, and have his lot and share with the blessed, ver. 13.

Ver. 1. *And at that time shall Michael stand up, &c.*] The Archangel, who has all the angels of heaven under him, and at his command, the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ; who is as God, as the name signifies, truly and really God, and equal in nature, power, and glory, to his divine Father: *he shall stand up*: which is not to be understood of his incarnation, or manifestation in the flesh, for this refers to times long after that; yet neither of his personal appearance in the clouds of heaven, and standing upon the earth in the latter day; but of his spiritual presence among his people, and protection of them, and continuance with them: this respects the spiritual reign of Christ, the Lamb's standing upon Mount Zion, and the 144,000 with him, Rev. xiv. 1. and this will be at *that time*, when the eastern antichrist, the Turk, will be destroyed; for the words are closely connected with the last verse of the preceding chapter; and when also the western antichrist, the pope of Rome, will come to his end; for, as they rose, so they will fall, much about the same time; and then Christ will rise and stand up, as the glorious Head of the church, and as a triumphant Conqueror over all his enemies, and take to himself his great power, and reign, and that kingdom which of right belongs to him. *The great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people*; the King of kings, and Lord of lords, the Prince of the kings of the earth; great in his person, and in his office; great in dignity, power, and authority; who always did, and ever will, stand on the side of the true Israel of God: he espoused their cause very early; he wrought out salvation for them in time; he intercedes for them now in heaven, and will appear to be their patron and defender against all their enemies in the latter day; here it seems to have special regard to the people of the Jews, Daniel's people; whom Christ shall appear unto, and for, in an eminent manner, to convert and save them, help and assist them, protect and defend them. *And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time*; that is, ever since the world was, from the beginning of it, from the creation of the world; not only from the time that the Jews became a people, which was at their coming out of Egypt, as some understand it, but from the beginning of time; and so our Lord interprets it, who seems to have this passage in view in Matt. xxiv. 21. there have been many great and sore troubles in the world, great confusions in it, and convulsions of it, strange and amazing changes in it; very afflictive and distressing times have been to several kingdoms, nations, and cities, which have been entirely overthrown; but never was any like to this; which respects not the distresses of the Jews in the times of Antiochus, or at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans; nor does it seem to respect them at all, at least they will have no further share and concern in it, than as they will be in connexion with other people, among whom they will be at this time; and it will be to them rather a time of deliverance and salvation than of distress; but it is that time of trial, and hour of temptation, that shall come upon all the world, Rev. iii. 10. as it may concern the church and people of God, it is the last struggle of the beast, of antichrist, at the time of his downfal and ruin, when he'll make his last effort; this will be the last persecution of the saints, which will be short and sharp; the slaying of the witnesses, which will affect the whole interest of Christ everywhere: and as this concerns others, it designs the pouring out of the vials of God's wrath upon all the antichristian states, and all those judgments and calamities which will come upon the nations of the world, signified by the harvest and vintage; see Rev. xiv. 14—20. and xv. 1. and xvi. 1, &c.; and this time of trouble, for the nature, quality, and extent of it, will exceed any and all that ever were in the world. *And at that time thy people shall be delivered*; the Jews, the people of Daniel; these shall be delivered not only from the then present outward troubles, not only from their present captivity and afflictions, but from their spiritual evils; from the bondage of sin, and the captivity of Satan; their disbelief of the Messiah; their confidence in their own righteousness, and attachment to the traditions of their fathers; they shall be turned from their transgressions, and return to the Lord their God, and David their King, and shall be truly converted, and spiritually and eternally saved, Rom. xi. 25, 26. *Every one that shall be found written in the book*; in the book of life, as Jacchiades; in the book of God's eternal purposes and decrees, concerning the salvation of his people by Christ; for it is according to these that God saves and calls men, whether Jews or Gentiles, 2 Tim. i. 9. see Phil. iv. 3. Heb. xii. 23. Rev. xx. 12, 15. and xxi. 27.

Ver. 2. *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, &c.*] Which is not to be understood in a figurative and metaphorical sense, as by R. Jeshuah the Jew, Porphyry the Heathen, and by some Christian writers; neither of the deliverance of the Jews from the troubles of Antiochus, or their present captivity; nor of the spiritual resurrection of them, or others, from their state of infidelity to a profession of the Gospel, which in some is real, in others only hypocritical; but, in a literal sense, of the resurrection of the dead at the last day, which, with respect to the righteous, will take place upon the personal appearance of Christ at first, 1 Thess. iv. 16. for, as death is oftentimes compared to *sleep*, in which the senses are bound up, and the body is in a state of inactivity; see John xi. 11. 1 Cor. xv. 20. 1 Thess. iv. 14. so the resurrection from the dead is expressed by awaking out of sleep, when the body shall rise fresh and vigorous, in full health and strength, as a man out of a comfortable sleep: see Psal. xvii. 15. Isa. xxvi. 19. The word *many* is used, either because, as all will not sleep, so all will not be awaked; there will be some that will be alive and awake at Christ's coming, 1 Cor. xv. 51. 1 Thess. iv. 17. or, as it signifies, a multitude, Psal. xcvii. 1. and so here the innumerable multitude of the dead, who are afterwards distributively considered: and indeed the word is sometimes used for *all*: see Rom. v. 15, 19: *some to everlasting life*: to the enjoyment of everlasting life and happiness with Christ in

the world to come; a phrase often used in the New Testament, though never before in the Old; expressive of that felicity and bliss which the saints enjoy in heaven after this life is over, first in the separate state of the soul, and then, at the resurrection, in soul and body, and of the everlasting continuance of it; they that shall enjoy this are those that are written in the Lamb's book of life, or are ordained unto eternal life; who are redeemed by the blood of Christ, regenerated by his spirit and grace, justified by his righteousness, adopted into the family of God, are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; these are the dead in Christ, which rise first: *and some to shame and everlasting contempt;* wicked men, who lived in a course of sin in this world, without any remorse or shame; but, when they shall rise from the dead, they'll rise with all their sins upon them, and with a full conviction of them in their consciences; and will be ashamed of them, and to appear before God the Judge of all; and will be had in contempt by the Lord, by elect angels, and all good men; and this reproach shall never be wiped off; see Isa. lxvi. 24. Our Lord seems manifestly to have respect to this passage, when he speaks of men coming out of their graves at the last day, some *unto the resurrection of life*, and others *unto the resurrection of damnation*, John v. 28, 29. and upon these words it may well be thought the Apostle Paul grounded his faith of the resurrection of the dead, both just and unjust, Acts xxiv. 15. and though the resurrection of both is spoken of here and elsewhere together, yet it will be at distinct periods of time; the resurrection of the just at the beginning of the thousand years, and that of the wicked at the end of them, Rev. xx. 5, 6. between which will be the intermediate state of the saints dwelling with Christ on earth; where they will be favoured with his presence, and the rewards of his grace, to which the following verse has respect.

Ver. 3. *And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament*, &c.] That are wise, not in things natural and civil, but in things spiritual; who are wise unto salvation; that are wise to know themselves, their state and condition by nature; their impurity and impotence; the insufficiency of their own righteousness; the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the dangerous circumstances they are in; that are wise to know Christ, and him crucified; to believe in him, and trust in him for everlasting life and salvation: these at the resurrection shall *shine*, both in body and soul; their bodies shall be fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ; their souls shall be filled with perfect light and knowledge, and be completely holy, without any sin upon them; and this light and glory that will be upon both soul and body will be like the brightness of the heavens when the sun is risen; yea, it will be like the brightness and glory of the sun itself, as our Lord affirms; having, as it seems, respect to this passage, Matt. xiii. 43. Some render it, *they that instruct*[i]; or make others wise, and so restrain it to ministers of the word; but the more general sense is best; and, besides, they are more particularly described in the next clause: *and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever:* or, *that justify many*[k]; that teach the doctrine of a sinner's free justification by the righteousness of Christ; that lead and direct souls sensible of sin, and of the weakness of their own righteousness, to the righteousness of Christ, as being that only which justifies before God; otherwise it is God alone that justifies men, by imputing the righteousness of his Son unto them: but these shew men the way of justification, or that which God takes to justify sinners; and this being the principal doctrine of the Gospel, they are denominated from it; and no man deserves the name of a Gospel minister that does not preach it, though this is not all that they preach; they preach all other doctrines of the Gospel in connexion with it, and also instruct men thus justified to live soberly, righteously, and godly: now, as these are stars in the church of Christ below, who receive their light from Christ the sun of righteousness, and communicate it to his people; so they will continue stars in the Millennium-state, and appear exceeding glorious, having the glory of God and Christ upon them, and not only then, but to all eternity. These words are applied to the days of the Messiah by the Jews[l].

Ver. 4. *But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words*, &c.] Of the book, in which he had wrote the visions and prophecies delivered to him: this he is bid to *shut up*, to keep it from the common and profane people, who would only burlesque it; and to keep it to himself, as a peculiar treasure committed to his care; and though it was not kept from the saints and people of God, from their reading it, yet he was not to interpret and explain it to them; it was to remain a secret until the time of its accomplishment was come, or, however, near at hand; so that this denotes the obscurity of the prophecy, and the great difficulty of understanding it; it being like a book that is shut and sealed, as follows; see Rev. v. 1—5: *and seal the book, even to the time of the end;* till the time comes appointed for the fulfilment of it, which shews that it reached to times at a great distance; that till these times were come, or near, it would be as a sealed book, and yet the accomplishment of it would be sure and certain, as what is sealed is: *many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased;* that is, towards the end of the time appointed, many persons will be stirred up to inquire into these things delivered in this book, and will spare no pains or cost to get knowledge of them; will read and study the Scriptures, and meditate on them; compare one passage with another; spiritual things with spiritual, in order to obtain the mind of Christ; will peruse carefully the writings of such who have gone before them, who have attempted any thing of this kind; and will go far and near to converse with persons that have any understanding of such things; and by such means, with the blessing of God upon them, the knowledge of this book of prophecy will be increased; and things will appear plainer the nearer the accomplishment of them is; and especially when accomplished, when prophecy and facts can be compared together: and not

[i] משכילים erudiant, Munster; erudientes, Junius & Tremellius; qui alios instituerint, Grotius.

[k] מצדיקי justificantes, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius; qui justificaverint, Calvin, Piscator.
[l] Shemot Rabba, sect. 15. fol. 102. 4.

only this kind of knowledge, but knowledge of all spiritual things, of all evangelic truths and doctrines, will be abundantly enlarged at this time; and the earth will be filled and covered with it, as the sea with its waters, see Isa. xi. 9. Hab. ii. 14.

Ver. 5. *Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, &c.*] Other two angels, besides the man clothed with linen, ver. 6. or rather besides the angel who had given Daniel the long account of things that were to come to pass, in the preceding chapter, and the beginning of this; whom Daniel, being attentive to that account, had not observed before; but now, that being finished, he looks about him, and takes notice of those other two who were standing, being ministering spirits to Christ, and ready to execute his orders: *the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river;* Hiddekel or Tigris, as appears from ch. x. 4. The reason of this position was chiefly on account of Christ, the man clothed with linen, who stood upon or above the water of the river, in the midst of it; and to shew that they were waiting upon him, and ready to go every way he should send them to do his will; and also on account of Daniel, that he might hear what was said, whether to Christ, or to one another; since, being at such a distance, their voice must be loud; and indeed the design of all that follows to the end of the chapter is to inform him, and by him the church and people of God in all future ages, of the time and end of all these things before delivered in the prophecy.

Ver. 6. *And one said to the man clothed with linen, &c.*] One of the angels on one side of the bank of the river spoke to Christ, who appeared in a human form, as a presage of his future incarnation; and as clothed in linen, expressive of his priestly office, and of his purity and holiness, which qualified him for it; see the note on ch. x. 6. Which of the angels it was that spake is not said, or on which side of the river he stood; very probably each of them spake in their turn, and joined in the same request to Christ: *which was upon the waters of the river;* or *above*[m] them; denoting his power and dominion over men, kingdoms, and nations, sometimes signified by waters, and even over those the most tumultuous and raging: *how long shall it be to the end of these wonders?* these wonderful things before predicted, concerning the state and condition of the people of God, their troubles and afflictions, the fall and ruin of antichrist, and the glorious things that shall follow upon that: angels, as they are inquisitive creatures, and pry into the mysteries of grace, so into those of Providence; especially such as concern the church of God, for whom they have a great regard; of the secrets of which they have no knowledge until revealed unto them; though this question seems to be put not so much for their own sakes as for the sake of Daniel, who was present, but had not that courage and presence of mind as they had; nor could use that freedom with Christ as they did, at least at first, till encouraged by their example.

Ver. 7. *And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, &c.*] Christ, as he appeared in a human form, and as the High-priest of our profession, and as the Mediator that has power over all flesh; so he pronounced articulate sounds with a human voice, and so loud, clear, and distinct, that Daniel could hear every word he said, and for whose sake it was said: *when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven:* the lifting up of the right hand is a gesture used in swearing, and the lifting up of both hands is either for the greater solemnity of the action, or with respect to the two angels that stood one on one side of him, and the other on the other, that both might be eye-witnesses of this solemn affair; though lifting up both hands is often a prayer-gesture, and there may be a mixture of both in this action, of both praying and swearing: Christ, as the High-priest, intercedes for his church and people, that their faith fail not till the end of their troubles comes: *and sware by him that liveth for ever;* by the living God, the immortal One, who only hath immortality. Maimonides[a] interprets it, *by the Life of the world:* that is, by God, who is the Life of the world, that gives life and being to all creatures; all live, and move, and have their being in him, and so is greater than all, and by whom an oath is only to be taken. Christ, as man, swears by his divine Father, who, as such, was greater than he; though, if we understand it of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, the one, only, true, and living God, there is no impropriety in Christ's swearing by himself the living God, which is a character he sometimes bears; see Heb. iii. 12. and vi. 13. what he here swears to is, *that it shall be for a time, times, and an half;* that it would be so long to the end of these wonderful things; or that the troubles of the church would last so long, and, at the end of that date here fixed, a glorious scene would open, and amazing things appear, to the great joy and comfort of the saints. *Time* signifies a prophetic year, or 360 years; and *times* two prophetic years, or 720 years; and *half* a time half a prophetic year, or 180 years, in all 1260 years; which is the exact date and duration of the reign of antichrist, of the church's being in the wilderness, and of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, and of the treading under foot the holy city, expressed both by 1260 days, and by 42 months, which are the same; see Rev. xi. 2, 3. and xii. 6, 14. and xiii. 5: *and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people;* that is, either, *when he* (God) *shall have finished the scattering the power of the holy people,* the *Jews;* when the dispersion of them, who were formerly a holy people to the Lord, and shall be so again, will be over; and they shall be gathered out of all nations where they have been dispersed, and, being converted, shall return to their own land: or, *when he* (antichrist) *shall have done scattering,* the church and people of God in general; when his wars with the saints, and victories over them, will be ended; and particularly when the slaying of the witnesses will be over, at which time there will be a great scattering of the saints; they will be as sheep without a shepherd, their pastors being

[m] ממעל למים super aquas, Pagninus; desuper aquas, Montanus; supra aquas, Calvin, Cocceius, Michaelis.

[a] Moreh Nevochim, par. 1. c. 72. p. 145. So R. Joseph Albo, Sepher Ikkarim, l. 4. c. 69. בחי העולם per vitam æternitatis; so some in Gejerus.

smitten, slain, or removed into corners; all which things will be fulfilled about the end of the date before mentioned: *and then all these things shall be finished*: or, as the same glorious Person explains it, *time will be no longer, and the mystery of God will be finished*, Rev. x. 6, 7. the time of antichrist's reign, and of the troubles of the church, and the witnesses' prophesying in sackcloth, will be protracted no longer than the time, and times, and half a time, or the 1260 days, or forty months, that is, 1260 years; then all the afflictions of the church will be at an end, and glorious times will succeed, as before spoken of; the spiritual reign of Christ, the first resurrection, and the Millennium, in their order.

Ver. 8. *And I heard, but understood not*, &c.] Daniel heard what Christ said, in answer to the angel, but he did not understand the meaning of it, which he ingenuously confesses; he did not understand what was meant by *time*, and *times, and half* a time; what kind of time this was, and when and how it would end, and which he was very desirous of knowing: *then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these* things? he applied not to the angel that put the above question, but to the man clothed with linen; to Christ, whom he perceived to be a divine Person, a Person of dominion, power, and authority, superior to angels, and his Lord and God; and who only could resolve the question he puts, which is somewhat different from that of the angel's, ver. 6. that respects the length of time, to the accomplishment of these things; this the quality at the end of them, what kind of end they should have; or what the signs, symptoms, and evidences of the end of them, by which the true end of them might be known. Mr. Mede renders it, *what are these latter times?* perhaps it might be rendered better, *what is the last of these* things*? what is the last thing that will be done, that so it may be known when all is over?

Ver. 9. *And he said, go thy way, Daniel*, &c.] About thy business; attend to civil affairs, the affairs in which he was concerned in the king's court, and ask no more questions concerning this matter; but be content with the prophecies that have been delivered to thee, and with what knowledge thou hast of them; or he is bid to go and write in a book the several visions he had seen, and the predictions related to him; that he might read them, and meditate on them at his leisure, and transmit them to future posterity, for their use: or go the way of all flesh, prepare for death and eternity; for in the present state he was not to expect a full revelation of these things; but should rest satisfied with what he knew, and assure himself with the full performance of them, and that he should have his share of the blessed times in the Millennium, and of the ultimate glory, as in ver. 13. *For the words are closed up, and sealed till the time of the end*: that is, till the time comes, or draws near, that they shall be accomplished; till then they would not be clearly understood, but remain in a great measure dark and obscure, though sure and certain: it is suggested they would not always remain so; time is the best interpreter of prophecy, and, the nearer the time of the accomplishment of it is, the clearer it appears, things leading the way to it being gradually fulfilled; but clearest of all when it is accomplished; then it is no more shut and sealed, but open and manifest; see the note on ver. 4.

Ver. 10. *Many shall be purged, and made white, and tried*, &c.] Though Christ does not give, in plain, clear, and explicit terms, an answer to the above question, when, and how, and what would be the end of the church's troubles and afflictions; yet he here points out the use of them, which for the present should be chiefly attended to; and, when duly considered, would be a means of causing the saints to endure them with more patience and cheerfulness: many should be hereby made more pure and holy, and more free from their spots, their chaff, and their dross; their corruptions, and the power of them, weakened; their graces tried, and become more bright and shining; and they themselves a greater ornament to the religion they profess: hereby they should be *purified*, or cleansed from the chaff of their sins; or be separated, as the chaff is by the fan, from hypocrites and ungodly men, who would not be able to endure persecution for the sake of the Gospel: and *be made white*; as cloth is by the fuller; freed both from their own spots in their garments, being led to the blood of Christ to wash their garments, and make them white therein; which afflictions may be the means of guiding them to, under the direction of the blessed Spirit; and from such persons who were spots in their feasts of love: and *be tried*, as gold and silver in the furnace, and so be rid of their own dross, and of the wicked of the earth, who are like unto it; see the note on ch. xi. 35. *But the wicked shall do wickedly*; go on in a course of sin, and be never the better for the afflictive dispensations of Providence; these either mean formal professors, that turn apostates from the faith, and become openly wicked livers; or the profane world in common; and particularly furious persecutors of the saints: such as each of these there will be till the end of things come; see Rev. xxii. 11: *and none of the wicked shall understand*; neither the doctrines of the Gospel spiritually and experimentally; nor the providences of God, and what he is doing in the world; and particularly not the prophecy of this book, and especially what has been just delivered: *but the wise shall understand*; more or less of each of these things, such as are wise unto salvation; that search the Scriptures, seek to God by prayer, and are much in meditation, and make use of every help for the understanding of divine things, and even of these prophecies; and especially towards the close of time, as the accomplishment of them draws near.

Ver. 11. *And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away*, &c.] This is in part an answer to the above questions, as they relate to the end of things: some dates are given, by which it might in general be known when and how these things would end: and these dates begin with the removal of the daily sacrifice; that is, the doctrine of atonement and satisfaction for sin by the sacrifice of Christ, the antitype of the daily sacrifice under the law; this was taken away by antichrist, when he got to his height; when he established

* מה אחרית אלה quid erit novissimum horum? Munster; postremum horum? Calvin.

the doctrine of works, and opposed the merits of men to the merits of Christ, and his own pardons, indulgences, penances, &c. to the satisfaction of Christ: *and the abomination that maketh desolate*; image-worship; the abomination of the Mass, and other acts of idolatry and superstition: *there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days*: from the beginning of the reign of antichrist to the end of it are one thousand two hundred and sixty days or years, or forty-two months, which is the same, according to Rev. xiii. 5. here thirty days or years are added, which begin where the other end, and is the time allotted for the conversion of the Jews, and other things, making way for the kingdom of Christ; and which the reign of antichrist was an hinderance of, but should now immediately take place.

Ver. 12. *Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the one thousand three hundred five and thirty days.*] Which is an addition of forty-five days or years more, beginning at the end of one thousand two hundred and ninety, and make up this sum; during which time the vials will be poured out upon all the antichristian states, and the Turkish empire be destroyed, and all the enemies of Christ and his church removed, and clear way made for the setting up of his kingdom in the world in a more visible and glorious manner; and therefore happy is the man that will be found waiting for these times, and live to enjoy them. There are various ways taken in the computation and application of these one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days by Jews and Christians. Lipman [p] the Jew makes them to be the same with *time*, and *times*, and *half a time*, ver. 7. *time*, he supposes, designs the space of four hundred and eighty years, from the Israelites going out of Egypt, to the building of the first temple; *times* the space of four hundred and ten years, which is as long as that temple stood; and *half a time*, half of these two spaces, that is, four hundred and forty-five years; all which make up one thousand three hundred and thirty-five: but strange it is that *time* should signify a larger space than *times*. Much more ingenious is the computation of Jacchiades on the text, who makes the account to describe the space of time from the days of Daniel to the end of the world. He supposes there were three thousand three hundred and ninety-one years, from the beginning of the world to Daniel; he then takes and joins the one thousand two hundred and ninety days in the preceding verse, which he understands of years, with the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days or years in this, which make together two thousand six hundred and twenty-five; and, added to the above, the whole is six thousand and sixteen years; which agrees with the opinion of Elias, in the Talmud [q], that the world shall stand six thousand years. Many Christian interpreters [r] apply it to the times of Antiochus, and reckon them thus, understanding them of days, and not years: from the time of his taking away the daily sacrifice, to the restoration of it by Judas Maccabæus, were three years and a half and some days, in all one thousand two hundred and ninety, as in the preceding verse; during which time the temple was profaned by idolatrous worship, the altar demolished, and the daily sacrifice ceased, and was a time of great distress with the Jews; and which, though greatly alleviated by the success of Judas, yet their calamities were not over until the death of Antiochus, which happened forty-five days after; and these, added to the above number, make one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days; at the close of which it was happy times with them, being delivered from so cruel and powerful an enemy; and therefore blessed were they that waited and came to this time. This passage Mr. Brightman applies to the Turkish empire; and thinks that time, and times, and half a time, ver. 7, measure the space of the power of that empire; *time* signifying one hundred years; *times* two hundred years; *half a time* fifty years; in all three hundred and fifty years; which added to one thousand three hundred, when that empire began, the date ends in one thousand six hundred and fifty, when, he supposes, it would begin to decline; to which, if you add forty-five days or years, as here, it will bring it down to one thousand six hundred and ninety-five, when he thought it would be utterly extinct; but time has shewn this to be a mistake. Mr. Mede [s] thinks these numbers are to be reckoned from the profanation of the temple by Antiochus; and that the first number, one thousand two hundred and ninety, ended in the year of Christ one thousand one hundred and twenty-three, when antichrist was come to his height, and was discerned by many to be the person that was prophesied of as such; and the latter number, one thousand three hundred and thirty-five, ended in the year of Christ one thousand one hundred and sixty-eight, when the Waldenses, Albigenses, and others, separated from the church of Rome as antichristian, upon which violent persecutions were raised upon them: but then not happy, but miserable times, followed on these; unless this blessedness spoken of is to be applied to the martyrs that died for the sake of Christ, as in Rev. xiv. 13. Another learned man [t] was of opinion that these numbers are to be counted from the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus Vespasian, A. D. 71. from whence the first number fell on the year 1361, at which time the school at Prague was founded by Charles king of Bohemia, and the errors and tyranny of antichrist began to be openly opposed by the same; and the second number ended in the year 1406, when the light of the Gospel broke out more clearly; so that the angel here pronounces those blessed, who overlived these first seeds of the Gospel being brought to light; but something of great importance, and cause of more joy, is here intended. Wherefore, upon the whole, it seems best to interpret these numbers, as at first, of the date of the reign of antichrist, and as shewing the full and certain end of it; when there will be blessed times, halcyon days indeed!

Ver. 13. *But go thou thy way till the end be*, &c.] Prepare for death, and expect to be under the power of it, to lie in the grave, till the end of the world, until the resurrection-morn: *for thou shalt rest*; from all

[p] Nizzachon, No. 333.
[q] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 1.
[r] Broughton in loc. L'Empereur, Not. in Jacchiad. in loc. Huls. Theolog. Jud. par. 1. p. 77, 79.

[s] Works, B. 3. p. 720.
[t] Henr. Wolphius lib. de tempore apud Brightman in loc.

toil and labour, from all sin and sorrow; his body in the grave, his soul in the bosom of Christ: *and stand in thy lot at the end of the days*; signifying that he should rise again from the dead, have his part in the first resurrection, his share of the glory of the Millennium-state, and his portion in the heavenly inheritance of the saints; the antitype of Canaan, which was divided by lot to the children of Israel; and, in the faith and hope of this, it became him to be contented and satisfied; believing the accomplishment of all that had been shewn him, and looking for the blessedness which was promised him. Agreeable to which is the paraphrase of Jacchiades; "but thou, O Daniel, go to "the end of thy life in this world; and, after thou art "dead, rest in the rest of paradise; and at the end of "days thou shalt stand and live in the resurrection of "the dead, and shalt enjoy thy good lot in the world "to come."

HOSEA.

THIS book, in the Hebrew Bibles, at least in some copies, is called *Sepher Hosea*, the Book of Hosea; and, in the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions, *the Prophecy of Hosea*; and, in the Syriac version, the *Prophecy of Hosea the Prophet*. It is the first of the twelve lesser prophets, so called, not because they were of less value, credit, and authority, than the other prophets; but because of their smallness in bulk; and which, as Kimchi says, upon the authority of their Rabbins, were put together in one book, that no one of them might be lost, because of their smallness; and Josephus [a] reckons them but as one book; and they are quoted in the New Testament under the name of *the Book of the Prophets* [b]. This prophet was one of them, and therefore placed here; though, as Kimchi, in his preface to this book, and R. David Ganz [c], observe, his prophecy was before the prophecy of Isaiah; and yet he was not the first of these minor prophets, as to order of time; not only Jonas, but Joel and Amos, were before him; and so they are placed by some writers; according to Mr. Whiston [d], he began to prophesy about 3906 of the Julian period, and 808 before Christ. Mr. Bedford [e] places him in 804. His name is the same with Joshua and Jesus, and signifies a saviour; and he was not only, as all the true prophets of the Lord and faithful ministers of the word are, the means and instruments in the hand of God of saving people; but he was a type of Christ the Saviour, as well as prophesied concerning him, and salvation by him. Of his parentage, and the time of his prophesying, see ch. i. 1. by which it appears that he lived in several reigns, and to a very great age. He chiefly prophesied against the ten tribes of Israel; reproved them for their sins; exhorted them to repentance; threatened them with destruction in case of impenitence; and comforted the truly godly with the promise of the Messiah, and of the happy state of the church in the latter day. His style is short and concise; in some places sententious, and without connexion, obscure and difficult of interpretation; and in others very pathetic and moving. Of the divine inspiration and authority of this book there is no room to doubt; since passages out of it are quoted and referred to by Christ and his apostles; by Christ himself, Matt. ix. 13. and xii. 7. out of ch. vi. 6. by the Evangelist Matthew, Matt. ii. 15. out of ch. xi. 1. and by the Apostle Paul, Rom. ix. 25, 26. out of ch. i. 10. and ii. 23. 1 Cor. xv. 55. from ch. xiii. 14. and by the Apostle Peter, 1 Pet. ii. 10. from ch. ii. 23. There are some things said of the descent, death, and burial of this prophet, not to be depended on. Pseudo-Epiphanius [f] and Isidorus [g] say he was of the tribe of Issachar, and born in Belomoth or Bethlemoth; and that he died in peace, and was buried in his own country; but, according to a tradition of the Jews [h], he died in Babylon, and was buried in Tzapheth, a city in upper Galilee; but all this is uncertain, and not very probable, and is of no importance to be known.

CHAP. I.

AFTER the general inscription of the book, in which the author, penman, and time of this prophecy, are expressed, ver. 1, the people of Israel are reproved for their idolatry, under the representation of a harlot the prophet is bid to marry, which he is said to do, ver. 2, 3. and their ruin and destruction are foretold in the names of the children he had by her, and by what is said on the occasion of the birth of each, ver. 4, 5, 6, 8, 9. but mercy and salvation are promised to Judah, ver. 7. and the chapter is concluded with a glorious prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles, and the calling of the Jews in the latter day; and of the union of Judah and Israel under one Head and Saviour, Christ; and of the greatness and glory of that day, ver. 10, 11.

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea,*

[a] Contr. Apion. l. 1. c. 8.
[b] Acts vii. 42.
[c] Tzemach David, fol. 12. 2.
[d] Chronological Tables, cent. 7.
[e] Scripture Chronology, B. 6. ch. 2. p. 645.
[f] De Prophet. Vit. &c. c. 11.
[g] De Vita & Mort. Sanct. c. 41.
[h] Shalsheleth Hakabala, fol. 12. 1.

&c.] Whose name is the same with Joshua and Jesus, and signifies a saviour; he was in some things a type of Christ the Saviour, and prophesied of him, and salvation by him; and was the instrument and means of saving men, as all true prophets were, and faithful ministers of the word are: to him the word of the Lord, revealing his mind and will, was brought by the spirit of God, and impressed upon his mind; and it was committed to him to be delivered unto others. This is the general title of the whole book, shewing the divine original and authority of it: *the son of Beeri*; which is added to distinguish him from another of the same name; and perhaps his father's name was famous in Israel, and therefore mentioned. The Jews have a rule, that where a prophet's father's name is mentioned, it shews that he was the son of a prophet; but this is not to be depended upon; and some of them say that this is the same with Beerah, a prince of the Reubenites, who was carried captive by Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, 1 Chron. v. 6. but the name is different; nor does the chronology seem so well to agree with him; and especially he can't be the father of Hosea, if he was of the tribe of Issachar, as some have affirmed: *in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel*: from whence it appears that Hosea prophesied long, and lived to a great age; for from the last year of Jeroboam, which was the fifteenth of Uzziah, to the first of Hezekiah, must be sixty-nine years; for Jeroboam reigned forty-one years, and in the twenty-seventh of his reign began Uzziah or Azariah to reign over Judah, and he reigned fifty-two years, 2 Kings xiv. 23. and xv. 1, 2. so that Uzziah reigned thirty-seven years after the death of Jeroboam, through which time Hosea prophesied; Jotham after him reigned sixteen years, and so many reigned Ahaz, 2 Kings xv. 23. and xvi. 2. so that without reckoning any part, either of Jeroboam's reign, or Hezekiah's, he must prophesy sixty-nine years, and, no doubt, did upwards of seventy, very probably eighty, the Jews say ninety; and allowing him to be twenty-four or five years of age when he began to prophesy, or only twenty (for it is certain he was at an age fit to marry, as appears by the prophecy), he must live to be upwards of a hundred years; and in all probability he lived to see not only part of Israel carried captive by Tiglath-pileser, which is certain; but the entire destruction of the ten tribes by Salmaneser, which he prophesied of. Jeroboam king of Israel is mentioned last, though prior to these kings of Judah; because Hosea's prophecy is chiefly against Israel, and began in his reign, when they were in a flourishing condition. It appears from hence that Isaiah, Amos, and Micah, were cotemporary with him; see Isa. i. 1. Amos i. 1. Mic. i. 1. within this compass of time Hosea prophesied lived Lycurgus the famous lawgiver of the Lacedemonians, and Hesiod the Greek poet; and Rome began to be built.

Ver. 2. *The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea*, &c.] Or *in Hosea*[i]; which was internally revealed to him, and was inspired into him, by the Holy Ghost, who first spake in him, and then by him; not that Hosea was the first of the prophets to whom the word of the Lord came; for there were Moses, Samuel, David, and others, before him; nor the first of the minor prophets, for Jonah, Joel, and Amos, are by some thought to be before him; nor the first of those cotemporary with him, as the Jewish writers interpret it, which is not certain, at least not all of them; but the meaning is, that what follows is the first part of his prophecy, or what it began with; by which it appears he was put upon hard service at first, to prophesy against Israel, an idolatrous people, and to do it in such a manner as must be disagreeable to a young man: *and the Lord said to Hosea, go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms*; a woman given to whoredom, a notorious strumpet, one taken out of the stews, and children that were spurious and illegitimate, not born in lawful wedlock. Some think this was really done; that the prophet took a whore, and cohabited with her, or married her; which, though forbidden a high-priest, was not forbid to a prophet; and had it been against a law, yet the Lord commanding it made it lawful, as in the cases of Abraham's slaying his son, and the Israelites borrowing jewels of the Egyptians; but this seems not likely, since it would not only look like countenancing whoredom, which is contrary to the holy law of God; but must be very dishonourable to the prophet, and render him contemptible to the people; and, besides, would not answer the end proposed, to reprove the spiritual adultery or idolatry of Israel, but rather serve to confirm in it; for how should that appear criminal and abominable to them, which was commanded the prophet by the Lord? others think that the woman he is bid to marry, though before marriage a harlot, was afterwards reformed; but this is directly contrary to ch. iii. 1. and besides, the children born of her, whether reformed or not, yet in lawful wedlock could not be called children of whoredom; nor would the above end be answered by it, since such a person would be no fit representative of Israel committing spiritual adultery or idolatry, and continuing in it; and moreover, whether this or the former was the case, the prophecy must be many years delivering; it must be near a year before the first child was born, and the same space must be between the birth of each; so that here must be a long and frequent interruption of the prophecy, which does not seem likely: nor is it probable that he took his own wife, which is the opinion of others, and gave her the character of a whore, and his children with her, and called them children of whoredom, in order to represent and reprove the idolatry of Israel: what Maimonides[k], and the Jewish writers in general, give into, is more agreeable, that this was all done in the vision of prophecy; that it so seemed to the prophet in vision to be really done, and so he related it to the people; but this is liable to objection, that such an impure scene of things should be represented to the mind of the prophet by the Holy Spirit of God; nor can the relation of it be thought to have any good effect upon the people, who would be ready to mock

[i] בהושע ἐν Ὠσηέ, Sept.; in Hosea, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius, Tarnovius.

[k] Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. 46. Aben Ezra & Kimchi in loc.

at him, and reproach him for it. It seems best therefore to understand the whole as a parable, and that the prophet, in a parabolical way, is bid to represent the treachery, unfaithfulness, and spiritual adultery of the people of Israel, under the feigned name of an unchaste woman, and of children begotten in fornication; and to shew unto them that their case was as if he had taken a woman out of the stews, and her bastards with her; or as if a wife married by him had defiled his bed, and brought him a spurious brood of children. So the Targum interprets it, "go, prophesy a prophecy against the inhabitants of the idolatrous city, "who add to sin:" *for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the Lord;* or "for the inhabitants of the land erring, erred from the worship "of the Lord," as the Targum; that is, the inhabitants of the land of Israel have committed idolatry, which is often in Scripture signified by adultery and whoredom; as an adulterous woman deals treacherously with her husband, so these people had dealt with God, who stood in such a relation to them; see Jer. iii. 1, 6, 9. Ezek. xvi. 17, 26, 28, 29. this interprets the parable, and shews the reason of using the following symbols and emblems.

Ver. 3. *So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, &c.*] In the course of prophesying he made mention of this person, who was a notorious common strumpet; and suggested hereby that they were just like her; or these were fictitious names he used to represent their case by. Gomer signifies both *consummation* and *consumption*[l]; and this harlot is so called, because of her consummate beauty, and her being completely mistress of all the tricks of one; or, being consummately wicked, a perfect whore, common to all; and because her ruin and destruction, persisting in such practices, were inevitable, and so a fit emblem of the present and future condition of Israel. Diblaim may be considered either as the name of a man, a word of the same form with Ephraim; or of a woman, the mother of Gomer; or else of a place, the wilderness of Diblath, Ezek. vi. 14. and signifies *a cake of dried figs*[m]; which, in that country, was reckoned delicious eating; and so denotes, either that both the sin and ruin of this people were owing to their luxury, or indulging themselves in carnal pleasures, through the great affluence they were possessed of; or that their original was from a wilderness, and for their sins should be reduced to a desolate state again: *which conceived and bare him a son;* whose name, and what he was an emblem of, are declared in the following verse. The Targum is, "and he went and prophesied "over them, that if they returned, it should be forgiven them: but, if not, as fig-tree leaves drop off, "so should they; but they added, and did evil "works."

Ver. 4. *And the Lord said unto him, call his name Jezreel, &c.*] Which some interpret *the seed of God,* as Jerom; or *arm of God,* as others; and Kimchi applies it to Jeroboam the son of Joash, who was strong, and prospered in his kingdom; but it rather signifies *God will sow,* or *scatter*[n]; denoting either their dissensions among themselves; or their dispersion among the nations, which afterwards came to pass; and so the Targum, "call their name *scattered;*" and alluding also to the city of Jezreel, where some of the idolatrous kings of Israel lived, and where much blood had been shed, which should be avenged, as follows: *for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu;* not the blood of Naboth the Jezreelite, that was shed by Ahab; but the blood of Joram the son of Ahab, and seventy other sons of his, and all his great men, kinsfolks and priests, shed by Jehu in this place; and though this was done according to the will of God, and for which he received the kingdom, and it was continued in his family to the fourth generation; yet, inasmuch as this was not done by him from a pure and hearty zeal for the Lord and his worship, and with a sincere view to his glory, but in order to gain the kingdom, increase his power, and satiate his tyranny and lust; and because, though he destroyed one species of idolatry, the worship of Baal, yet he continued another, the worshipping of the calves at Dan and Beth-el, and regarded not the law of the Lord, and so his successors after him; and were the means of causing many to sin, and so consequently of the ruin of many souls, whose blood would be required of them, which some take to be the meaning here; this is threatened; see 2 Kings ix. 24, 25, and x. 1—7, 11, 16, 28, 29, 30, 31. It may be observed, that God sometimes punishes the instruments he makes use of in doing his work; they either over-doing it, exercising too much cruelty; and not doing it upon right principles, and with right views, as the kings of Assyria and Babylon, Isa. x. 5, 7. Zech. i. 15. It is here said to be but a *little while* ere this vengeance would be taken, it being at the latter end of Jeroboam's reign when this prophecy was delivered out; and his son Zachariah, in whom the kingdom as in his family ceased, reigned but six months, being conspired against and slain by Shallum, who reigned in his stead, 2 Kings xv. 8, 9, 10. The Targum is, "for yet a little while "I will avenge the blood of those that worship idols, "which Jehu shed in Jezreel, whom he slew because "they served Baal; but they turned to err after the "calves which were in Beth-el; therefore I will reckon "that innocent blood upon the house of Jehu:" *and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel;* that is, in the family of Jehu; Zachariah the son of the then reigning prince being the last, and his reign only the short reign of six months; unless this has reference to the utter cessation of this kingdom as such in the times of Hoshea by Salmaneser king of Assyria, 2 Kings xvii. 6—23.

Ver. 5. *And it shall come to pass at that day, &c.*] When the Lord shall take vengeance on the family of Jehu, and deprive them of the kingdom of Israel, and shall punish the idolatrous kings that succeed: *that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel;* of which valley see Josh. xvii. 16. Judg. vi. 33. It is now called the plain of Esdraelon; as it is in Judith i. 8, the great plain of Esdrelom; according to Adrichomius[o], it is two miles broad, and ten miles long; its soil ex-

[l] A rad. גמר perfecit, desiit, Gussetius.
[m] Vox דבלים significat massas ficuum compressarum & siccatarum, Rivetus, Tarnovius.

[n] A rad. זרע seminavit, disseminavit, Schmidt.
[o] Theatrum Terræ Sanctæ, p. 36, 37.

ceeding fat and fruitful, and abounding with corn, wine, and oil; all travellers agree they never saw the like: one says [p] of this plain or valley, formerly the lot of the tribe of Issachar, this is the most fertile portion of the land of Canaan, where that tribe might well be supposed to have *rejoiced in their tents*, Deut. xxxiii. 18. at present, indeed, it is not manured, as another traveller [q] observes, and yet very fruitful; who says, it is of a vast extent, and very fertile, but uncultivated, only serving the Arabs for pasturage; and, according to the same writer, the ancient river Kishon runs through the middle of it: from the largeness of it, it is frequently called by writers the great plain or valley; and sometimes, from the places near it, or on it, the great plain of Legio, the great plain of Samaria, the great plain or valley of Megiddo, 2 Chron. xxxv. 22. and the great plain of Esdraelon, and here the valley of Jezreel; Jezreel or Esdraela being situated in this great plain or valley between Scythopolis and Legio, a very large village, as Jerom says [r] it was in his days; and also on this passage observes, that Jezreel, from whence this valley had its name, is now near Maximianopolis, and was the metropolis of the kingdom of Samaria, near which were very large plains, and a valley of a very great length, extending more than ten miles: here Ahab had a palace in his days, near to which was Naboth's vineyard, and where God revenged his blood: this city is called by Josephus [s] Azare and Azarus, or Izarus; and in the times of Gulielmus Tyrius [t] it went by the name of Little Gerinum. The *bow* is put for all instruments of war, and every thing in which confidence was put, which was weakened or removed from them: this refers either to Menachem's slaughter of Shallum, and wasting some parts of the land of Israel, 2 Kings xv. 14, 16. or rather it may be to a battle fought between Hoshea king of Israel and Salmaneser king of Assyria in this valley, which was not far from Samaria; in which the former was defeated, and the latter, having the victory, proceeded to Samaria, besieged and took it, 2 Kings xvii. 6. though of the action the Scripture is silent; but it is not improbable. The Targum is, "I will break the strength of the warriors of Israel in "the valley of Jezreel;" which seems to confirm the same conjecture. Some render it, *because of the valley of Jezreel* [u]; that is, because of the idolatry, bloodshed, and other sins, committed there.

Ver. 6. *And she conceived again, and bare a daughter*, &c.] One of the weaker sex: denoting the weaker state of the kingdom of Israel after Jeroboam, as Kimchi thinks; Zachariah his son reigning but six months, and Shallum the son of Jabesh, his successor, reigned but one month, 2 Kings xv. 8, 13: *and God said unto him, call her name Lo-ruhamah*: which signifies, *she hath not obtained mercy*; and what follows explains it to the same sense. The Targum is, "and they added "and did evil works; and he said unto him call their "name, who obtained not mercy by their works:" *for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel*: as he had heretofore, sparing them time after time, though they continued to sin against him; but now he would spare them no longer, but deliver them up into the hands of their enemies, as he did a part of them, first into the hands of Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and then to Salmaneser, 2 Kings xv. 29. and xvii. 6. otherwise, in the latter day, mercy will be shewn them again, especially in a spiritual way, when they shall be converted, and believe in Christ, and all Israel shall be saved, as well as possess their own land again; see ver. 10, 11. Rom. 11. 26: *but I will utterly take them away*; out of their land, from being a kingdom and nation, which was done by Salmaneser, another king of Assyria, 2 Kings xvii. 6. or, *bringing I will bring into them*, or *against them* [w]; that is, an enemy, the same king of Assyria: or, *but forgetting I will forget them* [x], as some render it, and remember them no more, till the fulness of time comes: or, *through pardoning I have pardoned*, or *spared them* [y]; that is, in times past. The Targum is, "but if they return, pardoning I will par"don them;" which will be done in the latter day.

Ver. 7. *But I will have mercy on the house of Judah*, &c.] The two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which retained the true worship of God among them; see ch. xi. 12. and though they often sinned against the Lord, he shewed them mercy, and spared them longer than the ten tribes; and though he suffered them to be carried captive into Babylon, he returned them again after seventy years: this is mentioned as an aggravation of the punishment of Israel, that Judah was spared, when they were not; and to shew that God will have a people to seek and serve him, and, when he rejects some, he'll make a reserve of others: *and will save them by the Lord their God*; by his own arm and power, and not theirs, or any creature's; nor by any warlike means or instruments whatever, as follows: *and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen*: which may respect either the deliverance of the Jews from the invasion and siege of Sennacherib's army; which was done without shooting an arrow, or drawing the sword, or engaging in a pitched battle, or by a cavalry rushing into his camp, discomfiting his army, and pursuing them; but by an angel sent from heaven, which in one night destroyed a hundred and fourscore and five thousand, 2 Kings xix. 35. or else refers to Cyrus being stirred up by the Lord to issue forth a proclamation, giving liberty to the Jewish captives to go free, without price or reward; and so was brought about, not by the might and power of man, but by the spirit of the Lord; see Ezra i. 1. Isa. xlv. 13. Zech. iv. 6. though a greater salvation is pointed at, or at least shadowed forth, by this, even the spiritual and eternal salvation of God's elect by Christ; which is the fruit of mercy, and not the effect of the merits of men; is obtained not by human power, or by man's righteousness; but by the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Jehovah our righteousness, the Lord God of his people; who stands in a relation to them prior to his being the

[p] Dr. Shaw's Travels, tom. 2. ch. 1. p. 275. Ed. 2.
[q] Maundrell's Journey from Aleppo, &c. p. 57. Ed. 7.
[r] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 92. I.
[s] Antiqu. l. 8. c. 13. sect. 6, 8.
[t] Tyr. Hist. l. 22. c. 26.
[u] בעמק יזרעאל propter vallem Jisreelis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[w] נשא אשא להם adducendo adducam contra eos, Munster; importando importabo eis, Drusius; so Kimchi and Ben Melech.
[x] Obliviscendo obliviscar eorum, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus.
[y] Quamvis omnino condonaverim eis, Piscator; quamvis hactenus condonando condonaverim eis, so some in Drusius.

Saviour of them; to which work and office he is equal, being the eternal Jehovah, and the true and living God. So the Targum, "and I will save them by the Word of "the Lord their God;" the eternal Word, that was with God, is God, and became incarnate, God in our nature.

Ver. 8. *Now when she had weaned Lo-ruhamah*, &c.] That is, when Gomer had weaned her daughter of this name, ver. 6. This some interpret of the people of Israel being deprived of the word and ordinances, compared to milk and breasts, having a famine of them; and so were like children weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts; though others think this is expressive of the patience of God in bearing with this people, after he had before threatened them with the subversion of their kingdom and state; and even after the prophecy had took place in part, in causing the kingdom to cease in the house of Jehu, he bore with them about forty years before they were entirely carried captive; suckling and weaning, before the conception and birth of another child, denoting some stop and stay; but rather this intends the taking away some part of the land of Israel, as a child when weaning is taken away from its mother; and may respect the carrying captive many of the Israelites in divers parts, particularly out of Gilead, Galilee, and Naphtali, by Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, 2 Kings xv. 29. This cannot be understood of the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, as Cocceius; for this is a resumption and continuation of the prophecy concerning the ten tribes, after inserting a promise of the salvation of Judah, in the preceding verse: *she conceived and bare a son*: according to Kimchi, as the weaning of Lo-ruhamah points at the times of weakness, from Zachariah the son of Jeroboam to the times of Pekahiah, when the reigns were short and troublesome; so this son conceived and born represents the state of the nation in the times of Pekah: who reigned twenty years, and was too powerful for the kingdom of Judah, slew multitudes of them, and carried others captive, and assisted Rezin king of Syria against Ahaz king of Judah: but, according to the series of the prophecy, it seems best to agree with the times of Hoshea king of Israel, who was not so bad as some of his predecessors; was a man of spirit and courage; cast off the Assyrian yoke, and neglected to give presents to the king of Assyria, and Samaria in his time held out a three-years' siege against that king, 2 Kings xvii. 1—5. The Targum is, "and the generation of them who are carried "captive among the nations are found not to have obtained mercy by their works, but they added and "did evil works."

Ver. 9. *Then said* God, *call his name Lo-ammi*, &c.] Which Aben Ezra interprets of the children of the ten tribes born in captivity, who never returned; but it rather signifies the ten tribes themselves, who were carried captive and had this name given them for the reason following: *for ye* are *not my people*: though he had chosen them to be his people above all people, and had distinguished them from others by various blessings and privileges; yet they did not behave as such to him: they did not serve, obey, and worship him, but the calves at Dan and Beth-el; and therefore did not deserve the name of his people: hence he says, *and I will not be your* or *yours**; that is, as we supply it, and so Aben Ezra, *your God*; will not behave toward you as such; will not take you under my care and protection, or continue you in your land, and in the enjoyment of the blessings of it; will not be your King, patron, and defender, but give you up into the hands of your enemies. This respects the captivity of the ten tribes by Salmaneser, 2 Kings xvii. 6. The Targum is, "for ye are not my people; because ye do not con-"firm the words of my law, my word shall not be "your help."

Ver. 10. *Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered*, &c.] Though called Lo-ammi, and rejected from being the people of God; yet there is a time when their number, according to the promise made to Abraham, shall be as the sand of the sea, and the stars of heaven; which, as the one cannot be measured, the other cannot be numbered; which was to be not at the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, when some of the ten tribes of Israel returned with them, as Theodoret and others think; for they were but few that then returned: but rather at the first times of the Gospel, when multitudes that came from several parts of the world were converted at the day of Pentecost, and greater numbers, who were met with in the ministry of the word, in the several parts of the world, where they were dispersed, and the Gospel came, to whom Peter and James wrote their epistles; and not these only are meant, but the vast numbers of Gentiles, who were effectually called by grace everywhere, and were true Israelites, the spiritual seed of Abraham; and to whom the Apostle Paul applies these words, producing them as a testimony of the election and calling, not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also, Rom. ix. 24, 25, 26. and which will have a further accomplishment in the latter day, when the fulness of the Gentiles will be brought in, the Jews will be converted, and all Israel saved, Rom. xi. 25, 26. then the numbers of the Israel of God, both of Jews and Gentiles, will be as the sand of the sea indeed! *and it shall come to pass*, that *in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, ye are the sons of the living God*; that is, in such places where it used to be said, here live Pagans, Turks, or Jews, who worship not the true God, or at least not aright, nor believe in Christ, and profess his name; *there it shall be said to them*, by the Lord himself, by his Spirit witnessing their relation to them, and by all good men, and even by the world in general; not only that they are *the people of God*, but have a superior privilege, a greater character, and a higher relation, *the sons of the living God*; the sons of God, not by nature, as Christ; nor by creation, as angels; nor by office, as civil magistrates; or by profession merely, as nominal Christians; but by adopting grace; which exceeds all other blessings, even of sanctification and justification; makes men honourable; is attended with various privileges, and always continues. The epithet of *the living God* is not without cause put; it stands in opposition to dead idols before

* לא אהיה לכם non ero vester, Pagninus; nec ego sum futurus vester, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

worshipped by some who will now be the children of God; and who, as he has life in himself, gives it to others; to all natural life and breath, and to his children spiritual and eternal life; and, as he lives for ever, so shall they his sons likewise. The Targum is, "and "it shall be in the place where they have been carried "captive, when they transgressed the law; and it was "said to them, ye are not my people; there they shall "be converted and increased (or made great); and "it shall be said to them, O ye people of the living "God."

Ver. 11. *Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together*, &c.] Not at the return from the Babylonish captivity; for, though some of the ten tribes might be mixed with the Jews when they went into captivity, and came out with them, and others might join them from the several nations where they had been dispersed; yet they did not gather together with them in a body, only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, those were the chief; of the children of Israel, but few, Ezra i. 5. Some refer this to the first times of the Gospel, when the Galileans were gathered to Christ by his ministry, who inhabited the countries where some of the tribes of Israel dwelt; and who might, at least some of them, descend from them: and when those in Jerusalem and in Judea, who also believed in Christ, united with them in their profession of him, and in affection to one another; or to the time of Christ's death, by which the whole Israel of God, who were scattered abroad, were gathered together in one; and even Jews and Gentiles were made one body, and one new man in Christ, the partition-wall being broken down: or to the times of the apostles, who were successful in the conversion and gathering of many of the Jewish nation, and also of the Samaritans; and of forming churches in Judea and Samaria under one head, in whom they agreed; and likewise of many others, both Jews and Israelites, in the several parts of the world, where they carried the Gospel; and who coalesced with the believing Gentiles in one church-state, under Christ their head: though it seems best to interpret this of the latter day, when the children of Israel and Judah shall join together in seeking the Lord their God, and the true Messiah, and shall be turned, and gathered to him; when they shall be no more two kingdoms or two nations, but be one under the Messiah, who shall be their King and Prince; when all their animosities shall be laid aside, and they shall no more envy or vex one another; but shall meet together in the same church-state, and worship the Lord with one shoulder and consent, being of one mind and sentiment in religious things, and when all Israel shall be saved, Jer. l. 4, 5. Ezek. xxxvii. 19—22. Isa. xi. 13. Zeph. iii. 9: *and appoint themselves one head*; not Sennacherib, as Aben Ezra, very absurdly; nor Hezekiah, nor Josiah, as others; nor Elijah the prophet, as some in Kimchi; nor Zerubbabel, to which the Targum seems to incline, paraphrasing it, "one head "of the house of David;" but better, as Jarchi, David their King; that is, the Messiah, as Kimchi and Ben Melech expressly interpret it; and so Abarbinel [b], though he understands it of the Messiah the son of Joseph; and undoubtedly the same is meant by the one head, as David their King and Prince, ch. iii. 5. Ezek. xxxvii. 24, 25. even Christ, who is the Head of angels, yea, the Head of every man, but in a special and peculiar sense the head of the body, the church; he is the federal and representative Head of his people, both in eternity and in time; and in such sense a Head to them, as a king is head of his subjects, a husband of his wife, a father of his family, and a master of his servants; and also as a natural head is to its body, of the same nature with it; in union to it; lives the same life; is above it, and more excellent than it: a perfect Head Christ is, there being nothing wanting in him as such; he has his eyes set upon his people; his ears are open to their cries; he smells a sweet savour of rest in their persons and services; he tastes and eats their pleasant fruits, and feels all their infirmities, troubles, and afflictions; and has a tongue to speak a word in season for them: there are no vicious humours in this Head to affect the body; no deformity in it, and all fulness therein to supply its wants; he is an everliving and everlasting Head, and the *one*, and only one; there is no other, neither the pope of Rome, nor any other; nor will true Israelites acknowledge any other: and though this Head is of God the Father's appointing, who has given him to be the Head; set him as King over Sion; raised him up to be a Prince and a Saviour; yet he is also of the saints' choosing and appointing; they approve of him as such, embrace him, own him, and submit to him, as the Jews will at the last day, though their forefathers have rejected him: *and they shall come up out of the land*; not of Israel, as Schmidt, who interprets this of the apostles going out from thence, and spreading the Gospel in the world; but out of the several lands and countries where Israel and Judah have been dispersed, and return to their own land; see Jer. iii. 18. Ezek. xxxiv. 13. and xxxvii. 21. So the Targum, "and they shall come up out of the land "of their captivity:" or it may be understood, figuratively and spiritually, of their coming up out of their captivity to sin, Satan, the law, and the world, as well as out of their present temporal captivity: and *out of the earth* [c], as it were, as it may be rendered; out of their earthly state, from the graves of sin, leaving their earthly affections, and becoming spiritual and heavenly-minded; willing to quit all that is dear unto them, even the country in which they were born and long lived, to follow Christ their Head and King: *for great shall be the day of Jezreel*; or, *though great* has been or is *the day of Jezreel* [d]; though it has been a great and long day of trouble and affliction to them, signified by Jezreel; see ver. 4, 5. yet all these good things promised shall surely be accomplished: indeed the day of Jezreel may be taken in a good sense, not for a time of dispersion and distress, but of great comfort, joy, and happiness; the word signifying, according to some, *the seed of God*, or *the arm of God*; and Jerom applies it to Christ, the seed of God; and the whole Gospel dispensation may be called his day, the day of salvation, the joyful day the Lord has made:

[b] Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 53. 2.
[c] מן הארץ e terra.

[d] כי quamvis; so some in Drusius, Rivet.

or rather by Jezreel, the seed of God, are meant his spiritual offspring, the children of Judah and Israel; who shall now be gathered, by *the arm of God*, his powerful and efficacious grace, and that in large numbers, so that great will be their day; so the Targum paraphrases it, "for great will be the day of their gathering." It respects the latter-day glory, when will be the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles; when there will be great peace and prosperity; great love and unity; great holiness and purity; great light and knowledge; great enjoyment of God, and of the presence of the Redeemer great glory upon the churches, and upon that a defence: in short, all the great and glorious things spoken of will now be completed; perfect deliverance from all afflictions and troubles; an entire destruction of all enemies; and a full enjoyment of the word and ordinances, in the purity of them, and large conversions everywhere.

CHAP. II.

THIS chapter is an explanation of the former, proceeding upon the same argument in more express words. The godly Israelites are here called upon to lay before the body of the people their idolatry, ingratitude, obstinacy, and ignorance of the God of their mercies; and to exhort them to repentance, lest they should be stripped of all their good things, and be brought into great distress and difficulties; all their joy and comfort cease, and be exposed to shame and contempt, ver. 1—13. yet, notwithstanding, many gracious promises are made unto them, of their having the alluring and comfortable word of the Gospel; of a door of hope; of salvation being opened to them; of faith in the Lord, and affection to him as their husband; of the removal of all idolatry from them; of safety from all enemies; of their open espousal to Christ; of his hearing of their prayers, and giving them plenty of all good things; and of their multiplication, conversion, and covenant relation to God, ver. 14—23.

Ver. 1. *Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi; and to your sisters, Ruhamah.*] These words are to be considered either in connexion with the latter part of the preceding chapter, and as directed to the sons of the living God, who had not been, but now were, *Ammi*, the Lord's people; and who had not, but now have, *Ruhamah*, obtained mercy; which grace and mercy shewn them, it became them to speak of one to another, to affect their hearts mutually with it, and to glorify God for it, Mal. iii. 16. as also to speak of it to their carnal relations, that so, if it was the will of God, it might be of use to them, to shew them the state they were in, the danger of it, their need of the grace and mercy of God, and the hope there was by their own instance and example of obtaining it; see Rom. ix. 1, 2, 3. and x. 1. or as directed to the converted Jews that appointed Christ their Head, and believed in him; exhorting them to own the believing Gentiles as their brethren and sisters, since they were the spiritual seed of Abraham their father, and walked in the steps of his faith; and to call them Ammi and Ruhamah, since they, who were not the people of God, now were, and who had not obtained mercy, now have obtained mercy, 1 Pet. ii. 10. or else they may be considered as in connexion with the following words, *plead with your mother;* and that either as spoken to the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who were the people of God, retained the pure worship of God, and obtained mercy of the Lord, ch. i. 7. and xi. 12. "O ye Ammi and Ruhamah, that are the "Lord's people, and he has had mercy on; stir up "and exhort your brethren and sisters of the ten "tribes, for so they were, notwithstanding their separation, 1 Kings xii. 24. to contend with their "mother, the body of the nation, about idolatry and "departure from God;" or as spoken to the godly among the ten tribes, who were the real people of God, and sharers in his grace and mercy; the remnant he reserved for himself, who had not bowed their knees to idols; or as the command of God by the prophet, to the people of Israel, to exhort one another to contend with their mother, who were, as yet, the Lord's people, had mercy shewn them, when this prophecy was delivered out; though, in case of obstinacy and impenitence, they were threatened with a *Lo-ammi* and *Lo-ruhamah*; so Schmidt, who thinks that *ammi* and *ruhamah* are put by way of *apposition* to *your brethren* and *sisters*, in which he seems to be right. Aben Ezra thinks the words are spoken ironically, like those in Eccl. xi. 9, and others, but without reason. The Targum is, "O ye prophets, say to your brethren, "and my people, and I will have mercy on your congregation;" but rather the words are spoken to the Jewish converts who first believed in Christ, were his people, received grace and mercy from him, and stood in the relation of brethren and sisters to one another, both in a natural and spiritual sense, to stir up one another to reprove their mother, the Jewish church, for rejecting Christ, saying, as follows:

Ver. 2. *Plead with your mother, plead,* &c.] The congregation of Israel, as the Targum; the body of the Jewish nation, which, with respect to individuals, was as a mother to her children; see Matt. xxi. 37. that is, lay before her her sin, in rejecting the Messiah, the Head and Husband of his true church and people; endeavour to convince her of it; reprove her for it; expostulate with her about it; argue the case with her, and shew her the danger of persisting in such an evil, as the apostles did, Acts ii. 23, 36. and iii. 14. and vii. 52. and xiii. 27, 40. for *she is not my wife, neither am I her husband;* for though there had been such a relation between them, yet it was now dissolved; she had broken the marriage covenant and contract, and God had given her a bill of divorce, Jer. xxxi. 32. Isa. l. 1. or, however, as she behaved not as a wife towards him, shewing love and affection, honour and reverence, and performing duty, and yielding obedience; so he would not carry it as a husband towards her, nourishing and cherishing her,

providing for her, and protecting and defending her; but leave her to shift for herself, and to the insults and abuses of others; having been guilty of idolatry, which is spiritual adultery, as the Israelites before the captivity were; and as the Jews in Christ's time were guilty of rejecting the word of God, and preferring their own traditions to it: hence it follows, *let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight*, or *from her face**, *and her adulteries from between her breasts*: alluding to the custom of harlots, who used to paint their faces, and to allure with their looks, words, and actions, and to make bare their breasts, or adorn them, or carry in them what were enticing and alluring. These adulteries and whoredoms, which are the same thing, may signify the many idolatries of the people of Israel before their captivity, and which were the cause of it; or the sins of the Jews before their dispersion; or their evil works, as the Targum, by which they departed from God and the true Messiah, and went a whoring after other lovers: thus they rejected, transgressed, and made of none effect the commandments of God by their traditions; paid tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, and neglected the weighty matters of the law; sought not the honour of God, but that which comes from men; and therefore confessed not the true Messiah, though under convictions of him, and went about to establish their own righteousness, and submitted not to his; these were the idols of their hearts, and the whoredoms and adulteries the Jewish converts, that truly believed in Christ, are ordered to exhort them to put away. The Septuagint and Arabic versions are, *I will take away her whoredoms*, &c.

Ver. 3. *Lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born*, &c.] Alluding to the case of an infant when born, which comes naked into the world; and referring to the state and condition of the Israelites in Egypt, which was the time of their nativity, as a people and church; see Zech. xvi. 4. and when they were in a state of servitude and bondage, and had no wealth and substance, and without possessions and lands, and had no country of their own to inhabit; and signifying that this should be their case again, if they persisted in their idolatry, impenitence, and unbelief; as has been the case of the ten tribes upon their captivity, when they were stripped of all their wealth and riches, carried away out of their own land, and scattered among the nations, and have never returned since; and as was the case of the Jews in their last destruction, for the rejection of Christ, they were stripped of their civil and religious privileges, of their temporal and spiritual mercies as a nation and church; what they feared is come upon them, that the Romans would come and take away their place and nation, John xi. 48. *and make her as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land*: having some respect to her former condition in the wilderness, where they had no food nor drink but what they had from God, as Abarbinel thinks; or else to the destruction and consumption of them in the wilderness, their carcasses falling there, who sinned against the Lord, as the Targum and Jarchi; and denoting the utter destruction of their commonwealth and church, when their land was laid waste, their city destroyed, their house and temple left desolate and burnt, and they deprived of all the necessaries of life, which was their case at their last destruction by the Romans; and to this day they are as they are described, ch. iii. 4: *and slay her with thirst*; after their vainly-expected Messiah, which has brought them to desperation; or with a thirst, not for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord, Amos viii. 11. the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, being taken away from them, and the clouds ordered to drop down no rain upon them; that is, the ministers of the word not to preach the Gospel to them; and so are left destitute of the means of grace, and of spiritual life, and of escaping eternal death, Matt. xxi. 43. Isa. v. 6. The Targum of the whole is, "lest I remove my Shechinah "from her, and take away her glory, and set her forsaken, as in the days of old, before she came to my "worship; and my fury shall remain upon her, as "it remained upon the people of that generation "that transgressed my law in the wilderness; and "I will set the land desolate, and kill her with "thirst."

Ver. 4. *And I will not have mercy upon her children*, &c.] The posterity of the Jews in succeeding ages, until the time of their conversion comes; they persisting in the sins of their forefathers, filling up the measure of their iniquities; remaining in their obstinate rejection of the Messiah, and in the same impenitence and unbelief, and having his blood imprecated upon them: *for they be the children of whoredoms*: begotten and born in whoredom, spurious and illegitimate; or that commit whoredoms; imitate their parents; are guilty of the same vices; a generation of vipers. So the Targum, "for they are children that commit idolatry;" retain the traditions of the elders; go about to establish their own righteousness, and reject the Messiah.

Ver. 5. *For their mother hath played the harlot*, &c.] Or committed idolatry; which is the reason why she is to be pleaded with, and why the Lord will not own her as his wife, or be a husband to her; and why she is to be exhorted to put away her whoredoms from her; and was in danger of all the above evils coming upon her, continuing in the same practice; and why her children were children of whoredoms. Though the connexion may be with the verse following, *for or because their mother hath played the harlot*, &c. *therefore I will hedge up* her *way*, &c. *She that conceived them hath done shamefully*: all sin is shameful and scandalous, especially adultery; it brings a reproach and a blot upon a person, that will not be wiped off; and so idolatry, worshipping stocks and stones instead of the living God; and particularly the sin of the Jewish church, in rejecting the true Messiah and his righteousness, and setting up their own, and tenaciously adhering to the traditions of the elders; and so departing from the true God, and his word and worship, which is no other than spiritual adultery or idolatry.

* מפניה a facie sua, Calvin, Pagninus, Piscator, Cocceius; a faciebus suis, Montanus, Schmidt.

The Targum is, "because their congregation hath "erred after the false prophets, their teachers are "confounded;" and which Jarchi interprets of the wise men that teach doctrines, who are ashamed because of the people of the earth; to whom they say, ye shall not steal, and yet they steal themselves; see Rom. ii. 21—24. Or, *she hath made ashamed*[f]; her husband, and her children: or, she is *confounded*[g], and *ashamed* herself, for what she has done. *For she said, I will go after my lovers*; her idols, as the ten tribes did after the calves at Dan and Beth-el. So Kimchi's father interprets it of the sun, moon, and stars, they worshipped; though he himself understands it of the Assyrians and Egyptians they were in alliance with, and trusted in. Some join together the Gentile nations and their gods. Or else it may be understood of the Jews seeking to the Romans, and courting their favour and friendship; desiring to be governed not by their own kings, but by the Romans[h]; declaring they had no king but Cæsar, and rejecting Christ as such, John xix. 12, 15. Acts xvii. 7. or rather of their beloved tenets, concerning traditions, the rites and ceremonies of the law, self-righteousness, &c.: the words are expressive of impudence, obstinacy, and self-will; resolving to pursue their own fancies, and have their own wills, be it as it would. *That give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink*, or *drinks*[i]; wine and other liquors, as Kimchi; these take in every thing belonging to food and raiment, and all the necessaries, and even delights and pleasures, of life: *bread and water*; all sorts of food: *wool and flax*; all sorts of clothing, both woollen and linen, for outward or inward covering: and *oil*, and *drinks*, or *liquors*; every thing for pleasure and delight; all which she ascribed not to God, from whence all good things come; but, which was an aggravation of her sin, to her lovers, her allies, or her idols; as the Jews did their plenty of victuals to the queen of heaven, and their worship of her, Jer. xliv. 17, 18. and as, in the times of Christ, they ascribed not only their enjoyment of temporal good things, but their righteousness, life, and salvation, to their observance of traditions, rites, and ceremonies, and the externals of religion.

Ver. 6. *Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns*, &c.] As fields and vineyards are fenced with thorn-hedges to keep out beasts; or rather as closes and fields are fenced to keep cattle in, from going out and straying elsewhere; which may be expressive of afflictions, and particularly wars among them, that they could not stir out and go from place to place: *and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths*; to go to Dan and Beth-el, and worship the calves there, as some; or to go to the Egyptians and Assyrians for help, as Jarchi and Kimchi; though it was by the latter that they were hedged in, and walled and cooped up, when the city of Samaria was besieged three years: rather this respects the straits and difficulties the Jews have been reduced to by the destruction of Jerusalem, and the continuance of them ever since; so that they are not able to offer their daily sacrifice, kill and eat their passover-lamb, and perform other rites and ceremonies they used in their own land; which they would fain perform, though abolished by Christ, but are restrained by this hedge and wall, the destruction of their temple and altar, and not being suffered to possess their land; hence they are said to be without a sacrifice and an ephod, ch. iii. 4. see Dan. ix. 27.

Ver. 7. *And she shall follow after her lovers*, &c.] Before mentioned; that is, in her affections and desires, with great eagerness and earnestness, as men pursue what they are bent upon; otherwise, being hedged in and walled up, she could not go after them in a proper sense: *but she shall not overtake them*; they fleeing from her, and she pent up: *she shall seek them, but shall not find them*; shall not be able to enjoy them, or act according to her wishes and desires, with respect to the performance of sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies, as before observed: *then shall she say*; in her heart, finding all endeavours fruitless, and that the things sought after were never to be had; the hedges and wall, the obstructions in the way, were never to be removed, whilst in such a pursuit; wherefore after a long time, many hundreds of years, even in the latter day, being convinced of her sin and folly in rejecting Christ, and pursuing after other objects, she will take up the following resolution: *I will go and return to my first husband*; either the God of Israel, whom the ten tribes departed from by worshipping the calves Jeroboam set up; but in the latter day will seek the Lord their God again, who was a husband to them, and shall cleave to him again, and all Israel shall be saved: so the Targum, "I will go and return to the service of my first "master, for it was well with me when I served him; "henceforth I will not serve idols:" or Christ, who was promised and prophesied of as a husband to the Jewish church, Isa. liv. 5. and whom they believed in, and expected as such, but when he came rejected him; but now being convinced of their error shall seek David their King, appoint themselves one head, and embrace Christ as their husband, and adhere to him; see ch. iii. 5: *for then was it better with me than now*; whilst in the faith, and hope, and expectation of the true Messiah; having a spiritual apprehension of him, true faith in him, and comfort from him, as held forth in the promise; being then possessed of the good land, in the enjoyment of the word and ordinances, and of all religious and civil privileges, but now deprived of them. This may be applied to the case of true believers in Christ, having partially departed from him, and being restored. Christ is a husband to them, who has betrothed them to himself, and they have given themselves to him, and have been loved, nourished, cherished, and provided for by him, and for a while had much nearness, familiarity, and communion with him; but unbelief prevailing, first love waxing cold, and being got into a carnal and sleepy frame, neglect both private and public worship, fall into sin, and removed from church-communion, and so may be said to have departed from Christ their husband; but

[f] הובישה pudefecit, Junius apud Rivet.
[g] Confusa, vel pudefacta, Pagninus, Montanus; pudore suffusa est, Gussetius.

[h] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 17. c. 13. sect. 2.
[i] שקויי potationes meas, Montanus; potiones meas, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; potus meos, Cocceius, Schmidt.

being recovered by divine grace, and sensible of their sins, resolve to return to him again by repentance and acknowledgment, by doing their first works, and by attendance on his word and ordinances; instigated hereunto very much by remembering how it has been with them when they kept close to him, and observing the difference between those times and the present; how they had then the presence of God and Christ, and communion with them, and the secret discoveries of the love of God; in what lively exercise the graces of the Spirit were; what delight and profit they had in ordinances, and what peace, joy, and comfort, in their souls; all which now they want; see Job xxix. 2, 3, 4, 5.

Ver. 8. *For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil,* &c.] This is a reason, not of her resolution to return to her first husband, but to go after lovers, and of her ascribing these things to them, ver. 5. and why the Lord would behave towards her as he determined to do, ver. 6, 7. this ignorance was wilful and affected, and therefore blamable; she might have known, but she would not; she did not set her mind to know; she did not consider who gave her these things, nor behave as if she knew, as Jarchi: or she did not own and acknowledge God to be the author and giver of them, as she should have done; which was ingratitude rather than ignorance, and is a heinous sin, and to be resented; since all good things, temporal and spiritual, as daily bread, all the necessaries of life, signified by these things, so the word, and ordinances, and spiritual gifts, which they may be emblems of, come from God, and should be acknowledged; but the Jews, as in the times of Isaiah, did not know him, and acknowledge his benefits, Isa. i. 2, 3. so, in the times of Christ, they did not know him to be the God of Israel, God over all, blessed for ever; from whom, and for whose sake, who was to be, and was born of them, they enjoyed the privileges they did, John i. 10, 11. Rom. ix. 4, 5. *And multiplied her silver and gold,* which *they prepared for Baal;* the relative *which* may refer to all that goes before; and the sense be, that these gifts of God, and which should have been owned as such, and employed in his service, and to his glory; some were made use of in meat and drink offerings to Baal; and others in decking themselves to appear in his worship to his honour; or in ornamenting the idol therewith, or in making it thereof, so the Targum and Syriac version: and all this may be said to be done, when these things are spent in the service of other lords than the Lord himself; when they are abused to sinful purposes, and consumed on the lusts of men, to gratify their sensuality, pride, and vanity, which the Jews did.

Ver. 9. *Therefore will I return, and take away,* &c.] Or, *take away again**; an usual Hebraism: *my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof;* for though these are the gifts of God to men for their use, and to dispose of for the good of others; yet he retains his property in them, and can and will call them to an account for their stewardship; and, when he pleases, take away both their office, and the good things they were intrusted with, not making a right use of them; and this he does in his own appointed time and season, or at such a time when these are at the best, and the greatest good is expected from them, and which therefore is the more afflictive; as in the time of harvest and vintage, so Kimchi, when corn and grapes are fully ripe; or, as the Targum, in the time of the corn being on the floor, and of the pressure of the wine: *and will recover my wool, and my flax,* given *to cover her nakedness*: or, *I will take away;* by force and violence, as out of the hands of thieves, and robbers, and usurpers, who have no right to them, being forfeited; these were given to cover her nakedness, but not to deck herself with for the honour of her idols, or to cherish pride and superstition; see Matt. xxiii. 5. these were all taken away when the Romans came and took away their place and nation, John xi. 48. The Septuagint and Arabic versions give the sense as if these were taken, *that they might not cover her nakedness,* or *shame;* but that it might be exposed, as follows:

Ver. 10. *And now will I discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers,* &c.] The people, her lovers, as the Targum; which is by many understood of the Egyptians and Assyrians; but rather means the Romans, whom the Jews courted as their friends: though it seems best to interpret it in a more general way, that the sin and folly of the Jews in rejecting Christ, and adhering to their beloved tenets, should be discovered and made manifest to all in the most public manner by their punishment; by being scattered among the nations, and becoming a taunt, reproach, and a curse everywhere: *and none shall deliver her out of my hand;* none of her lovers, as Kimchi, nor any other: it denotes the utter, total, and final destruction of the Jews, wrath being come upon them to the uttermost; and which is irrecoverable by human help, has continued for many hundred years, and will until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, or till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, Luke xxi. 24. Rom. xi. 25.

Ver. 11. *I will also cause all her mirth to cease,* &c.] As it must in course, this being her case, as before described, whether considered in individuals, or as a body politic, or in their church-state, as follows: *her feast-days;* which the Jews understand of the three feasts of tabernacles, passover, and pentecost; typical of Christ's tabernacling in human nature; of his being the passover sacrificed for us; and of the first fruits of the spirit; which being come, the shadows are gone and vanished, and these feasts are no more: *her new moons, and her sabbaths;* the first day of every month, and the seventh day of every week, observed for religious exercises; typical of the light the church receives from Christ, and the rest it has in him; and he, the body and substance of them, being come, these are no more, Col. ii. 16, 17: *and all her solemn feasts;* all others, whether of God's appointment or their own; all are made to cease of right, if not in fact; the law of commandments, contained in ordinances, being abolished by Christ, and the Jews without a priest, sacrifice, and ephod, Ephes. ii. 14, 15, 16. Hos. iii. 4.

Ver. 12. *And I will destroy her vines and her fig-trees,* &c.] Which are mentioned for the rest, being

* אשוב ולקחתי iterum capiam, Drusius; recipiam, Livelcus.

the most fruitful and beneficial: this was done when Judea was invaded, overrun and wasted, by the Roman army; and when many were cut down, as Josephus observes, to build forts, and cast up mounts against Jerusalem; so that, he says [t], the appearance of the earth was miserable, for what before was adorned with trees and gardens, looked now like a wilderness: *whereof she hath said, these are my rewards that my lovers have given me*; alluding to the hire of harlots, given them by their gallants; these she ascribed, as she did before her bread, water, wool, flax, and oil, ver. 5, not to God, the author and giver of them, but to the people her lovers, as the Targum; or to her idols, or to her beloved tenets, and doing according to them; and which is here mentioned as a reason of the divine resentment, and why he destroyed these fruitful trees: *and I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them*; make the vines and fig-trees like forest-trees, barren and unfruitful; the fruitful land of Judea should be turned into a forest, or become like a desert or wilderness, and all the fruits of it should be eaten up by wild beasts; by their enemies, compared to the beasts of the field, particularly the Romans, the fourth beast; see Isa. lvi. 9. Dan. vii. 7.

Ver. 13. *And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, &c.*] That is, punish them for all the idolatries committed by their forefathers, in the days that the several Baals, as Baal-peor, and Baal-berith, and others, were worshipped by them; they their children, though not worshipping these Baalim, yet other lords, lusts and idols, they set up of themselves, and in their own hearts; see Matt. xxiii. 32—35: *wherein she burnt incense to them*; to the Baalim; this one species of idolatrous worship being put for the rest: *and she decked herself with her ear-rings and her jewels*: with her best and richest attire; the latter word signifying in the Arabic language, as Jarchi observes, the ornaments of women; this was done to grace the idolatrous worship, and for the honour of the idols: *and she went after her lovers*; the traditions of the elders; the weak and beggarly elements of the ceremonial law now abolished, and their own legal righteousness: *and forgot me, saith the Lord*; or, "left my worship," as the Targum; forgot and rejected the true Messiah, his word and ordinances.

Ver. 14. *Therefore, behold, I will allure her, &c.*] Since these rough ways will not do, I'll take another, a more mild and gentle way; instead of threatening, terrifying, and punishing, I'll allure, persuade, and entice, giving loving words and winning language: or *nevertheless, or notwithstanding* [u]: so Noldius and others render the particle; though they have thus behaved themselves, and such methods have been taken with them to no purpose, yet I'll do as follows: the words may be understood of the call and conversion of the people of God, the spiritual Israel of God, both Jews and Gentiles, in the first times of the Gospel, as ver. 23 is quoted and applied by the Apostle Paul, Rom. ix. 24, 25. and be understood also of the call of the believing Jews out of Jerusalem, before the destruction of it, Luke xxi. 21. from whence they removed to Pella, as Eusebius [w] relates: and of the apostles out of the land of Judea into the wilderness of the people, the Gentile world, to preach the Gospel there; where vineyards or churches were planted; the door of faith and hope were opened to the Gentiles, that had been without hope; and the conversions now made, both among Jews and Gentiles, opened a door of hope, or were a pledge of the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles in the latter day; to which times also these words may be applied, when the Jews shall be allured and persuaded to seek the Lord their God, and David their King, and join Gospel-churches in the wilderness of the people, and shall have abundance of spiritual consolation and joy; and they may also be applied to the conversion of sinners in common, and set forth the methods of God's grace in dealing with them: there is throughout an allusion to Israel's coming out of Egypt, from whence the Lord allured and persuaded them by Moses and Aaron; and then brought them into the wilderness, where he fed and supplied them, and spoke comfortably to them, and gave them the lively oracles; and from whence, from the borders of it, they had and entered into the vineyards in the land of Canaan; and in the valley of Achor ate of the corn of the land, which was a door of hope to them they should enjoy the whole land; and when they rejoiced exceedingly, particularly at the Red sea, at their first coming out. The word rendered *allure* signifies to *persuade* [x], as in Gen. ix. 27. and in conversion the Lord persuades men, not merely by moral suasion, or the outward ministry of the word, but by powerful and efficacious grace; opening the heart to attend to things spoken, and the eyes of the understanding to behold wondrous things in the word of God; working upon the heart, and removing the hardness and impenitence of it; quickening the soul, drawing it with the cords of love, and sweetly operating upon the will; and on a sudden and unawares making the soul like the chariots of Amminadib, or a willing people; persuading it to true repentance for sin, to part with sins and sinful companions, and with its own righteousness, and to come to Christ, and to look to him, and lay hold on him as the Saviour, and to submit to his ordinances: moreover, the Lord persuades men at conversion of his love to them, and of their interest in Christ, and all the blessings of grace in him. Kimchi's note is, "I will put "into her heart to return by repentance;" and compares with it Ezek. xxxvi. 26. The Targum is, "I "will subject her to the law." *And bring her into the wilderness*: so in conversion the Lord calls and separates his people from the world, as the Israelites were from the Egyptians, when brought into the wilderness; and when they are solitary and alone, as they were, and so in a fit circumstance to be spoken unto, and to hear comfortable words, as follows; and when the Lord feeds them with the corn of heaven, with hidden manna, the food of the wilderness; and when they come into trouble and affliction for the sake of

[t] De Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 1. sect. 1.
[u] לכן atqui, vel attamen, Glassius.
[w] Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 5.

[x] מפתיה persuadendo inducam eam, Munster; persuadebo illi, Calvin; persuadens, vel persuadebo illi, Schmidt.

Christ and his Gospel. Some understand this of the church into which they are brought, because separate from the world, and attended with trouble; but this is rather a garden than a wilderness. Some, as Noldius and others, render it, *when* or *after I have brought her into the wilderness* [p]; so after the Lord has shewn men their sin and danger, their wilderness, desolate, state and condition, and stripped them of all succour elsewhere; or has brought them under afflictive dispensations of Providence; then he does what he said before, and follows after. *And speak comfortably unto her*: or, *speak to her heart* [q], as in Isa. xl. 2. as he does when he tells them their sins are forgiven; that he has loved them with an everlasting love; what exceeding great and precious promises he has made unto them; and when he speaks to them by the Spirit and Comforter, who takes his and the things of Christ, and shews them unto them; and in his word, written for their consolation; and by his ministers, who are *Barnabases*, sons of comfort; and in the ordinances, those breasts of consolation. The Targum is, "and I will do for "her wonders and great things, as I did for her in "the wilderness; and by the hand of my servants the "prophets I will speak comforts to her heart." The Jewish writers [r] interpret this of the Messiah's leading people into a wilderness in a literal sense; they ask where will he (the Messiah) lead them? the answer of some is, to the wilderness of Judea (see Matt. iii. 1, 13); and of others is, to the wilderness of Sihon and Og (the wilderness the Israelites passed through when they came out of Egypt): they, who are on the side of the first answer, urge in favour of it Hos. xii. 9. and they who are for the latter produce this passage.

Ver. 15. *And I will give her vineyards from thence*, &c.] Either from the wilderness into which she is brought; or from the time of her being brought there, allured and spoke comfortably to; which are put for all temporal blessings, and as emblems of spiritual ones: and so from the time that the Lord deals thus graciously, as before expressed, he gives more grace, larger measures, and continual supplies of it, and withholds nothing good, comfortable, and useful to them: the Vulgate Latin version renders it, *her vine-dressers*; and the Targum, her governors: *and the valley of Achor for a door of hope*; this valley was so named from Achan, who was stoned in it in the days of Joshua; who is by Josephus [s], Theodoret [t], and others, called Achar, and so in 1 Chron. ii. 7. and the signification of its name is the valley of trouble, because that he both troubled Israel by his evil actions, which brought them into distress; and because he was here troubled himself, being here punished for his sin, Josh. vii. 24, 25, 26. Jerom [u] says it lies to the north of Jericho, and is still called by its old name by the inhabitants of it. Some take it to be the same with the valley of En-gedi, which 'tis certain was near Jericho. Now as the valley of Achor was at the entrance of the Israelites into the land of Canaan, and gave them hope of possessing the whole land; so what the people of God enjoy at first conversion lays a foundation for hope of eternal glory and happiness; as the Lord's being given them as their portion, Christ as their Saviour, and all things freely with him; the Spirit and his grace as the earnest and pledge of the eternal inheritance: grace and glory are so strictly connected, that the one is a door of hope to the other. *And she shall sing there*; either in the wilderness, where the Lord speaks comfortably to her; or in the vineyards she has from thence; alluding to the songs of joy at the time of vintage, or pressing of the grapes: or in the valley of Achor, there rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, singing the songs of electing, redeeming, pardoning, and justifying grace: *as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt*: as when the people of Israel were first brought into their civil and ecclesiastic state, which were the days of their youth as a people; and that was when they came out of Egypt, and had passed the Red sea, at the shore of which they sung; and to which is the allusion here; see Exod. xv. 1. Rev. xv. 3. this passage is applied to the times of the Messiah in the Talmud [w].

Ver. 16. *And it shall be at that day, saith the Lord*, &c.] The Gospel day, the times of the Gospel dispensation, the latter part of them; at the time of the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles; at the time when God will allure and persuade them to seek the Messiah, and they shall turn to him; when he shall speak comfortably to them, and give them a door of hope, and all spiritual blessings, and cause them to sing as when they came out of Egypt: that *thou shalt call me Ishi*; or, *my husband* [x]; returning to Christ their first husband, and being received by him, shall have faith and interest in him, and full assurance of it; and shall not only be allowed to call him their husband, but in the strength of faith, and with great freedom of soul, shall call him so, and say as the church did, *my beloved is mine, and I am his*, Cant. ii. 16: or, *my man* [y]; the man the Lord, the man Jehovah's fellow, Immanuel God with us, God in human nature; and so more manifestly points at Christ, who, most properly speaking, stands in the relation of a husband to his people: or, *my strength*, as some interpret it; the husband being the strength, protection, and defence of the wife, the weaker vessel; so Christ is the strength of his saints, in whom they have righteousness and strength, and through whose strength they can do all things: *and shalt call me no more Baali*; which signifies *my husband* too, and is used of God and Christ; he is called Baal, and the church is called Beulah, because married together, Isa. liv. 5. and lxii. 4, 5. Jer. xxxi. 32. but it signifies a lordly and imperious husband; and the other word, *Ishi*, a loving one: so Jarchi observes that the sense is, that they should serve the Lord from love, and not fear; *Ishi* being a word expressive of marriage and love,

[p] והלכתיה המדבר postquam duxero eam in desertum, Calvin, Drusius; quum deduxero, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[q] על לבה ad cor ejus, Pagninus, Cocceius; super cor ejus, Munster, Montanus, Schmidt.
[r] Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 11. 2. Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2.
[s] Antiqu. l. 5. c. 1. sect. 10, 14.
[t] Comment. in loc.
[u] De locis Hebr. fol. 88. B. tom. 3.
[w] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 111. 1.
[x] אישי maritus meus, Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus; marite mi, Schmidt.
[y] Vir meus, V. L. mi vir, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Liveleus.

and *Bauli* of lordship and fear: hence some have thought this to be the reason why the one should be used, and the other not, under the Gospel dispensation; because saints now have not the spirit of bondage to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they call God their father, and Christ their husband: though rather the reason is, because the word *Baal*, as R. Marinus observes, is of doubtful signification, an ambiguous word, used for the idol Baal, as well as signifies lord and husband; and therefore to be laid aside, lest, when they mentioned it, it should be thought they spoke of Baal, and not of the Lord; or should be led to think of that idol, and remember him.

Ver. 17. *For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth*, &c.] Out of the mouth of Israel, as Saadiah; out of the mouth of the converted Jews, and even out of the mouth of the Gentiles, as Kimchi owns; the several Baals, as Baal-peor, Baal-berith, and Baal-zebub, and others: the names of them should be no more used, should not be spoken of, unless with detestation and abhorrence; not with honour and respect, with love and affection, or so as to yield worship and homage to them; or otherwise their names may be lawfully mentioned, as in Rom. xi. 4. there seems to be some reference to the law in Exod. xxiii. 13. the sense is, that idolatry shall be utterly abolished, even of every kind; not the worship of Baalim only, but of all other idols: and so the Targum is, "and I will take away the name of the idols "of the people out of their mouth;" and may design the idolatry of the church of Rome; their worship of images of gold and silver, wood, brass, and stone; in whose communion are many of the Jews at this time; but when the time of their conversion comes, all this will be abolished among them, and among the Gentiles also: *and they shall no more be remembered by their name*; or made mention of by name; the same thing as before, in other words, repeated for the confirmation of it.

Ver. 18. *And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field*, &c.] That is, so as to be at peace with them, as the Targum is; see Job v. 23. the sense is, the Lord here promises this unto them, and that it shall be as sure and firm, and to be as much depended upon, as if it was established and settled by covenant, and should be enjoyed as a covenant mercy and blessing; and the creatures should as strictly observe it, and answer to it, as if bound by covenant: and this should reach not only to the beasts of the field, the wild beasts of prey, but *the fowls of heaven*; as the locusts and others, as Kimchi observes, which should not eat up the fruits and increase of the earth: and *the creeping things of the ground*: as serpents and scorpions, as the seme writer suggests. Some think this was fulfilled in the first times of the Gospel, when the apostles took up serpents, and trod on scorpions, without any hurt; but then nothing was more common than for the Christians to be thrown to the lions, and devoured by beasts of prey. Others refer it to the last days, the times of the restitution of all things, when they suppose all creatures will be restored to their paradisaical estate, and be in entire subjection to men. Rather the sense is, that whereas noisome beasts, and other things, were one of God's sore judgments, with which he threatened his people, when they sinned against him, now they should no more be hurt by them in a way of judgment; and, indeed, should cease from being among them, so that they should be in no fear of them any more; see Lev. xxvi. 22. Ezek. xiv. 21. and xxxiv. 25, 28. Though the words may be understood figuratively and mystically, either of deliverance from all spiritual enemies by Christ, as sin, Satan, and the world, and all others; or of freedom from all wicked men, cruel and crafty ones, open and secret persecutors of the saints: persecution will cease at the time of the Jews' conversion; antichrist, and all the antichristian states, will be destroyed; the beast and false prophet will be taken and cast into the furnace of fire; the old serpent, the devil, will be bound, during the Millennium; and there will be none to hurt in God's holy mountain, neither in the spiritual nor personal reign of Christ. *And I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth*; all the instruments of war shall be no more, these mentioned being put for all the rest; and there shall be no more battles fought after that at Armageddon; swords shall be beat into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks; there shall be no more wars, nor rumours of wars, but perfect external peace from all enemies on all sides, as well as spiritual and internal peace in the breast of the saints; and of both there shall be abundance, and without end, Psal. lxxii. 7. Isa. ii. 4. and ix. 7: *and will make them to lie down safely*: under the protection of the King Messiah, David their Prince, who shall be over them, and whom they shall own, acknowledge, and serve, and so dwell in the utmost safety and security, not fearing any enemy whatever; they may lie down on their couches at meals, or on their beds at night for rest, or as flocks of sheep in their folds and pastures, and none make them afraid; see Jer. xxiii. 5.

Ver. 19. *And I will betroth thee unto me for ever*, &c.] Which is taking them into a marriage-relation with himself; and is to be understood not of the whole body of God's elect, who were secretly betrothed to Christ in the everlasting covenant from eternity; for this respects what is yet to come; but of the people of the Jews, when converted in the latter day, when will be the marriage of the Lamb with them, and with the fulness of the Gentiles then brought in; of which see Rev. xix. 7, 8, 9. who will then return to their first husband; and though the Jews have been divorced, they will be received again, and be afresh betrothed; a new covenant or contract will be made with them, and which shall last for ever, Jer. xxxi. 31, 32. and this may be applied to every particular soul at conversion, which is the day of their open espousals to Christ; and they are visibly brought into a marriage-relation with him, than which nothing is more near; they become flesh of his flesh, bone of his bone, yea, one spirit with him, and are indulged with near communion with him; and hence is that sympathy he has with them in all their afflictions, temptations, and exercises, and takes that as done to him which is done to them, whether good or ill; hence all their debts or sins become his, and he satisfies for them, and his righteousness becomes theirs: this is a very endearing relation; there is a mutual delight and complacency they take in each other; and a most honour-

able one it is; hence they are called by his name, Christians, and partake of his honour; he is King, and they queen; and a very beneficial relation it is, for all that Christ is, and has, are theirs; and a most marvellous and wondrous thing it is that he should betroth them to himself, when he is the son of the living God, himself the true God, God over all blessed for ever, the Maker and Governor of the world, and heir of all things; and though they in their secret betrothment were considered as sinless creatures, yet in their open espousals at conversion are fallen sinners, in a very low estate indeed; under sentence of condemnation and death; devoid of the image of God; depraved, polluted, and guilty creatures; in deep debt, and extreme poverty; it is as if a prince, heir apparent to the throne, should take a convict or condemned malefactor out of her cell, or a common strumpet out of the stews, or a bankrupt and beggar from the dunghil, and marry her: and this relation will continue *for ever*: the marriage covenant or contract is an everlasting one; the bond of union, which is everlasting and unchangeable love, is indissoluble; death cannot take place in either party; both shall live for ever; and this is a strong proof of the final perseverance of the saints. *Yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness*; either in truth, in sincerity, heartily, and without any hypocrisy or dissimulation; or consistent with righteousness, with his love of righteousness and holiness, and hatred of sin: or rather in his own justifying righteousness; not in their own righteousness, which is as rags; for though he finds them in such rags, he strips them of them, and puts on the wedding-garment, the robe of his own righteousness, and garment of salvation; when they become as a bride, adorned with ornaments, and so made ready for the nuptials, and in this he betroths them; see Isa. lxi. 10. Matt. xxii. 12. Rev. xix. 7, 8: *and in judgment*; in sanctification, according to some, the work being now begun by the spirit of God, as a spirit of judgment; or in a judicious way, not rashly and precipitantly, but with mature deliberation, and of choice arising from judgment; or rather absolving them from the sentence of condemnation and death by his righteousness, and protecting and defending them from their enemies, for the sake of which, and other things, he takes them into this relation; *and in loving-kindness, and in mercies*; denoting both the love, which is the spring and source of this relation, and not any merits of theirs; and the kind and tender manner in which he betroths them; as well as the numerous favours he bestows upon them; as pardon of sin; justification of life; spiritual peace; supplies of all grace, and eternal life; all the effects of free grace, unmerited love, and sovereign mercy.

Ver. 20. *I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness*, &c.] Which lies in keeping the marriage-contract inviolable; Christ will never suffer his faithfulness to fail, nor break his covenant; as he is faithful to his Father that appointed him, so he is, and will be, to his church and people, and to every believer, to whom he is espoused; and it is he that makes them faithful unto him, and gives them faith to believe in him, receive, embrace, own, and acknowledge him as their husband: and in this sense some understand it, rendering it, *in faith*[a]; so the Targum and others. This is the third time the word *betroth* is used, or this promise made; which, according to Jerom, refers to the espousing of the Jews in Abraham, at Mount Sinai, and in the times of Christ; and, according to Kimchi, to the three captivities of the Jews, in Egypt, in Babylon, and that in which they now are: and some Christian writers think the mystery of the Trinity is here pointed at; and the sense to be, that all the three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, would espouse them: but rather it is so often repeated to confirm it, and express the certainty of it, which might, on many accounts, seem a thing incredible. *And thou shalt know the Lord*: that the Messiah is Jehovah, and that he is their husband; they shall all know him, from the least to the greatest; they shall have a saving knowledge of him, which will issue in eternal life; they shall own him, and acknowledge him, serve and obey him, as their Lord, Head, and Husband, as well as love him, and believe in him. The Targum is, "and "ye shall know to fear before the Lord;" see Jer. xxxi. 34. Let it be observed, here are no conditions throughout, it is only *I will*, and *thou shalt*.

Ver. 21. *And it shall come to pass in that day*, &c.] When these espousals shall be made, when the marriage of the Lamb will be come, and his bride will be betrothed to him; then the whole creation, the heavens and the earth, shall contribute of their riches and plenty to make a marriage-feast for them; or then shall the spouse of Christ, in a very visible and plentiful manner, by virtue of the marriage-union between them, partake of all his good things, both temporal and spiritual; and especially the latter, as signified by the former; but yet in the use of means, and as the effect of prayer, as follows: *I will hear, saith the Lord*; the petitions of his new-married bride, which he can't deny her: or, *I will answer*[b]; men oftentimes hear, and answer not; but when the Lord hears his people, he answers them, and grants them their requests; he is a God hearing and answering prayer. So the Targum, "I will receive your prayer, saith the Lord." *I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth*; in these and the following words is an elegant prosopopœia, a figure by which inanimate creatures are represented as persons speaking, praying, asking, and being heard and answered; and a beautiful climax, or a chain of second causes linked together, and as depending upon the first cause, the Lord himself; the heavens are represented as desiring the Lord of nature, the Maker and Supporter of them, having been like brass, and shut up, that they might have leave to let down their refreshing dews, and gentle showers of rain, upon the earth; and the earth as being dry and thirsty, as gaping, opening its mouth, and imploring these benign influences of the heavens; and both as answered: for so it may be rendered, *I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth*[c]; the Lord promises to answer the desires of the heavens, and allow them to drop their dew, and distil their rain; and so they shall answer the cravings

[a] באמונה in fide, V. L. &c.
[b] אענה respondebo, Calvin, Drusius, Tarnovius, Cocceius.
[c] אענה את שמים respondebo cœlo, & illud respondebit terræ, Cocceius, Drusius.

of the earth. The spiritual sense may be, according to Schmidt, Christ is he on whom all blessings depend; *heaven* may signify the Holy Spirit Christ gives, who intercedes with him for the saints; the *earth* the ministration of the word and ordinances, by which the Spirit is given, invoked by the ministers of them. Or, as Cocceius, the *heavens* may design the ministers of the church, who govern in it, and who pray and plead for help, assistance, and success; and the *earth* the audience, the common people, who also pray, and are heard and answered, when ministers let down the dew and rain of evangelical doctrine upon them, and water them, and refresh them with it; and such precious seasons as these, as the fruit of prayer, will the saints have in the latter day.

Ver. 22. *And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil,* &c.] Or *answer;* here the corn, and vines, and olive-trees, are represented as requesting the earth to be let into it, and receive moisture from it, that they may grow and increase, and bring forth fruit; by which may be meant the fruits and graces of the Spirit, and all spiritual gifts, communicated by means of the word and ordinances; or the fruits brought forth by the church, under the ministry of the word; which serves like *corn* to nourish and strengthen; like *wine* to comfort, cheer, and revive; and like *oil* to heal and soften, as well as make glad. *And they shall hear Jezreel;* or *answer;* that is, these trees and fruits shall answer to the requests and desires of Jezreel, who shall be abundantly blessed with them. By *Jezreel* is not meant the name of a place, as Aben Ezra; but the people of Israel, who had before been signified by a son of the prophet of this name, ch. i. 4. and which name is here continued, to shew how unworthy they were of such favours in themselves, and the riches of God's grace in bestowing them on them: or else the word here has a different signification; whereas before it signified their being scattered and dispersed, here their being the seed of God; and which is confirmed by the following words, *I will sow her unto me,* &c.: the sum of the whole is, that at the prayers of the Lord's people abundance of spiritual blessings shall be bestowed upon them from Christ by the Spirit, under the ministration of the word and ordinances. The Targum of both verses is, "I will command the heavens, and they "shall let down rain upon the earth; and the earth "shall produce corn, and wine, and oil, and they "shall be sufficient for the captivity of the people." Kimchi says this belongs to the time of salvation; and Aben Ezra to time to come.

Ver. 23. *And I will sow her unto me in the earth,* &c.] That is, Jezreel, or the people of God, the church betrothed; this is another blessing following upon the marriage-relation between Christ and his people, both Jews and Gentiles, in the latter day, a multiplication of a spiritual seed and offspring. So Kimchi and Aben Ezra observe, that the words signify that the people of Israel shall increase and be fruitful as the seed of the earth. These now are good seed which the Lord sows; such as are born not of corruptible but incorruptible seed; are quickened by the spirit of God; have a good work of grace begun in them; and though they may lie for some time under the clods in darkness and obscurity, yet shall rise up in the green blade of a lively profession, and bring forth the fruits of righteousness. Seed for sowing is the choicest and most precious, and of greatest esteem and value, and is separated from the rest for that use, though but little and small in quantity in comparison of it; all which is applicable to the people of God. This is said to be sown *in the earth* or *land;* either in their own land, the land of Israel, into which they shall now be brought, Ezek. xxxvii. 21, 22. Amos ix. 15. or in the field of the world, the nations and people of the earth, according to Zech. x. 9. or rather in the churches of Christ on earth, the churches in the Gentile world, into which the Jews, when converted, shall be brought, and increase and multiply; and this will be all the Lord's doing. *I will sow her;* he will quicken and convert them, and place and plant them in Gospel churches, though ministers may be instruments in his hands; and all their fruitfulness and increase will be *unto him,* for his service, the promotion of his interest, and for his honour and glory. The Targum is, "I will esta- "blish you before me in the land of my Shechinah or "majesty." *And I will have mercy on her that had not "obtained mercy;* upon Lo-Ruhamah, or the people of Israel, signified by her, ch. i. 6. and also the Gentiles, for to both Jews and Gentiles the apostle applies the words in Rom. ix. 24, 25. and they were fulfilled in part in his time, by the conversion of some of the Jews, and by the calling of the Gentiles; but will have a larger accomplishment in the latter day, when all Israel shall obtain mercy, and be saved; see Rom. xi. 26, 30, 31, 32. and are applicable to the people of God at all times, when called by grace; for though before conversion there is mercy for them in the heart of God, which is from everlasting; and in his purpose and resolution to bestow; and which is displayed in his choice of them, considered in the decree of the means as fallen creatures, and so vessels of mercy; and which is laid up in covenant for them, which is full of the sure mercies of David; and appears in the mission of Christ, and their redemption by him; and in sparing and saving them before calling; as well as in their regeneration, which is the fruit of abundant mercy; yet is not manifested to them till converted, when they openly obtain it: the Lord has mercy on them, and brings them out of the horrible pit of the state of nature; plucks them as brands out of the burning; opens the prison-doors, knocks off their fetters, and sets them free; feeds their hungry and clothes their naked souls; heals their diseases, and pardons their iniquities, and saves them with an everlasting salvation. *And I will say to* them *which were not my people, thou art my people;* or to *Lo-ammi,* the people of Israel, signified by the prophet's child of that name, ch. i. 9. who should no more be called so, but *Ammi,* my people, ch. ii. 1. which, as before observed, was in part fulfilled in the first times of the Gospel; but will be more fully accomplished at the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles; who though chosen to be the people of God, and are so federally, and were given in covenant to Christ as such, and so redeemed and saved by him from their sins; yet are

not till conversion laid hold on by the Lord, and formed as his people for himself, and are without knowledge of him, and communion with him: nor are they called his people by themselves or others; but, when converted, they have the characters, and enjoy the privileges, of God's people; they have the witness of the relation to themselves by the spirit of God, and are known and acknowledged by others; the Lord says this unto them, and avouches them for his people: *and they shall say*, thou art *my God*; in the strength of faith, under the testimony of the spirit of God, they shall claim their interest in God, as their covenant-God in Christ; which is made known in effectual vocation by the work of grace on their hearts; by the blessings of grace bestowed on them; and by the Lord's dwelling among them, and his protection of them.

CHAP. III.

IN this chapter is an order to the prophet to love an adulterous woman beloved of her friend, and by this parable to express the love of God to Israel, and their ingratitude to him, ver. 1. the prophet's execution of that order, making a purchase of her, and a covenant with her, which set forth the captive, servile, mean, and abject state of that people, ver. 2, 3. which is explained of their being deprived for a long time of civil and ecclesiastic government, ver. 4. and the chapter is concluded with a prophecy and promise of their conversion to Christ in the latter day, ver. 5.

Ver. 1. *Then said the Lord unto me*, &c.] Or, as the Targum, *the Lord said unto me again*; for the word *yet* or *again* is to be joined to this, and not the following clause; and shews that this is a new vision, prophecy, or parable, though respecting the same persons and things: *go, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress*; not the prophet's wife, not Gomer, but some other feigned person; beloved either of her own husband, as the Targum and Jarchi, notwithstanding her unchastity and unfaithfulness to him; or of another man, as Aben Ezra, who had a very great respect for her, courted her, and perhaps had betrothed her, but had not yet consummated the marriage; and, though a harlot, loved her dearly, and could not get off his affections from her, but hankered after her: or of the prophet, as Kimchi, who paraphrases it, "thou shalt love her, and be to her a "friend;" to protect and defend her, as harlots used to have one in particular they called their friend, by whose name they were called, and was a cover to them. The sense is, that the prophet was to go to the people of Israel, and deliver this parable to them, setting forth their state and condition, and their behaviour towards God, and his great love to them, notwithstanding all their baseness and ingratitude; 'twas as if a woman that was either married or betrothed, or that either had a husband or a suitor that so dearly loved her, that though she was guilty of uncleanness, and continued in it, yet would not leave her; and which is thus expressed by the Targum, "go, deliver "a prophecy against the house of Israel, who are "like a woman dear to her husband; and though she "commits fornication against him, yet he so loves "her that he will not put her away:" *according to the love of the Lord toward the children of Israel*; or such is the love of the Lord to them; for though they were guilty of idolatry, intemperance, and other immoralities, yet still he loved them, and formed designs of grace and goodness for them. And thus, though God does not love sinners as such; yet he loves them, though they are sinners, and when and while they are such; as appears by his choice of them, and covenant with them, by Christ's dying for them while sinners, and by his quickening them when dead in trespasses and sins: *who look to other gods*; or *though they look to other gods*[f]; look to them and worship them, pray unto them, put their trust in them, and expect good things from them: *and love flagons of wine*, or *tubs of grapes*[g]; or of wine made of them; or lumps of raisins, cakes or junkets made of them and other things, as the Septuagint; and may respect either the drunkenness and intemperance of the ten tribes; see Isa. xxviii. 1. they loved, as Kimchi says, the delights of the world, and not the law and commandments of God; or the feasts that were made in the temples of their idols; they loved good eating and drinking, and that made them like idolatry the better for the sake of those things; see Exod. xxxii. 6. for the Heathens used to eat and drink to excess at their sacrifices: hence Diogenes[h] the philosopher was very angry with those who sacrificed to the gods for their health, yet in their sacrifices feasted to the prejudice of their health.

Ver. 2. *So I bought her to me for fifteen* pieces *of silver*, &c.] Or, *fifteen shekels*, which was about one pound seventeen shillings and six pence of our money, reckoning a shekel at two shillings and six pence; though some make it to be but two shillings and four pence; this was but half the price of a servant, Exod. xxi. 32. and alludes to the dowry which men used to give to women at their marriage; see 1 Sam. xviii. 25. The word here used has the signification of digging; hence the Vulgate Latin version renders it, *I dug her*: and the abettors and defenders of it think it refers to the digging, or boring the ears of a servant that chose to continue with his master, Exod. xxi. 6. but the word is used in the sense of buying, Gen. l. 5. Deut. ii. 6. and so Jarchi says it has the sense of merchandise or bargaining; and in the sea-coasts he observes, that they call מכירה, a purchase, כירה. Perhaps the word is better rendered by the Septuagint and Arabic versions,

[f] והם פנים quamvis respiciant, Piscator.
[g] אשישי ענבים dolia uvarum, Paguinus, Montanus, Zanchius; so some in Drusius.

[h] Laertius in Vit. Diogenis, p. 382.

hired: and كرا *cara* in the Arabic language signifies *to hire*: so it is used in Acts xxviii. 30. So with the Turks, as Monsieur Thevenot[f] observes, a letter-out of beasts to hire is called *moucre* or *moukir*, which comes from the Arabic word *kira*, he says, which signifies to let or hire; and is here fitly used of a harlot. The Jews have many whims and fancies about these fifteen pieces of silver. The Targum, and Pesikta in Jarchi, make them to respect the fifteenth day of Nisan, on which the Israelites were redeemed out of Egypt; according to Aben Ezra, they design the fifteen kings of Judah, from Rehoboam to the captivity, reckoning the sons of Josiah as one, being brethren; according to others, in Kimchi, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the twelve tribes; and, according to Abarbinel, the fifteen prophets that prophesied of the redemption: *and for an homer of barley, and an half-homer of barley*; a *homer* held ten *ephahs*, and a *lethec*, or half-*homer*, five *ephahs*, or so many bushels, these making the number fifteen: again, according to Saadiah, they design Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, and the twelve tribes; and, according to Aben Ezra, the number of the high-priests in the kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem, a homer making thirty seahs, and a half-homer fifteen, in all forty-five; but according to others, in Kimchi, these design the forty-five days between the coming of the Israelites out of Egypt and their receiving the law: but, leaving these fancies, as the number of shekels given for her was but a low price, and shews what an estimate was made of her; and barley being the coarsest of grain, and bread made of it, that of the worst sort, which the poorer people eat; may be expressive of the captive, servile, mean, and abject state of the people of Israel, from the time of their captivity to their conversion to Christ, as is after more fully explained.

Ver. 3. *And I said unto her*, &c.] Having bought or hired her; this was the covenant or agreement he made with her, *thou shalt abide for me many days*: dwell alone in some solitary and separate place, and have no conversation with any, especially with men; live like a widow that has lost her husband, and so wait for a long time till the prophet should think fit to take her to his house and bed: *thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for* another *man*: neither prostitute herself, as she had done to her lovers; nor marry another, but keep herself chaste and single: *so* will *I also* be *for thee*: wait for thee, and not take another wife; or will be thy husband, after having made proper trial and full proof of thy conduct and behaviour: the Targum paraphrases it thus; "say, O prophet, to her, O "congregation of Israel, your sins are the cause that "you are carried captive many days; ye shall give "yourselves to my worship and not err, nor serve "idols, and even I will have mercy on you." The whole is explained in the following words:

Ver. 4. *For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince*, &c.] Without any form of civil government, either regal or princely; without any civil magistrate, either superior or subordinate, of their own; being subject to the kings and princes of other nations, as the ten tribes were from their captivity by Salmaneser, to the coming of Christ, which was about seven hundred years; and from that time the tribes of Judah and Benjamin have had no kings and princes among them, for the space of seventeen hundred years, which may very well be called *many days*. This answers to the harlot's abiding for the prophet many days, in the parable: *and without a sacrifice*; the daily sacrifice, which has ceased as long as before observed; and any other sacrifice of slain beasts, as the passover-lamb, *&c.*; the Jews not thinking it lawful to offer sacrifice in a strange land, or any where but upon the altar in Jerusalem; and to this day have no such sacrifices among them, though they have no notion of the abrogation of them, as the Christians have; but so it is ordered in Providence, that they should be without them, being kept out of their own land, that this and other prophecies might be fulfilled: *and without an image*, or *statue*; such as were made for Baal, or as were the calves at Dan and Beth-el; and though the people of Israel were very subject to idolatry, and set up images and statues for worship before their captivities, yet since have nothing of image-worship among them, but strictly observe the command. *And without an ephod*; a linen garment wore by the high-priests under the law, to which the breast-plate was fastened, which had in it the Urim and Thummim; and which were wanting in the second temple, and have been ever since; so that these people have been so long without this way and means of inquiry of God about future things, see Ezra ii. 63. this may be put for the whole priesthood, now ceased in a proper sense; and so the Septuagint render it, *without a priesthood*; so that the Jews are without any form of government, civil or ecclesiastical; they have neither princely nor priestly power: *and* without *teraphim*; which some understand to be the same with the Urim and Thummim; and so the Septuagint render it, *without manifestations*; by which they are thought to mean the Urim, which according to them so signifies: but the word is generally thought to design some little images or idols, like the penates or household gods of the Romans, which were consulted about future things; and so the Jews commonly understand it, and some describe them thus[g], "what are the *teraphim*? they slay the first-born of a "man, cut off his head, and pickle it with salt and oil, "and inscribe on a plate of gold the name of an unclean "spirit, and put that under his tongue; then they "place it in a wall, and light candles before it, and "pray unto it, and it talks with them." But now, according to this prophecy, the Jews in their captivity should have no way and means of knowing future things, either in a lawful or unlawful manner; see Psal. lxxiv. 9. How the whole of this prophecy is now fulfilled in them, hear what they themselves say, particularly Kimchi; "these are the days of the captivity "in which we now are at this day; we have no king "nor prince out of Israel; for we are in the power of "the nations, and of their kings and princes; and have "no sacrifice for God, nor image for idols; no *ephod* "for God, that declares future things; and no *teraphim* "for idolatry, which shew things to come, according "to the mind of those that believe in them;" and so

[f] Travels, part 2. B. 1. ch. 3. p. 11.

[g] Pirke Eliezer, c. 36. fol. 40. 1.

Jarchi, "without a sacrifice in the sanctuary in Judah: "without an image of Baal in Samaria, for the kings "of Israel; without an ephod of Urim and Thummim, "that declares hidden things; and *teraphim* made for "a time to speak of, and shew things that are secret;" and to the same purpose Aben Ezra. The Targum is, "without a king of the house of David, and without "a ruler over Israel; without sacrifice for acceptance "in Jerusalem; and without a high place in Samaria; "and without an ephod, and him that shews;" *i. e.* what shall come to pass. The Syriac version renders the last clause, *without one that offers incense;* and the Arabic version, *without one that teaches.*

Ver. 5. *Afterward shall the children of Israel return,* &c.] The ten tribes of Israel, and also the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which are included in the name of Israel, as Aben Ezra interprets it; and these are joined together in parallel places; see Jer. xxx. 3, 9. and l. 4, 5. for though they did not go into captivity together, yet their return and conversion will be at the same time; and they are all spoken of under the name of Israel by the Apostle Paul, when he foretels their conversion and salvation, Rom. xi. 26. The *return* of them, here prophesied of, does not barely mean their return to their own land, which will be at this time; see Jer. xxx. 3. Ezek. xxxvii. 21, 22. Amos ix. 15. but their return to the Lord by repentance; when they shall repent of, and turn from, their sinful course of life, and particularly of their unbelief and rejection of the true Messiah, and embrace him; and of their traditions and false ways of worship, which they shall discard; and of their own righteousness they shall now renounce; and shall turn to the Lord Jesus Christ, and believe in him for righteousness, life, and salvation: *and seek the Lord their God, and David their King;* these may be considered either as two distinct persons, Jehovah the Father, and the Messiah, as in Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. and xxxvii. 23, 24. and so the Targum, "and "seek the worship of the Lord their God, and obey "Messiah the son of David their King;" who will be both equally sought after, and unto, by them; and which is a proof of the divinity of the Messiah, and of his equality with God his Father; as well as points out the right way in which Jehovah is to be sought, namely, with Christ, or in him, in whom he is a God gracious and merciful; and to seek and know both the one and the other is eternal life, John xvii. 3. or else all this is to be understood of the Messiah, rendering the words, *and seek the Lord their God, even David their King:* as also Jer. xxx. 9, Jud. 3, may be rendered; and so these are all epithets, titles, and characters of him: he is Jehovah, the everlasting I AM; the true God, and eternal life; Immanuel, God with us; God in our nature, manifest in the flesh; the son of David, and his antitype, often called David in Scripture, Psal. lxxxix. 3, 4. Ezek. xxxiv. 24. and xxxvii. 24. King of kings, King of the saints, of his church, and will be owned as such by the Jews at the time of their conversion, though they have rejected him; but now they'll receive him, and be subject to him; they'll seek to him for salvation, for the pardon of their sins, for righteousness, for rest, for food, for protection and safety, and to serve and obey him: and this seeking will not be out of curiosity, or in a carnal way, or for selfish ends; nor hypocritically; but with their whole hearts, and diligently, and in earnest. Not only the Targum interprets this of Messiah the son of David, but Aben Ezra on the place says, this is the Messiah; and it is applied to him, and his times, by other Jewish writers, both ancient and modern. In an ancient book [h] of theirs, speaking of David, it is said, the holy blessed God is well-pleased with him in this world, and in the world to come; in this world, as it is written, *and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake,* 2 Kings xx. 6. and in the world to come, as it is written, *they shall seek the Lord their God, and David their King,* &c.; David was King in this world, and David shall be King in the time to come. And in both Talmuds the words are applied to the Messiah; in one of them [i], after quoting this text, it is added, the Rabbins say this is the King Messiah; if of the living, David is his name; if of the dead, David is his name. And in the other [k], it is said, when Jerusalem is built, David comes; that is, the son of David, the Messiah; which is proved by this passage, *afterwards the children of Israel shall return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their King:* that is, as the gloss interprets it, after they shall return to the house of the sanctuary, or the temple: so Abarbinel, both in his commentary upon this place, and elsewhere [l], as he interprets the *one head* in ch. i. 11, of Messiah ben Ephraim, whom he, with the rest of his tribe, feign shall perish in war; so he observes, that then Israel shall seek David their King, the rod out of the root of Jesse, whom the Lord shall choose, and cause to reign over them. And another of their later writers [m] interprets the passage of the Messiah, and produces it to prove against the Christians that he should come in the end of days, or in the latter days; as it is plain and certain that our Jesus, the true Messiah, came at the end of the Jewish world, in the last days of their civil and church state; see Heb. i. 1, 2. and ix. 26. *and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days:* not man, but the Lord; not his wrath and vengeance, but his goodness; not with a servile, but with a godly filial fear; a fear influenced by the blessings of goodness they shall now be partakers of, particularly pardoning grace and mercy, Psal. cxxx. 3, 4. they shall fear the Lord, who is good, and goodness itself, and Christ, in whom the goodness of God is displayed, and who is prevented with the blessings of goodness for his people: it may be rendered, they *shall fear,* or *come fearing to the Lord, and his goodness* [n], being sensible of their sin, danger, and misery; they shall flee to the Lord as to their city of refuge, and to the blessings of his goodness they see their need

[h] Zohar in Exod. fol. 93. 2.
[i] T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 5. 1.
[k] T. Bab. Megillah, fol. 18. 1.
[l] Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 55. 4.
[m] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 44.
[n] ופחדו אל יהוה ואל טובו pavebunt ad Dominum, Montanus; pavidi accedent ad Jehovam, & ad bonitatem ejus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius; & cum timore venient ad Jehovam, & ad bonum ejus, Schmidt; so Ben Melech interprets it, they shall fear, and be afraid of him, flow to him, and to his goodness; and which, he says, Saadiah explains of his glory, agreeably to Exod. xxxiii. 19.

of; and this they shall do in haste, as Aben Ezra interprets it, comparing it with ch. xi. 11. The Septuagint version is, *they shall be amazed at the Lord, and his good things*: the Syriac version, *they shall know the Lord, and his goodness*; the Arabic version, *they shall confess the Lord, and his benefits*: the Targum, "they shall "give themselves to the service of the Lord, and his "goodness shall be multiplied, which shall come to "them in the end of days;" or, as Aben Ezra, in the end of the prophecy of the prophets, in future time, in the times of the Messiah; which, as Kimchi observes, are always meant by the last days; and here it signifies the latter day of the last days, or of the Gospel dispensation.

CHAP. IV.

THIS chapter contains a new sermon or prophecy, delivered in proper and express words, without types and figures, as before; in which the people of Israel are summoned to appear at the tribunal of God, to hear the charge brought against them, and the sentence to be pronounced upon them, and which would be executed. They are charged with sins of omission and commission; with want of truth and mercy to men, and with ignorance of God; with swearing, lying, murder, theft, and adultery, ver. 1, 2. the punishment threatened is the sword, famine, and pestilence; which should affect the whole land, and all creatures in it, men, beasts, fowls, and fishes, ver. 3. then the priests and false prophets are threatened with falling into calamities along with the people, and with rejection from their office, and forgetfulness of their posterity, and a taking away their glory from them, because of their striving with the true prophets; their rejection of knowledge; forgetfulness of the law of God; covetousness, adultery, and drunkenness, ver. 4—11. then the discourse is turned to the people again, who are charged with divination and idolatry, which is spiritual adultery; and therefore, by way of retaliation, their wives and daughters would be left to commit adultery and fornication, ver. 12, 13, 14. and the chapter is concluded with advice to Israel not to tempt Judah to sin; or to Judah not to do the like, after the example of Israel, who were backsliders, idolaters, left of God and alone; guilty of bribery, and the like shameful things, and would be suddenly filled with shame, ver. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.

Ver. 1. *Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel*, &c.] The people of the ten tribes, as distinct from Judah, ver. 15. the prophet having finished his parables he was ordered to take up and deliver, and his explanations of them, and concluded with a gracious promise of the conversion of the Jews in the latter day, enters upon a new discourse, which begins with reproof for various sins; since what had been delivered in parables and types had had no effect upon them, they are called upon to hear what the Lord would say to them by the prophet, in more clear and express terms; silence is ordered, and attention required to what follows: *for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land*: the land of Israel; against him they had sinned, before him they stood guilty; he had something, yea, many things, against them; a charge is brought into open court, the indictment is read, an answer must be made: God is the antagonist, that moves and brings on the controversy in a judicial way, and who can answer him for one of a thousand? or stand before him, or in court with him, when he marks iniquity? the charge is as follows, *because there is no truth*; none that do or speak truth; that are true and faithful men, true to their word, and faithful to their trust; no truth of grace in them, nor truth of doctrine held and received by them; truth failed from among them, and none were valiant for it; no truth or civil faith with respect to men, nor any truth of word or worship with respect to God: *nor mercy*; to poor and indigent creatures; no compassion shewn them; no offices of humanity or acts of beneficence exercised towards them; though these are more desirable by the Lord than, and are preferred by him to, all ceremonial sacrifices, ch. vi. 6. or no piety, religion, godliness, powerful godliness, which has the promise of this life, and that to come: *nor knowledge of God in the land*; in the land of Israel, where God was used to be known; where he had been worshipped; where his word had been dispensed, and his prophets had been sent, and his saints that knew him, and his mind and will, formerly had dwelt; but now a company of atheists, at least that lived as such, and had no true spiritual saving knowledge of God, and communion with him; they had not true love to him, nor a godly reverence of him, which this implies; and that was the source of all the wickedness committed by them, afterwards expressed. The Targum is, "there are none "that do truth, nor dispense mercy, nor walk in the "fear of the Lord, in the land."

Ver. 2. *By swearing, and lying*, &c.] Which some join together, and make but one sin of it, false swearing, so Jarchi and Kimchi; but that swearing itself signifies, as the Targum interprets it; for it not only takes in all cursing and imprecations, profane oaths, and taking the name of God in vain, and swearing by the creatures, but may chiefly design perjury; which, though one kind of *lying*, may be distinguished from it here; the latter intending *lying* in common, which the devil is the father of, mankind are incident unto, and which is abominable to God, whether in civil or in religious things: *and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery*: murders, thefts, and adulteries, were very common with them; sins against the sixth, eighth, and seventh commandments: *they break out*; through all the restraints of the laws of God and man, like an unruly horse that breaks his bridle and runs away; or like wild beasts, that break down the fences and enclosures about them, and break out, and get away; or like a torrent of water, that breaks down its dams and banks, and overflows the meads and plains; such a flood and deluge of sin abounded in the nation.

Some reader it, *they thieve*[o]; or act the part of thieves and robbers: and the Targum, "they beget sons of "their neighbours' wives;" and so Abarbinel interprets it of breaking through the hedge of another man's wife; but these sins are observed before: *and blood toucheth blood:* which some understand of sins in general, so called, because filthy and abominable; and of the addition and multiplication of them, there being as it were heaps of them, or rather a chain of them linked together. So the Targum, "and they add sins "to sins." Others interpret it of impure mixtures, of incestuous lusts, or marriages contrary to the ties of blood, and laws of consanguinity, Lev. xviii. 6. Ezek. xxii. 11. or rather it is to be understood of the great effusion of blood, and frequency of murders; so that there was scarce any interval between them, but a continued series of them. Some think respect is had to the frequent slaughter of their kings; Zachariah the son of Jeroboam was slain by Shallum, when he had reigned but six months; and Shallum was slain by Menahem when he had reigned but one month; and this Menahem was a murderer of many, smote many places, and ripped up the women with-child; Pekahiah his son was killed by Pekah the son of Remaliah, and he again by Hoshea, 2 Kings xv. 8, 10, 13, 14, 16, 25, 30.

Ver. 3. *Therefore shall the land mourn,* &c.] Because of the calamities on it, the devastations made in it; nothing growing upon it, through a violent drought; or the grass and corn being trodden down, or eaten up, by a foreign army: *and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish:* that is, every man, an inhabitant thereof, shall become weak, languish away, and die through wounds received by the enemy; or for want of food, or being infected with the wasting and destroying pestilence: *with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven;* the one shall die in the field for want of grass to eat, and the other shall drop to the earth through the infection of the air: *yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away:* or *gathered*[p]; to some other place, so as to disappear; or they shall be consumed and die, as Kimchi interprets it; and as all these creatures are for the good of men, for sustenance, comfort, and delight, when they are taken away, it is by way of punishment for their sins. So the Targum, "the fishes of the sea shall be lessened "for their sins."

Ver. 4. *Yet let no man strive, nor reprove another,* &c.] Or rather, *let no man strive, nor any man reprove us*[q]; and are either the words of the people, forbidding the prophet, or any other man, to contend with them, or reprove them for their sins, though guilty of so many, and their land in so much danger on that account: so the Targum, "but yet they say, "let not the scribe teach, nor the prophet reprove:" or else they are the words of God to the prophet, restraining him from striving with and reproving such a people, that were incorrigible, and despised all reproof; see Ezek. iii. 26. or of the prophet to other good men, to forbear any thing of this kind, since it was all to no purpose; it was but casting pearls before swine; it was all labour lost, and in vain: *for thy people are as they that strive with the priest;* they are so far from receiving correction and reproof kindly from any good men, that they will rise up against, and strive with, the priests, to whom not to hearken was a capital crime, Deut. xvii. 12. Abarbinel interprets it, and some in Abendana, like the company of Korah, that contended with Aaron; suggesting that this people were as impudent and wicked as they, and there was no dealing with them. So the Targum, "but "thy people contend with their teachers;" and will submit to no correction, and therefore it is in vain to give it them. Though some think the sense is, that all sorts of men were so corrupt, that there were none fit to be reprovers; the people were like the priests, and the priests like the people, ver. 9. so that when the priests reproved them, they contended with them, and said, physician, heal thyself; take the beam out of your own eye; look to yourselves, and your own sins, and don't reprove us.

Ver. 5. *Therefore shalt thou fall in the day,* &c.] Either, O ye people, every one of you, being so refractory and incorrigible; or, O thou priest, being as bad as the people; for both, on account of their sins, should fall from their present prosperity and happiness into great evils and calamities; particularly into the hands of their enemies, and be carried captive into another land: and this should be *in the day,* or *to-day*[r]; immediately, quickly, in a very short time; or in the day-time, openly, publicly, in the sight of all, of all the nations round about, who shall rejoice at it; or in the day of prosperity, while things go well, amidst great plenty of all good things, and when such a fall was least expected: *and the prophet also shall fall with thee in the night:* or the false prophets that are with you, as the Targum, and so Jarchi; either with you, O people, that dwell with you, teach you, and cause you to err; or with thee, O priest, being of the same family, as the prophets, many of them, were priests; now these should fall likewise into the same calamities, as it was but just they should, being the occasion of them: and this should be *in the night;* in the night of adversity and affliction, in the common calamity; or in the night of darkness, when they could not see at what they stumbled and fell, and so the more uncomfortable to them; or as the one falls in the day, the other falls in the night; as certainly as the one falls, so shall the other, and that very quickly, immediately, as the night follows the day: *and I will destroy thy mother:* either Samaria, the metropolis of the nation; or the whole body of the people, the congregation, as the Targum, and Kimchi, and Ben Melech, being as a mother with respect to individuals; and are threatened with destruction, because the corruption was general among prophets, priests, and people, and therefore none could hope to escape.

Ver. 6. *My people are destroyed for lack of know-*

[o] פרצו latrocinantur, vel latrones agunt, Schmidt.

[p] יאספו congregabuntur, V. L.; colligentur, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius, Schmidt.

[q] ואל יוכח איש & ne reprehendito quisquam, *scil.* nos, Schmidt.

[r] היום hodie, Munster, Montanus, Drusius, Tarnovius, Rivet; hoc tempore, Pagninus. So Kimchi and Ben Melech.

ledge, &c.] This is not to be understood of those who are the Lord's people by special grace; for they cannot be destroyed, at least with everlasting destruction: God's love to them, his choice of them, covenant with them, the redemption of them by Christ, and the grace of God in them, secure them from such destruction: nor can they perish through want of knowledge; for though they are by nature as ignorant as others, yet it is the determinate will of God to bring them to the knowledge of the truth, in order to salvation: and that same decree which fixes salvation as the end, secures the belief of the truth as the means; and the covenant of grace provides for their knowledge of spiritual things, as well as other spiritual blessings; in consequence of which their minds are enlightened by the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and they have the knowledge of God and Christ given them, which is life eternal. But this is to be understood of the people of the ten tribes of Israel, who were nationally and nominally the people of God, were so by profession; they called themselves the people of God; and though they were idolaters, yet they professed to worship God in their idols; and as yet God's *lo-ammi* had not taken place upon them: he still sent his prophets among them, to reprove and reform them, and they were not as yet finally rejected by him, and cast out of their land. These may be said to be *destroyed*, because they were threatened with destruction, and it was near at hand, they were just upon the brink of it; and because of the certainty of it, and this *through lack of knowledge*: either in the people, who were ignorant of God, his mind, and will, and worship, and without fear and reverence of him, which was the cause of all the abominations they ran into, for which they were threatened with ruin; or in the priests, whose business it was to teach and instruct the people; but instead of teaching them true doctrine, and the true manner of worship, taught them false doctrine, and led them into superstition and idolatry; and so they perished through the default of the priests in performing their office; which sense is confirmed by what follows: *because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me*: the priests that Jeroboam made were of the lowest of the people, ignorant and illiterate men, 1 Kings xii. 31. and xiii. 33. and they chose to continue such; they rejected with contempt and abhorrence, as the word signifies, the knowledge of God, and of all divine things; of the law of God, concerning what was to be done, or not to be done, by the people; and of all statutes and ordinances relating to divine worship, and the performance of the priestly office: and though there might be some of Aaron's line that continued in the land of Israel, and in their office; yet these affected the same ignorance, and therefore the Lord threatens them with a rejection from the priesthood; or, however, that they should be no priests to him, or in his account, but should be had in the utmost abhorrence and contempt. The word here used has a letter in it more than usual [s], which may signify the utter rejection of them, and the great contempt they were had in by the Lord; this was to take place, and did, at the captivity by Salmaneser. *Seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God*; which he had given them, who was their God by profession; and which they had forgot as if they never had read or learnt it; and so as not to observe and keep it themselves, nor teach and instruct others in it: *I will also forget thy children*; have no regard to them, take no notice and care of them, as if they were never known by him; meaning either the people in general, their disciples and spiritual children; or else their natural children, who should be cut off, and not succeed them in the priesthood. The words are very emphatical, *I will forget* them, *even I* [t]; which expresses the certainty of it more fully, as well as more clearly points at the justness of the retaliation.

Ver. 7. *As they were increased, so they sinned against me, &c.*] As the children of the priests increased and grew up, they sinned against the Lord, imitating their parents; they were as many sinners as they were persons, not one to be excepted: this expresses their universal depravity and corruption. Some understand it of their increase, as in number, so in riches, wealth, honour, dignity, and authority, and yet they sinned more and more; which shews their ingratitude. So the Targum, "as I have multiplied fruits unto them," &c. *Therefore will I change their glory into shame*; take away their priesthood from them, so that they shall be no more priests, and as if they never had been; and reduce them to a state of poverty, meanness, and disgrace; and cause them to go into captivity with the meanest of the people; and be in no more honour, but subject to as much scorn and contempt as they.

Ver. 8. *They eat up the sin of my people*, &c.] That is, the priests did so, as the Targum, the priests of Jeroboam; they ate up the sacrifices which the people brought for their sins: and their fault was, either that they ate that which belonged to the true priests of the Lord, so Jarchi; or they did that, and had no concern to instruct the people in the right way; all that they regarded were good eating and drinking, and living voluptuously; and were altogether careless about instructing the people in the nature of sacrifices, and in the way of their duty: or this may regard the Bacchanalian feasts, as some think, which the people made in the temples of idols, and so sinned; and of which the priests greatly partook, and encouraged them in, and so were partakers not only of their banquets, but of their sins. *They set their heart on their iniquity*: either their offerings for their iniquity, or their iniquity itself: or, *lift up their soul* [u] *to it*; diligently looking after it, not caring how much they committed; since the more sin-offerings would be brought, which would be to their advantage. Though some think the sin of whoredom, frequently and impudently committed at these idol-feasts, is meant, which the priests were much addicted to, and very greedy of; they committed uncleanness with greediness, Ephes. iv. 19.

Ver. 9. *And there shall be, like people, like priest*, &c.] No difference between them in their festivals, the one

[s] ואמאסאך: the last א is superfluous; the reason of the word being so written Ben Melech confesses his ignorance of.

[t] גם אני etiam ego, Pagninus, Montanus, Zanchius, Cocceius, Rivet, Schmidt.

[u] ואל עונם ישאו נפשו et ad iniquitatem eorum levaverunt animam suam, Montanus, Pagninus, Tigurine version; attollunt, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; et ad iniquitatem eorum tollunt animam suam, Schmidt.

being as greedy of committing intemperance and uncleanness as the other, and in their common conversation of life; though the priests ought both to have given good instructions, and to have set good examples; but instead of that were equally guilty as the people, and so would be alike in their punishment, as it follows: *and I will punish them for their ways:* their evil ways, as the Targum; their wicked manner of life and conversation, both of the people and the priests; especially the latter are meant: or, *I will visit upon him his ways* [w]; upon every one of the priests, as well as the people; which visit must be understood in a way of wrath and vengeance: *and reward them their doings:* reward them according to their doings, as their sins deserve, and as it is explained in the next verse: or, *I will return their doings to them* [x]; bring them back again, when they seemed to be past and gone, and set them before them, and charge them with them, and punish for them.

Ver. 10. *For they shall eat, and not have enough,* &c.] Namely, the priests; for of them the words are continued, who ate of the sacrifices of the people, and of feasts made in honour of idols; and yet, either what they ate did not satisfy or nourish them, or else their appetites were still greedy after more of the same kind: or this may respect a famine, either at the siege of Samaria, or in their captivity; when they who had lived so voluptuously should have so little to eat, that it should not satisfy them: or though, as others, they eat to the honour of their idols, expecting to be blessed with plenty by them, they shall not have it: *they shall commit whoredom, and shall not increase;* that is, their offspring; they shall not beget children, so the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi; or the children they beget shall quickly die; yea, though they commit whoredom in the idol's temple with that view, where the women prostituted themselves for that purpose: *because they have left off to take heed to the Lord;* to his word, and worship, and ordinances, which they formerly had some regard unto, but now had relinquished: or, *the Lord they have forsaken, or left off to observe* [y]; his ways, his word, and worship. R. Saadiah connects this with the following words, they have forsaken the Lord to observe fornication and wine; but wrongly.

Ver. 11. *Whoredom and wine, and new wine, take away the heart.*] Uncleanness and intemperance besot men, deprive them of reason and judgment, and even of common sense, make them downright fools, and so stupid as to do the following things; or they take away the heart from following the Lord, and taking heed to him, and lead to idolatry; or they *occupy* [z] the heart, and fill it up, and cause it to prefer sensual lusts and pleasures to the fear and love of God: their stupidity brought on hereby is exposed in the next verse; though it seems chiefly to respect the priests, who erred in vision through wine and strong drink, and stumbled in judgment, Isa. xxviii. 7.

Ver. 12. *My people ask counsel at their stocks,* &c.] Or *at his wood* [a], or stick; his wooden image, as the Targum; their wooden gods, their idols made of wood, mere stocks and blocks, without life or sense, and much less reason and understanding, and still less divinity. Reference is here had either to the matter of which an idol was made, being the trunk of a tree, or a block of wood; as the poet [b] introduces Priapus saying, *olim truncus eram ficulnus, inutile lignum:* or to sticks of wood themselves, without being put into any form or shape; for so it is reported [c], that the ancient idolaters used to receive for gods, with great veneration, trees or pieces of wood, having the bark taken off; particularly the Carians worshipped for Diana a piece of wood, not hewed, squared, or planed [d]: though the first seems rather to be the sense here; and either was extremely foolish. And yet such was the stupidity of this people, whom God had formerly chose for his people, and had distinguished them by his favours from others, and they had professed themselves to be his people, and as yet were not utterly cast off, as to forsake him and his divine oracles, and all methods of knowing his will; as to ask counsel of such wooden deities in matters of moment and difficulty, what should be done by them, or concerning things to come. *And their staff declareth unto them;* what methods are to be taken by them in the present case, or what shall come to pass, as they fancy; that is, either their idol, made of a staff or stick of wood, or a little image carried on a staff; such as probably were the teraphim they consulted, instead of the Urim and Thummim; and imagined they declared to them what they should do, or what would befall them. Kimchi's father interprets it of the false prophets on whom they depended, and whose declarations they received as oracles. Perhaps some respect is had to a sort of divination used among the Heathens by rods and staves, called *rabdomancy*, which the Jews had learnt of them; like that by arrows used by Nebuchadnezzar, Ezek. xxi. 21. This was performed by setting up a stick or staff, and as that fell, so they judged and determined what was to be done. The manner, according to Theophylact on the place, was this, "they set up two rods, and muttered some verses and enchantments; and then the rods falling through the influence of demons, they considered how they fell, whether forward or backward, to the right or the left; and so gave answers to the foolish people, using the fall of the rods for signs." The Jews take this to be forbid by that negative precept, Deut. xviii. 10. *there shall not be found among you any that useth divination.* So Jarchi and Baal Hatturim on that text explain a diviner by one that holds his staff; and the former adds and says, shall I go, or shall I not go? as it is said, *my people ask counsel at their stocks,* &c.; the manner of which they thus describe [e], "when they are about to go a journey, "they inquire before they set out, *i. e.* whether it will

[w] ופקדתי עליו דרכיו et visitabo super eum vias ejus, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Coccejus, Schmidt.

[x] ומעלליו אשיב לו et opera ejus redire faciam, Zanchius.

[y] את יהוה עזבו לשמר Jehovam deseruerunt observare, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Rivetus, Liveleus; ad observandum, Schmidt; reliquerunt observare, Coccejus; deseruerunt observare, so some in Vatablus.

[z] יקח לב occupant cor, so some in Calvin and Rivet; occuparit cor, Schmidt.

[a] בעצו in ligno suo, V. L. Montanus, Calvin; lignum suum, Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[b] Horat. Sermon. l. 1. Satyr. 8.

[c] Alexand. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 6. c. 26.

[d] Arnobius adv. Gentes, l. 6. p. 232.

[e] Moses Kotsensis praecept. neg. 52.

" be prosperous or no; and the diviner takes a branch " of a tree, and takes off the bark on one side, and " leaves it on the other, and then throws it out of his " hand; if, when it falls, the bark is uppermost, he " says, this is a man; then he casts it again, and if the " white is uppermost, this is a woman; to a man, and " after that a woman, this is a good sign, and he goes " his journey, or does what he desires to do: but if the " white appears first, and after that the bark, then he " says, to a woman, and after that a man, and he for- " bears (that is, to go his journey, or do what he de- " sired): but if the bark is uppermost in both (throws), " or the white uppermost in both, to a man after a " man, and a woman after a woman, then his journey " (as to the success of it) is between both; and so they " say they do in the land of Slavonia." And from the Slavonians, Grotius says, the Germans took this way of divination, of which Tacitus [e] gives an account; and it seems by him that the Chaldeans also had it, from whom the Jews might have it. This way of divination by the staff is a little differently given in Hascuni [f]: the diviner measures his staff with his finger, or with his hand; one time he says, I will go; another time, I will not go; but if it happens, at the end of the staff, I will not go, he goes not. *For the spirit of whoredom hath caused them to err;* a violent inclination and bias of mind to idolatry, which is spiritual adultery, and a strong affection for it, stirred up by an evil spirit, the devil; which so wrought upon them, and influenced them, as to cause them to wander from the true God, and his worship, as follows: *and they have gone a whoring from under their God;* or "erred from the wor- " ship of their God," as the Targum: from the true God, who stood in the relation of a husband to them; but, led by a spirit of error, they departed from him, and committed spiritual adultery, that is, idolatry; which is explained and enlarged upon in the next verse.

Ver. 13. *They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains,* &c.] The highest part of them, nearest to the heavens, where they built their altars to idols, and offered sacrifice unto them, as we often read in Scripture they did: *and burn incense upon the hills;* to their idols, which was one kind of sacrifice put for all others: *under oaks, and poplars, and elms;* and indeed under every green tree that grew upon them, where there were groves of them raised up for this purpose; see Jer. ii. 20. and iii. 6: *because the shadow thereof is good;* the shadow of these trees, of each of them, was large, and preserved them from the sultry heat of the sun, as well as hid them from the sight of men; they could perform their idolatrous rites, as well as gratify their impure lusts, with more privacy and secrecy; and perhaps they thought the gods delighted in such shady places, and that these were frequented by spirits, and the departed souls of men; in such places the Heathens, whom the Jews imitated, built their temples, and offered their sacrifices [g]. The *oak* is a very spreading tree; its branches are large, and its shadow very great: hence the religious Heathens in ancient times used to live under them, and worship them as gods, and dedicate temples to them, because they furnished them with acorns for food, and a shelter from the rain, and other inclemencies of the heavens [h]; particularly the oak was consecrated to Jupiter, as appears from what Virgil says [i]. The oak at Dodona is famous for its antiquity, where were a fountain and groves, and a temple dedicated to the same Heathen deity; and from whence oracles were given forth [k]. The Druids here in Britain chose to have their groves of oaks; nor did they perform any of their sacred rites without the leaves of them: hence Pliny [l] says they had their name. The *poplar* mentioned is the white poplar, as the word used signifies, and which affords a very hospitable shadow, as the poet [m] calls it; and this was a tree also with the Heathens sacred to their gods, particularly to Hercules [n]; because it is said he brought it first into Greece from the river Acheron, where it grew; and the wood of no other tree would the Eleans use, in preparing the sacrifices for Jupiter Olympius [o]. The *elm* is also a very shady tree; hence Virgil [p] calls it *ulmus opaca, ingens;* and under this tree sacrifices used to be offered to idols, as is evident from Ezek. vi. 13. where the same word is used as here, though it is there rendered an *oak;* but that it is different from the oak appears from these two words being read together, so that they cannot be names of one and the same tree, Isa. vi. 13. where it is rendered the *tey-tree,* as distinct from the oak. Now these trees being very shady ones, and under which the Gentiles used to perform their religious rites, the Jews imitated them therein, which is here complained of. *Therefore your daughters shall commit whoredoms, and your spouses shall commit adultery;* or their *sons' wives* [q]; either spiritually, that is, commit idolatry by the example of their parents and husbands; or corporeally, being left at home whilst their parents and husbands were worshipping their idols upon the mountains, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi: and so this is to be considered as a punishment of the idolatry of their parents and husbands; that as they commit spiritual adultery against God, or idolatry, their daughters and wives shall be given up to such vile affections, or by force shall be made to commit corporeal adultery against them; or rather the sense is, led by the example of their parents and husbands, whom they see not only sacrifice to idols in the above places, but commit uncleanness with harlots there, they will throw off all shame, and commit

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[e] De Moribus German. c. 10.

[f] Apud Drusium in Deut. xviii. 10.

[g] Locus in urbe fuit media, lætissimus umbra:
Hic templum Junoni ingens Sidonia Dido
Condebat. — Virgil. Æneid. l. 1.

[h] Vid. Chartarii Imagines Deorum, p. 5.

[i] Sicubi magna Jovis antiquo robore quercus,
Ingentes tendat ramos—— — Georgic. l. 3.
Altissima quercus erat Jovis signum.
— Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 4. c. 12.

[k] Vid. Pausan. Attica, sive l. 1. p. 30. Achaica, sive l. 7. p. 438. Arcadica, sive l. 8. p. 490. & Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 6. c. 2.

[l] Nat. Hist. l. 16. c. 44.

[m] Qua pinus ingens albaque populus,
Umbram hospitalem consociare amant
Ramis—— — Horat.

[n] Populus Alcidæ gratissima, Virgil. Bucolic. Eclog. 7. Vid. Æneid. l. 1. Herculi populus, Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 12. c. 1.

[o] Pausan. Eliac. 1. sive l. 5. p. 313.

[p] Æneid. l. 6.

[q] כלותיכם nurus vestræ, Montanus, Vatablus, Piscator, Liveleus, Cocceius, Schmidt, Gussetius.

whoredom with men: for so the words may be rendered, *hence your daughters*, &c.: so Abarbinel.

Ver. 14. *I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredoms*, nor *your spouses when they commit adultery*, &c.] Either not punish them at all, so that they shall go on in sin, and to a greater degree, to the disgrace and reproach of their parents and husbands; or not as yet, or not so severely in them, because it was by their example they were led into it. Jarchi's note is very impertinent, that God threatens them with the disuse of the bitter waters of jealousy. The words are by some rendered interrogatively, *shall I not punish your daughters?* &c[t]; verily I will; and not them only, but their parents and husbands too, who deserve more severe corrections: *for themselves are separated with whores, and sacrifice with harlots:* they separated themselves to Baal-peor, that shameful idol, ch. ix. 10. the Priapus of the Gentiles, in whose idolatrous worship many obscene rites were used; these men separated themselves from their wives, as well as from God and his worship, and from the company and conversation of men, and in private committed uncleanness with the women that attended, and with the she-priests that officiated at the worship of idols; those *sanctified* ones, as the word may be rendered; and after that ate of things offered to idols with them. So the Targum, "they associated themselves with whores, and ate and "drank with harlots." Some versions understand the latter of catamites, or sodomitical persons, and of the wickedness practised by them in such places. *Therefore the people that doth not understand*; the law, as the Targum; what is to be done, and what to be avoided; the difference between the true and false religion; have no knowledge of divine and spiritual things, at least are very wavering and unsettled in their minds about religion, having thought little, and know less, of the matter: *shall fall*. into idolatry and adultery, led by such examples. So the Septuagint version, *is implicated with a whore;* or *embraces a whore*, as the Syriac and Arabic versions; see Prov. vii. 22. and xxii. 14. or shall fall into calamities, ruin, and destruction; *shall be dashed*, as the Targum; so the Arabic interpreter of Mark ix. 26, Luke ix. 42, uses the word: though Aben Ezra and Kimchi say, that in the Arabic language it signifies to be perplexed and disturbed, so as not to know what to do[u]. The first sense seems to be best, of being scandalized, offended, and stumbling and falling into sin; and which Abarbinel suggests, and it agrees with what follows concerning Judah.

Ver. 15. *Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend*, &c.] That is, though the Israelites, the people of the ten tribes, committed adultery, both corporeal and spiritual, in their idolatrous worship, as before observed, to which they had been used ever since the times of Jeroboam the first, and were hardened therein, and from which there were little hopes of reforming them; yet let not the men of Judah be guilty of the same crimes, who have as yet retained the pure worship of God among them; where the house of God is, and the priests of the Lord officiate, and sacrifices are offered up to him according to his will, and all other parts of religious service are performed: or the whole seems to be directed to Israel, as an exhortation to them, that though they had given into such abominations, yet should be careful not to offend Judah, or cause them to stumble and fall, and become guilty of the same sins, and so be exposed to the same punishment; and which would be an aggravation of Israel's sin, to draw others into it with them: *and come not ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Beth-aven;* to worship idols in those places; otherwise it might be lawful to go to them on any civil accounts: Gilgal was upon the borders of the ten tribes, between them and Judah, where Joshua circumcised the Israelites; kept the first passover in the land; and where the ark and tabernacle were for a time; and perhaps for these reasons was chosen for a place of idolatrous worship: Beth-aven is the same with Beth-el, the name Jacob gave it, signifying the house of God; but when Jeroboam set up one of his calves here, the prophets, by way of contempt, called it Beth-aven, the house of iniquity, or the house of an idol; though there was a place called Beth-aven near Beth-el, and Ai, as Kimchi observes, and as appears from Josh. vii. 2. yet Beth-el was sometimes so called, as it seems to be here, because of the idolatry in it; and so the Talmudists[w] say, the place called Beth-él is now called Beth-aven. Now the question is, whether Judah or Israel are here addressed; many interpreters carry it in the former sense, as if the men of Judah were dissuaded from going to these places for worship, when the temple, the proper place of worship, was in their own tribe; but the speech seems rather to be directed to the Israelites, to leave off going to these places for worship; for being so near to Judah, they might be the means of insnaring and drawing them into the same idolatrous practices: *nor swear, the Lord liveth;* or swear by the living God, so long as they worshipped idols; for it was not well-pleasing to God to have his name used by idolaters, or joined with their idols: especially as they meant their idol when they swore by the Lord.

Ver. 16. *For Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer*, &c.] A heifer or young cow Israel is compared unto; the rather, because of the object of their idolatrous worship, the calves at Dan and Beth-el: the Septuagint calls them *heifers*: which they are hereby put in mind of, and upbraided with; as also to express their brutish stupidity in worshipping such idols, in which they obstinately persisted; and so were like a *refractory* and *untamed* heifer, as some[x] render it, which will not be kept within bounds, either within doors or without, but breaks through, and passes over, all fences and enclosures; as they did, who transgressed the laws of God, and would not be restrained by them: or like a heifer unaccustomed to the yoke, which will not submit to it, but wriggles its neck from under it; so the Israelites would not be subject to the yoke of the law of God, were sons of Belial, children without a yoke; or like one, though yoked, yet would not draw

[t] So Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt.
[u] Vid. R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 43. 2.
[w] T. Hieros. Avoda Zara, fol. 43. 1.

[x] סררה refractaria, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius, Schmidt; indomita, Calvin, Drusius.

the plough, but slip back in the furrows, even though goaded; so they, though stimulated by the prophets, whose words were as goads and pricks to push them on, yet would not hearken to them, but pulled away the shoulder, and slid back from the ways and worship of God; hence called backsliding Israel, Jer. iii. 6. and this is either a reason why Judah should not follow their example, because backsliders, or why they should be punished, as follows: *now*, or *therefore*[x], *the Lord will feed them as a lamb in a large place*: not that they were like lambs for the good properties of them, innocence, harmlessness, meekness, and patience; nor fed as the Lord feeds his lambs, and gathers them in his arms; but either as a heifer in sheep-pasture, in short commons, for that creature can't live where sheep and lambs can; or rather as a lamb that is alone, separate from the flock, not under the care of any shepherd; but exposed to every beast of prey upon a large common, on a wild desert and uncultivated place; afraid of every thing it hears and sees; bleating after its dam, of whose sustenance and nourishment it is destitute; and so is expressive of the state and condition of Israel in captivity, in the large Assyrian empire; and dispersed among the nations, where they were weak and helpless, destitute of all good things, and exposed to all dangers, and to every enemy. Aben Ezra and Kimchi understand the words in a good sense, that the Lord would have fed them as lambs in a large place, in an affluent manner, but that they rebelled and backslided: and to this sense the Targum seems to incline, which paraphrases the whole verse thus, "for "as an ox which is fattened and kicks, so Israel rebels "because of the multitude of good things; now the "Lord will lead them as a choice lamb in a valley," or plain: and so Noldius, *though Israel is refractory*, &c. *notwithstanding the Lord will feed them*, &c.; and indeed the phrase is used in a good sense in Isa. xxx. 23. but there herds and flocks are spoken of, and not a single lamb, as here; though Kimchi thinks the singular is put for the plural, lamb for lambs.

Ver. 17. *Ephraim is joined to idols*, &c.] That is, the ten tribes of Israel, frequently so called after their separation from the rest, because that Jeroboam, by whom the revolt was made, was of that tribe; and because that tribe was the principal of them, and Samaria, the metropolis of their kingdom, was in it: and so the Targum here renders it, "the house of Israel are joined to "idols;" to the calves at Dan and Beth-el; to Baal, and other idols, they worshipped: the phrase expresses their strong affection for them, their constant worship of them, and their obstinate persisting therein, and the difficulty there was of bringing them off of it; they cleaved to their idols, were glued, and as it were wedded unto them, and there was no separating of them; as men are, who are addicted to the lusts of the flesh, to the mammon of unrighteousness, or to their own self-righteousness, or to any idol they set up in their hearts as such: hence it follows, *let them alone*; which are either the words of the Lord to the prophet, enjoining him to prophesy no more to them; to reprove them no more for their sins, since it was all to no purpose, there was no reclaiming them, so Jarchi and Kimchi; and therefore let them alone, let them go on in their sins, and in their errors, and in their superstition and idolatry; see Ezek. iii. 26. Matt. xv. 14. God was determined to let them alone himself, and therefore bids his prophet to do so likewise: and sad is the case with men when he lets them alone, and will not disturb their consciences any more by rebukes and convictions, but gives them up to a seared conscience, to hardness of heart, and to their own lusts; when he will not hedge up their way with thorns, or distress them with afflictive providences, and hinder them from going on in a course of sin and wickedness; nor give them restraining grace, but suffer them to go on in the broad road, till they drop into hell; and says of them, *let him that is filthy be filthy still*, Rev. xxii. 11. or else they are the words of the prophet to the men of Judah, to have nothing to do with Israel, since they were such backsliders and idolaters; to have no communion and conversation with them, but let them be alone, and worship alone for them; since what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness, light with darkness, Christ with Belial, a believer with an infidel, or the temple of the living God with idols and idolaters? 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15. Ephes. v. 11. some take them to be the words of the prophet to God concerning Israel, approving of his righteous judgments, in threatening to feed them as a lamb in a large place; dismiss him thither, suffer and leave him to feed there. The Targum interprets it of their sin, and not their punishment, "they have left their worship;" the service of God.

Ver. 18. *Their drink is sour*, &c.] In their stomachs, having drank so much that they can't digest it; hence nauseous eructations, with a filthy stench, are belched out; so it is a charge of drunkenness which Ephraim or the ten tribes were addicted to, and are accused of, Isa. xxviii. 1. or *their drink is gone*[y]; it has lost its colour, brightness, smell, and flavour; it is turned to vinegar; expressive of the general corruption and depravity of manners and religion among them; see Isa. i. 22. or *their drink departeth*, or *causeth to depart*, or *is refractory*[z]; that is, it made them refractory, like a refractory heifer, as before; caused them to depart from God and his worship, and led them into all sin and irreligion, particularly what follows: *they have committed whoredom continually*: corporeal whoredom, which drunkenness leads to; and spiritual whoredom or idolatry, which they had committed, and continued in, ever since the days of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and increased therein: *her rulers with shame do love, give ye*; or *her shields*[a]; those that should have been the protectors of Israel, compared before to a heifer; and preserved them not only from their external enemies, but from all innovations in religion; and which we rightly enough render *rulers*, civil and ecclesiastic, kings, princes, and priests; see Psal. xlvii. 9. these *loved*, *give ye*, which was a *shame* to them: the sense is, either they loved gifts and bribes, and were

[x] ועתה quare, ideo, nunc itaque, Schmidt; igitur nunc, Cocceius.
[y] סר סבאם recessit potus eorum, Montanus, Drusius; recessit vinum eorum, Schmidt.
[z] Recedere fecit merum eorum, Tarnovius; refractarium est merum eorum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[a] מגניה clypei ejus, Montanus, Vatablus; scuta ejus, Drusius, Tarnovius; cujus clypei, Cocceius.

continually saying, *give, give*, when causes were to be tried, and so perverted justice and judgment, which was very shameful; or they loved wine and strong drink, and therefore required it to be continually given them, which was very scandalous in rulers more especially, Prov. xxxi. 4. or they loved whoredom, both in a corporeal and spiritual sense, and desired more harlots and more idols, and added to their old ones, which was very abominable and ignominious. So the Targum, "they turned themselves after fornication they "loved, which brought shame unto them;" and these may be considered as so many reasons, why Judah should have nothing to do with Israel.

Ver. 19. *The wind hath bound her up in her wings, &c.*] That is, the wind in its wings hath bound up Ephraim, Israel, or the ten tribes, compared to a heifer; meaning, that the wind of God's wrath and vengeance, or the enemy, the Assyrian, should come like a whirlwind, and carry them swiftly, suddenly, and irresistibly, out of their own land, into a foreign country: the past tense for the future, as is common in prophecy, because of the certainty of it; so Jarchi and Joseph Kimchi: but Aben Ezra, David Kimchi, Abarbinel, and Abendana, render it *she*, that is, Israel, *hath bound up the wind in her wings*[a]; meaning that they had laboured in vain in their idolatrous worship; and it was all one as if a man should attempt to gather the wind, and bind it up in the skirts of his garment, and when he opens them there is nothing to be found; and to this sense is the Targum, "the works of their great "men are not right, as it is impossible to bind the wind "in a wing;" referring to the sins of their rulers, as before: or rather the sense is, the wind shall get into the loose skirts of the garments of the Israelites, which shall be as a sail to it, as Schmidt observes, and shall carry them into distant lands; which falls in with the first sense of the words, and is best: *and they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices*; they of the ten tribes, the people of Israel; or their shields, their rulers, as Aben Ezra, shall be filled with shame, being disappointed of the help they expected from their idols, to whom they offered sacrifices; and the more, inasmuch as they will find that these idolatrous sacrifices are the cause of their ruin and destruction. The Targum is, "because of the altars of their idols;" and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, *because of their altars*.

CHAP. V.

THE design of this chapter is to expose the sins of Israel and of Judah, and to declare the judgment of God upon them for them. Men of all ranks in Israel are summoned to attend to the charge brought against them, and the sentence on them, ver. 1. The charge exhibited is, that they were guilty of insnaring men to the slaughter of idolatrous sacrifices, though they had been sufficiently rebuked and corrected, ver. 1, 2. of both corporeal and spiritual adultery, whereby they were defiled, and which was well known to the Lord, ver. 3. of obstinate persistence in impenitence, owing to the efficacy of an unclean spirit in them, and their want of the knowledge of God, ver. 4. of open pride, which stared them in the face, and for which they fell into calamities, and Judah with them, and should not be able with all their sacrifices to find favour with God, who had withdrawn himself from them, ver. 5, 6. also of treacherous dealing with the Lord by their spiritual adultery, and begetting strange children, ver. 7. next their punishment is denounced, of which notice was to be given them by the sound of the trumpet, as an alarm of war, or as calling for mourning, ver. 8. since Ephraim would become desolate, of which notification had been made among the tribes, ver. 9. and wrath would be poured out in great abundance on the princes of Judah, who were very wicked men, ver. 10. and Ephraim would be oppressed and broken by the judgment of God, who would be as a moth unto them, and also rottenness to Judah, because they followed the commandments of men, ver. 11, 12. and, what was still more provoking, when they were sensible of their calamities and distresses, they sought not help from the Lord, but from men that could do them no good; and therefore he threatens to be as a devouring lion to them, ver. 13, 14. and yet the chapter concludes with a promise of the conversion of these people, after the Lord had dealt with them in an angry manner, ver. 15.

Ver. 1. *Hear ye this, O priests, &c.*] Though idolatrous ones, who called themselves priests, and were reckoned so by others, though not of the tribe of Levi, but such as Jeroboam had made priests, or were their successors; and there might be some of the family of Aaron and tribe of Levi, that might continue in the cities of Israel, and who gave in to the idolatrous worship of those times. Some render it *princes*[b], and the word signifies both: *and hearken, ye house of Israel*; not the kingdom of Judah, as Kimchi, for this is manifestly distinguished from Israel in this chapter; nor the sanhedrim, to which sense Aben Ezra seems to incline; but the ten tribes, the whole kingdom of Israel, the common people in it: *and give ye ear, O house of the king*; of the king of Israel, who, at this time, is thought to be Menahem; the royal family, the princes of the blood, and all that belonged to the king's court; all of every office, priestly or kingly, of every rank, high and low, are called upon to hearken to what is about to be said, both concerning their sin and punishment: *for judgment is toward you*; either to know and do that which is just and right; it belonged to the priests to know and teach divine judgment, to instruct the people in the knowledge of the

[a] צרר רוח אותה בכנפיה ligavit illa ventum in alis suis, Munster, Calvin, Tigurine version.

[b] הכהנים significat sacerdotes & principes, vid. 2 Sam. viii. 18. Sacerdotes ac domum regis, i. e. regem cum principibus & aulicis, Liveleus.

judgments, statutes, and laws of God; and it belonged to the king to execute human judgment, to do justice and judgment according to the laws of God, and of the realm; and it belonged to the people to attend to both: so the Targum, "does it not *belong* to you to "know judgments?" or rather this is to be understood of punitive justice and judgment, of the sentence of condemnation, or denunciation of punishment for sin: the reasons of which follow, *because ye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor:* these were two high mountains in the land of Israel; the former was near Hermon and Lebanon, and the same with Gilead, Josh. xi. 3. Judg. xi. 29. the latter was a mountain in Galilee, between Issachar and Zebulun, two leagues from Nazareth: it was, according to Joseph ben Gorion[d], thirty furlongs high, had on the top of it a plain of twenty-three furlongs; the true Josephus[e] says twenty-six; see the note on Jer. xlvi. 18. the Jews[f] have a tradition, that Jeroboam set spies upon these mountains at the time of the solemn feasts, to watch who went to them out of Israel, and to inform against them; but these could not command all the roads leading to Jerusalem. It may be these mountains were much infested with hawkers and hunters, to which there may be an allusion; and the sense be, ye priests, people, and king, are like to those that set snares and nets on those hills, as they to insnare and catch creatures, so ye to insnare and draw men into idolatrous practices; or rather, since there is no note of comparison, the meaning is, that they set up altars, and offered sacrifices on these hills, and thereby insnared not only those of their own tribes, but drew and enticed many of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin to fall in with the same idolatrous practices.

Ver. 2. *And the revolters are profound to make slaughter, &c.*] The *revolters* are the king, priests, and people, who had revolted from the true worship and ways of God unto idolatry. These formed deep-laid schemes, and took crafty methods, like hawkers; who lay themselves flat upon the ground to manage their snares and nets, and observe the creatures that fall into them, and take them, and whom they artfully decoy, to which the allusion is; and that either to slay those who would not comply with their false worship; or rather to multiply the sacrifices of slain beasts, and offer them with a great shew of devotion and religion, and thereby beguile, entice, and insnare simple and unwary souls; so the Targum, "they sacrifice to idols "abundantly;" and which, in the sight of God, was mere slaughter and butchery: *though I have been a rebuker of them all,* king, priests, and prophets; those idolaters, revolters, or worshippers of Baal, as Aben Ezra calls them: this is to be interpreted either of the prophet, who had freely, faithfully, and openly reproved all orders of men for their departure from God and his worship, and for their idolatrous practices; or of the Lord himself, which comes to the same sense, who had rebuked them by his prophets, and corrected them by his judgments, but to no purpose: and therefore they could not plead ignorance, or excuse themselves upon that account.

Ver. 3. *I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me, &c.*] Though they may cover their designs from men, and seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and make plausible pretences for what they do, and put on an appearance of religion; yet God, who knows all men, and their hearts, cannot be deceived; he judges not according to outward appearance; all things are naked and open to him; nor can any hide themselves from him; he knows their persons, intentions, and designs, as well as actions. Kimchi interprets Ephraim of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who was of that tribe; others, of the tribe itself, and Israel of the other nine tribes; others take Ephraim for the ten tribes, and Israel for the two tribes: but it is best to understand Ephraim and Israel of the same, even of the ten tribes; whose works, as the Targum paraphrases it, the Lord knew, particularly what follows: *for now, O Ephraim, thou committest whoredom;* both corporeal and spiritual adultery, which frequently went together, as observed in the preceding chapter; the Lord knew their corporeal whoredom, though ever so secretly committed, and their spiritual adultery or idolatry, under all the specious pretences of worshipping him; which was an abhorrence to him, as well as a pollution to them: *and Israel is defiled;* with the same sins; for all sin is of a defiling nature, and especially those mentioned, which defile body and soul, and render men loathsome and abominable in the sight of God.

Ver. 4. *They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God, &c.*] Either their evil doings; they will not leave, as the Targum and Jarchi[g]; their evil ways and worship, their adultery and idolatry; which was necessary to repentance and true conversion to God, whom they yet professed to be their God, though they had so sadly departed from him: or their good works; they did not choose to do them, which were leading steps to repentance and conversion, or fruits and evidences of it: they had no mind to repent of their sins, and turn from them to the Lord; they had no thought, care, or concern, about these things, but obstinately persisted in their sins, and in their impenitence: their wills were wretchedly depraved and corrupted; their hearts hard, perverse, and obstinate; they had no will to that which is good: *for the spirit of whoredom is in the midst of them;* an unclean spirit, that prompts them to and pushes them on to commit corporeal and spiritual whoredom; the bias and inclination of their minds were this way, which put them upon such evil practices; the spirit of error, which caused them to err, as the Targum and Kimchi; the lying spirit in the false prophets, which encouraged them therein; and even himself, the spirit that works in the children of disobedience: *and they have not known the Lord:* ignorance of God, his nature and perfections, his will, word, and worship, was the cause of their idolatry, and other sins; see ch. iv. 1. and this was wilful and affected ignorance; they knew not, nor would they understand: they rejected the knowledge of God, and the means of it; so the Targum, "and they sought "not instruction (or doctrine) from the Lord."

[d] Hist. Heb. l. 4. c. 25. p. 635.
[e] De Bello Jud. l. 4. c. 1. sect. 8.
[f] Jarchi ex Tanchuma, Abendana ex Midrash.
[g] So R. Sal. Urbin. fol. 64. 2.

Ver. 5. *And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face,* &c.] Or, *does* or *shall answer to his face* [h]; contradicts him, convicts him, and fills him with shame; the pride of his heart, and of his countenance, and which appears in all his actions, and which is open and manifest to all, shall stare him in the face, and confound him; even all the sinful actions done by him in a proud and haughty manner, in contempt of God and of his laws, shall fly in his face, and fill him with dread and horror. The Targum is, "the glory of Israel shall be humbled, and they seeing *it*:" instead of greatness, glory, and honour, they formerly had, they shall be in a mean low condition, even in their own land, before they go into captivity; and which their eyes shall behold, as Kimchi explains the paraphrase; and to this sense Jarchi and Aben Ezra incline; and so read the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions. Some understand this of God himself, who, formerly, at least, was the pride, glory, and excellency of Israel; of whom they were proud, and boasted, and gloried in; even he shall be a swift witness against them: *and therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity:* that is, the ten tribes shall fall by and for their iniquities, such as before mentioned, into ruin and misery; it has respect to their final destruction and captivity by the Assyrians; they first fell into sin, and then by it into ruin: see ch. xiv. 1. *Judah also shall fall with them;* the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, as they fell into idolatry, and were guilty of the same crimes, so should be involved in the same or like punishment, though not at the same time; for the Babylonish captivity, in which Judah was carried captive, was many years after Israel was carried captive by the Assyrians; unless this is to be understood of the low, afflicted, and distressed condition of Judah, in the times of Ahaz, by Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, who had a little before carried captive part of Israel, and by others; and in which times Judah fell into idolatrous practices, and fell by them; see 2 Kings xv. 29. and xvi. 7, 8. 2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 6, 16—20.

Ver. 6. *They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the Lord,* &c.] Not only the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, to whom Kimchi, Aben Ezra, and Abarbinel, restrain the words; but the ten tribes of Israel also, who, when in distress, and seeing ruin coming upon them, should seek the Lord; seek help from him against their enemies, and the pardon of their sins; seek his face and favour, and to appease his wrath, by bringing a multitude of sacrifices out of their flocks and herds; such a number of them, as if they brought all their flocks and herds with them; but not with true repentance for their sins, nor with faith in the great sacrifice, which legal sacrifices, rightly performed, prefigured. Kimchi refers this to the times of Josiah; but, as it respects Israel as well as Judah, it seems to design some time a little before the ruin of them both: *but they shall not find him;* shall not find grace and mercy with him; he will not be favourable to them, will not afford them any help, but give them up to utter ruin and destruction; as he did Israel at the Assyrian captivity, and Judah at the Babylonish captivity: *he hath withdrawn himself from them;* the glory of the Lord departed from them; his Shechinah, or divine Majesty, as the Targum, removed from them, because of their idolatry, and other sins; they sought him not where and while he was to be found; and therefore, when they sought him, found him not, because he had withdrawn his presence from among them, being provoked by their iniquities.

Ver. 7. *They have dealt treacherously against the Lord,* &c.] Which was the reason of his departure from them; as a woman deals treacherously with her husband when she is unfaithful to him, and commits adultery; so Israel and Judah dealt treacherously with the Lord, who stood in the relation of a husband to them in covenant, by committing idolatry: *for they have begotten strange children:* either of strange women, the daughters of idolatrous Heathens they married, so the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi; or rather their natural children, though born of Israelitish or Jewish parents, both such; yet being educated by them in an idolatrous way, and brought up in the commission of the evils their parents were guilty of, are said to be strange children to the Lord, alienated from him and his worship, and as such to be begotten: *now shall a month devour them with their portions;* the Jews understand this literally of the month Ab, the time of Jerusalem's destruction, so Jarchi and R. Jeshuah in Aben Ezra and Ben Melech; or the month Tammuz, in which the city was broke up, and the month Ab, in which it was destroyed, as Kimchi; or rather, which is also a sense he mentions, it signifies a short time, a very little while ere the destruction should come; and compares it with Zech. xi. 8. though, according to the Targum, it is to be understood of every month; and so denotes the continual desolation that should be made, until they were utterly destroyed; but others seem better to interpret it of their new moon, or first day of the month, which they observed in a religious way, by offering sacrifice, &c. and on which they depended; but this should be so far from being of any service to them, that it should turn against them; and, because of the idolatry committed in them, the Lord would hate them, and destroy them on account of them; even their farms, and fields, and vineyards, which were their portions and inheritances; see Isa. i. 13, 14, unless it is rather to be understood of the parts of the beasts slain in sacrifice on those days, to appease the Lord; which would be so far from doing it, that they would provoke him yet more to wrath, and slay them.

Ver. 8. *Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah, and the trumpet in Ramah,* &c.] As an alarm of war, to give notice that the enemy is at hand, just ready to invade the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and bring destruction upon them; according to the Targum, the words are directed to the prophets, "O ye prophets, lift up your voice like a trumpet;" to declare to the people of Judah their sins and transgressions, and the punishment that would be inflicted on them for them: or it may be, this is a call of the people to fasting, mourning, and lamentation, as in Joel ii. 1, 15. Gibeah is the

[h] ענה בפניו respondebit, Montanus, Zanchius, Tarnovius, Rivet, Schmidt; respondit, Coccius.

same which is called *Gibeah of Saul*, 1 Sam. xi. 4. it being the birth-place of that prince; and which Josephus[l] calls Gabath-saoule, and interprets it the hill of Saul, and says it was distant from Jerusalem about thirty furlongs; though elsewhere[k] he represents it as but twenty furlongs; perhaps in the latter place there is a corruption in the number; for, according to Jerom, it was near Ramah, which was seven miles from Jerusalem; he says it is called also *Gibeah of Benjamin*, 1 Sam. xiii. 2. because it was in that tribe, as was also Ramah; which, according to Eusebius[l], was six miles from Jerusalem; these were near to each other; see Judg. xix. 13. so that the calamity threatened is what respects the two tribes: *cry aloud at Beth-aven* the same with Beth-el, or a place near unto it, in the tribe of Benjamin, or on the borders of Ephraim; see ch. iv. 15. According to the above writer[m], it lay about twelve miles from Jerusalem; in the way to Sichem; and being upon the borders both of Benjamin and Ephraim, it sometimes belonged to Israel, and sometimes to Judah; see 2 Chron. xiii. 19. and seeing, as Jerom observes, that Benjamin was at the back of it (for where the tribe of Benjamin ended, not far in the tribe of Ephraim, according to him, was this city built), it therefore very beautifully follows, *after thee, O Benjamin*; that is, either the enemy is after thee, O Benjamin, is just at hand, ready to fall upon thee, and destroy thee, as Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech; or rather, after the trumpet is blown in Gibeah and Ramah, cities which belonged to Benjamin, let it be blown, either in Beth-aven, on the borders of Benjamin and Ephraim; or let it be blown in the tribe of Judah, so that all the twelve tribes may have notice, and prepare for what is coming upon them.

Ver. 9. *Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke*, &c.] The country of the ten tribes shall be laid desolate, the inhabitants of them destroyed either by the sword, or famine, or pestilence, and the rest carried captive, as they were by Salmaneser; and this was the day of the Lord's rebuke and chastisement of them: or of the reward of their sins, as the Targum, when the Lord punished them for them; and this is what the trumpet was to be blown for, in order to give notice of, or to call for mourning on account of it: *among the tribes of Israel have I made known that which shall surely be*; this desolation was foretold by the prophets, and published in all the tribes of Israel, as what should certainly come to pass; and therefore they could not plead ignorance of it, or say they had no notice given them, or they would have repented of their sins. The Targum is, "in the tribes of Israel I have "made known the law;" so Jarchi; which they transgressed, and therefore were made desolate; or the word of truth, as Kimchi; the true and faithful word, that if they walked in his ways, hearkened unto him, it would be well with them; but, if not, he would destroy their land, and carry them captive.

Ver. 10. *The princes of Judah were like them that remove the bound*, &c.] Or landmark, which to do was contrary to the law, Deut. xix. 14. and has always been reckoned a heinous sin among all nations, and is only done by such who have no regard to right and wrong, and by them secretly; and such were the kings, princes, and nobles of Judah; they secretly committed the grossest iniquities, yea, were abandoned to their vile lusts, and could not be contained within any bounds. The *caph* here used is, according to Kimchi and Ben Melech, not a note of similitude, but of certainty; and then the sense is, that the princes of Judah did remove the bound; either, in a literal sense, by force and violence seized on the possessions and inheritances of their neighbours which lay next to theirs; or, in a figurative sense, they broke through all bounds and limits, and transgressed the laws of God and men, being not to be restrained by either: *therefore I will pour out my wrath upon them like water*; in great abundance, and with such force and vehemence, as not to be stopped, but utterly destroy; like a flood of water, which overflows the banks, or breaks them down, and carries all before it; or like the flood of water that came upon the earth, and carried off the world of the ungodly; in like manner should the wrath of God be poured down from heaven upon these princes without measure, exceeding all bounds, in just retaliation for their removing the bounds of their neighbours, or transgressing the laws of God: this was fulfilled either in the times of Ahaz, when Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah king of Israel, as well as Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, greatly afflicted Judah, 2 Chron. xxviii. or at the time of the Babylonish captivity.

Ver. 11. *Ephraim is oppressed, and broken in judgment*, &c.] Here the prophet again returns to the ten tribes, who were oppressed and broken, either by their own judgments, as the Targum; by the tyranny of their kings, and the injustice of their judges, who looked only for the mammon of unrighteousness; or by the judgment of their enemies, the Assyrians, the taxes they laid upon them, the devastations they made among them, and by whom, at last, they were carried captive; or by the judgments of God upon them; for all the enemy did was by his permission, and according to his will: *because he willingly walked after the commandment*; not after the commandment of God, but after the commandment of men, as Aben Ezra; or after the commandment of the prophets of Baal, as Jarchi; or after the commandment of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, as Kimchi, by worshipping the calves at Dan and Beth-el he set up there.

Ver. 12. *Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth*, &c.] Which eats garments, penetrates into them, feeds on them privately, secretly, without any noise, and gradually and slowly consumes them; but at last utterly, that they are of no use and profit: this may signify the various things which befell the ten tribes in the reigns of Zachariah, Shallum, Menachem, Pekahiah, and Pekah, which secretly and gradually weakened them; and the utter consumption of them in the times of Hoshea by Salmaneser: *and to the house of Judah as rottenness*; as rottenness in the bones, Prov. xii. 4. which can never be got out or cured; or as a worm that eats into wood, as Jarchi interprets it; and gets into the very heart of a tree, and eats it out: thus

[i] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 2. sect. 1.
[k] Antiqu. l. 5. c. 2. sect. 8.
[l] Apud Reland. Palestina Illustrata, l. 3. tom. 2. p. 962.
[m] Apud Reland. ib. p. 637.

the Lord threatens the house of Judah, or the two tribes, with a gradual, yet thorough, ruin and destruction.

Ver. 13. *When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound*, &c. That their civil state were in a sickly condition, very languid, weak, feeble, and tottering, just upon the brink of ruin; see Isa. i. 6: *then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to King Jareb*; that is, the ten tribes, or the king of them, went and met the Assyrian king; and Judah the two tribes, or the king of them, sent ambassadors to King Jareb; which sense the order of the words, in connexion with the preceding clause, seems to require: by the Assyrian and King Jareb we are to understand one and the same, as appears from the following words, *yet could he not heal*, &c.; whereas, if they were different, it would have been expressed, *yet could they not heal*, &c.; and the king of Assyria is meant, who also is called King Jareb, or rather king of Jareb[p]; see ch. x. 6. for this does not seem to be the name of the king of Assyria himself; though it may be that Pul, or Tiglath-pileser, or Salmaneser, might have more names than one, whoever is meant; but rather it is the name of some place in Assyria, as Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, from which the country may be here denominated; though the Targum takes it to be, not the proper name of a man or place, but an appellative, paraphrasing it, "and sent to the king that shall come to avenge them;" and so other interpreters[q] understand it, rendering it, either the king that should defend, as Tremelius; or the king the adversary, or litigator, as Cocceius, Hillerus[r], and Gussetius[s]; a court-adversary, that litigates a point, contends with one, and is an advocate for another; or, as Hiller elsewhere[t] renders it, the king that lies in wait: this was fulfilled with respect to Ephraim, when Menachem king of Israel, or the ten tribes, often meant by Ephraim, went and met Pul king of Assyria, and gave him a thousand talents to depart out of his land; perceiving his own weakness to withstand him, and in order to strengthen and confirm the kingdom in his hand, 2 Kings xv. 19. or when Hoshea king of Israel gave presents to Salmaneser king of Assyria, and became a servant to him, till he could get stronger, and shake off his yoke, 2 Kings xvii. 3. and with respect to Judah it had its accomplishment when Ahaz king of Judah sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria to come and help him against the kings of Syria and Israel, finding he was not strong enough to oppose them himself, 2 Kings xvi. 7. now all this was highly provoking to the Lord, that when both Israel and Judah found themselves in a weak condition, and unable to resist their enemies, instead of seeking to him for help, they applied to a foreign prince, and which proved unsuccessful to them: *yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound*; but, on the contrary, afflicted them, hurt and destroyed them; there being a *meiosis* in the words, which expresses less than is designed; for though, with respect to Ephraim or Israel, Pul king of Assyria desisted from doing any damage to Israel, yet a successor of his, Tiglath-pileser, came and took several places of Israel, and carried the inhabitants captive; and at last came Salmaneser, and took Samaria, the metropolis of the land, and carried all the ten tribes captive, 2 Kings xv. 29. and xvii. 4, 5, 6. and so, with respect to Judah, Tiglath-pileser, whom Ahaz sent unto for help, not only did not help and strengthen him, but afflicted him, 2 Chron. xxviii. 20. thus when sensible sinners see their spiritual maladies, and feel the smart of their wounds, and make a wrong application for relief, to their tears, repentance, and humiliation, and to works of righteousness, or to any thing or person short of Christ the great Physician, they meet with no success, find no relief until better directed.

Ver. 14. *For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah*, &c.] Being provoked by their above conduct and behaviour in seeking to others, and not to him, for help, he threatens to punish them in a more public and severe manner; not be to them only as a moth and rottenness, but as a lion, and as a young lion, creatures strong and fierce, that destroy and devour all that come into their hands, and from whom there is no deliverance: thus the Lord was both to Israel and Judah, by means of the Assyrians and Babylonians; the former are compared to a lion, that devoured Israel; and the latter to a young lion, that broke the bones of Judah; see Jer. l. 17. and last of all by means of the Romans, especially to Judah: *I, even I, will tear and go away*: as a lion tears its prey in pieces it seizes upon, and goes away, and leaves it torn, having satisfied itself, and is in no fear of being pursued, or any vengeance taken on him for what he has done; so the Lord would destroy Israel and Judah, and leave them in their ruinous state, none being able to rise up and avenge their cause. The *I* is doubled, to express the certainty of it: *I will take away, and none shall rescue him*; as the lion, having glutted itself with its prey, takes the rest away, and carries it to its den, where none dare come and take it from him; so the Lord signifies, that those of Israel and Judah that perished not by the sword of the enemy, or by famine or pestilence, should be carried captive, and none should be able to return them till he pleases: under the wrath and displeasure of God, and under this tearing, rending, and afflictive dispensation, they now are, and will continue till the time of their conversion.

Ver. 15. *I will go and return to my place*, &c.] Leave the countries of Israel and of Judah, where he had used to grant his gracious and spiritual presence unto his people, and watched over them, and cared for them, and bestowed many favours on them, and go up to heaven, the place of his more glorious presence, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, interpret it; and there, as it were, shut himself up, particularly with respect to these people, as if he had no more thought of them, or concern for them: this is to be understood in a sense becoming and agreeable to the omnipresence of God: *till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face*; till the Israelites acknowledge their idolatry, and the Jews their disbelief and rejection of the Messiah,

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[p] אל מלך ירב ad regem Jareb, Zanchius, Livelcus, Drusius; so Luther in Tarnovius.

[q] ירב ultorem, Vulg. Lat.; qui eum vindicaret, Tigurine version; propugnaturum, Junius & Tremellius; qui litigaret, Piscator.

[r] Onomast. Sacr. p. 219.

[s] Ebr. Comment. p. 780.

[t] Onomast. Sacr. p. 439.

and all other sins; till they ingenuously confess themselves to be guilty, or know and acknowledge they have sinned, as the Targum; and then humbly seek the face and favour of God, the remission of their sins from him, and acceptance with him: *in their affliction they will seek me early:* in the morning, betimes, early, and earnestly; which affliction may be understood both of the Assyrian and Babylonish captivity; or rather of their present affliction toward the close of it, when they shall be sensible of their sins, and confess them, and look to him whom they have pierced, and mourn, and seek for pardon, righteousness, and salvation, from him: and so all Israel shall be saved, of whose conversion this is a prophecy.

CHAP. VI.

THIS chapter gives an account of some who were truly penitent, and stirred up one another to return to the Lord, encouraged by his power, grace, and goodness, ver. 1, 2, 3. and of others, who had only a form of religion, were very unstable in it; regarded more the ceremonial law, and the external sacrifices of it, than the moral law; either that part of it which respects the love of the neighbour, or that which concerns the knowledge of God; and dealt treacherously with the Lord, transgressing the covenant, ver. 4, 5, 6, 7. particularly the city of Gilead is represented as full of the workers of iniquity, and is charged with bloodshed, ver. 8. yea, even the priests were guilty of murder and lewdness, ver. 9. and Israel, or the ten tribes in general, are accused of whoredom, both corporeal and spiritual, with which they were defiled, ver. 10. nor was Judah clear of these crimes, and therefore a reckoning day is set for them, ver. 11.

Ver. 1. *Come, and let us return unto the Lord,* &c.] The Septuagint and Arabic versions connect these words with the last clause of the preceding chapter, adding the word, *saying;* and so the Targum and Syriac version, *they shall say;* and very rightly as to the sense; for they are the words of those persons under the afflicting hand of God; and, being brought thereby to a sense of their sins, acknowledge them, and seek to the Lord for pardon, and encourage one another so to do; as Israel and Judah will in the latter day, when the veil shall be taken off their minds, the hardness of their heart removed, and they shall be converted, and turn to the Lord, and seek him together, weeping as they go; having both faith in Christ, and repentance towards God, by which they will return unto him; see 2 Cor. iii. 16. Jer. l. 4, 5. so all sinners sensible of their departure from God by sin, and of the evil and danger of it, repent of it, and loath it, confess and acknowledge it, depart from it, and forsake it; and return to the Lord, having some view and apprehension of him as a God, gracious and merciful in Christ; imploring the forgiveness of their sins, with some degree of faith and confidence in him; and not having only love to their own souls, and the welfare of them, but also to the souls of others, exhort and encourage them to join with them in the same acts of faith, repentance, and obedience. The Targum is, "let us return to the "worship of the Lord;" from which they have sadly departed. The arguments or reasons follow, *for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up;* the same hand that has torn will heal, and that has smitten will bind up, and none else can; and therefore there is a necessity of returning to him for healing and a cure, Deut. xxxii. 39. and his tearing is in order to heal, and his smiting in order to bind up; and, as sure as he has done the one, he'll do the other, and therefore there is great encouragement to apply to him; all which the Jews will be sensible of in the last day; and then the Lord, who is now tearing them in his wrath, and smiting them in his sore displeasure, both in their civil and church state, dispersing them among the nations, and has been so doing for many hundred years, will *bind up the breach of his people, and heal the stroke of their wound,* Isa. xxx. 26. and so the Lord deals with all his people, who are truly and really converted by him; he rends their heart, tears the caul of it; pricks and cuts them to the heart; smites them with the hammer of his word; wounds their consciences with a sense of sin; lets in the law into them, which works wrath, whereby they become broken and contrite; and all this in order to their turning to him that smites them, and be healed, and in love to their souls, though for the present grievous to bear; and then the great Physician heals them by his stripes and wounds; by the application of his blood; by means of his word, the Gospel of peace and pardon; by a look to him, and a touch of him by faith; by discoveries of his love, and particularly his pardoning grace and mercy, which as oil and wine he pours into the wounds made by sin, and binds them up; and which he heals universally, both with respect to persons and diseases, for which he is applied unto, and infallibly, thoroughly, and perfectly, and all freely.

Ver. 2. *After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up,* &c.] The Jews, in their present state, are as dead men, both in a civil and spiritual sense, and their conversion and restoration will be as life from the dead; they are like persons buried, and, when they are restored, they'll be raised out of their graves, both of sin and misery; see Rom. xi. 15. Ezek. xxxvii. 11, 12, 13, 14. the time of which is here fixed, after two days, and on the third; which Jarchi interprets of the two temples that have been destroyed, and of the third temple to be built, which the Jews expect, but in vain, and when they hope for good times: Kimchi explains it of their three captivities, in Egypt, Babylon, and the present one, and so Ben Melech, from which they hope to be raised, and live comfortably; which sense is much better than the former: and with it may be compared Vitringa's* notion of the text, that the first day was between

* Comment. in Isa. viii. 20.

Israel's coming out of Egypt and the Babylonish captivity; the second day between that and the times of Antiochus, which was the third night; then the third day followed, which is the times of the Messiah: but the Targum comes nearer the truth, which paraphrases the words thus, "he will quicken us in the "days of consolation which are to come, and in the "day of the resurrection of the dead he will raise us "up;" where by days of consolation are meant the days of the Messiah, with which the Jews generally connect the resurrection of the dead; and if we understand them of the last days of the Messiah, it is not much amiss; for the words respect the quickening and raising up of the Jews in the latter day, the times of Christ's spiritual coming and reign: and these two and three days may be expressive of a long and short time, as interpreters differently explain them; of a long time, as the third day is a long time for a man to lie dead, when there can be little or no hope of his reviving, Luke xxiv. 31. or of a short time, for which two or three days is a common phrase; and both true in this case: it is a long time Israel and Judah have been in captivity, and there may seem little hope of their restoration; but it will be a short time with the Lord, with whom a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years: and this I take to be the sense of the words, that after the second Millennium, or the Lord's two days, and at the beginning of the third, will be the time of their conversion and restoration, reckoning from the last destruction of them by the Romans; for not till then were Israel and Judah wholly in a state of death: many of Israel were mixed among those of Judah before the Babylonish captivity, and many returned with them from it; but, when destroyed by the Romans, there was an end of their civil and church state; which will both be revived on a better foundation at this period of time: but if this conjecture is not agreeable (for I only propose it as such), the sense may be taken thus, that in a short time after the repentance of Israel, and their conversion to the Lord, they will be brought into a very comfortable and happy state and condition, both with respect to things temporal and spiritual. *And we shall live in his sight:* comfortably, in a civil sense, in their own land, and in the possession of all their privileges and liberties; and in a spiritual sense, by faith on Jesus Christ, whom they shall now embrace, and in the enjoyment of the Gospel and Gospel ordinances; and the prophet represents the penitents and faithful among them as believing and hoping for these things. This may be applied to the case of sensible sinners, who, as they are in their natural state dead in sin, and dead in law, so they see themselves to be such when awakened; and yet entertain a secret hope that sooner or later they shall be revived and refreshed, and raised up to a more comfortable state, and live in the presence of God, and the enjoyment of his favour. The ancient fathers generally understood these words of Christ, who was buried on the sixth day, lay in the grave the whole seventh day, and after these two days, on the third, rose again from the dead; and to this passage the apostle is thought to have respect, 1 Cor. xv. 3. and also of the resurrection of his people in and with him, and by virtue of his; and true it is that Christ rose from the dead on the third day, and all his redeemed ones were quickened and raised up together with him as their head and representative, Ephes. ii. 5, 6. and it is in virtue of his being quickened that they are regenerated and quickened, and made alive, in a spiritual sense; he is the author of their spiritual life, and their life itself; see 1 Pet. i. 3. and not only in virtue of his resurrection is their spiritual resurrection from the death of sin to a life of grace, but even their corporeal resurrection at the last day; and as, in consequence of their spiritual resurrection, they live in the sight of God a life of grace and holiness by faith in Christ, and in a comfortable view and enjoyment of the divine favour; so they shall live eternally in the presence of God, where are fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore: but the first sense is best, and most agreeable to the context and scope of it.

Ver. 3. *Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord,* &c.] The word *if* is not in the original text, and the passage is not conditional, but absolute; for as persons, when converted, know Christ, and not before, when he is revealed to them, and in them, as the only Saviour and Redeemer, so they continue and increase in the knowledge of him; they earnestly desire to know more of him, and eagerly pursue those means and methods by which they attain to a greater degree of it; for so the words are, *and we shall know, we shall follow on to know the Lord*[*]; that grace, which has given the first measure of spiritual and experimental knowledge of him, will influence and engage them to seek after more. The Jews, when they are quickened, and turn to the Lord, will know him, own and acknowledge him, as the Messiah, the only Redeemer and Saviour; and will be so delighted with the knowledge of him, that they will be desirous of, and seek after, a larger measure of it; and indeed they shall all know him, from the least to the greatest, when the covenant of grace shall be renewed with them, manifested and applied to them. The words may be considered as a continuation of their exhortation to one another from ver. 1. thus, *and let us acknowledge, let us follow on to know him*[*]; let us own him as the true Messiah, whom we and our fathers have rejected; and let us make use of all means to gain more knowledge of him: or let us follow after him, to serve and obey him, which is the practical knowledge of him; let us imitate him, and follow him the Lamb of God, embrace his Gospel, and submit to his ordinances. So Kimchi interprets it, *to know him;* that is, to serve him; first know him, then serve him. *His going forth is prepared as the morning;* that is, the Lord's going forth, who is known, and followed after to be more known; and is to be understood, not of his going forth in the council and covenant of grace from everlasting; nor of his incarnation in time, or

* ונדעה נרדפה לדעת את יהוה sciemusque, sequemur ad sciendum Dominum, Montanus; & cognoscemus, & persequemur ad cognoscendum Jehovam, Zanchius; sciemus persequemur, Livelcus.

* Cognoscamus, sive agnoscamus, & persequamur scientiam Domini, Schmidt.

of his resurrection from the dead; but of his spiritual coming in the latter day, with the brightness of which he will destroy antichrist; or of his going forth in the ministration of the Gospel, to the conversion of Jews and Gentiles, the light of which dispensation will be very great: it will be like a morning after a long night of darkness with the Jewish and Pagan nations; and be as grateful and delightful, beautiful and cheerful, as the morning light; and move as swiftly and irresistibly as that, and be alike growing and increasing: and so the words are a reason of the increasing knowledge of the Lord's people in those times, because he shall go forth in the ministration of the word like the morning light, which increases more and more till noon; and of the evidence and clearness of it, it being like a morning without clouds; with which agrees the note of Joseph Kimchi, "we shall know him, and "it will be as clear to us as the light of the morning "without clouds:" and also of the firmness and certainty of it; for both the increasing knowledge of the saints, and the going forth of Christ in a spiritual manner, is *firm* and *sure* (which may be the sense of the word *) as the morning; for, as sure as the night cometh, so also the morning. *And he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth;* in the land of Israel they had usually two rains in a year; the one in autumn, or quickly after the seed was sown; the other in the spring, when the corn was ripe, and harvest near, and which was very reviving and refreshing to the earth, and the fruits of it; and such will be the coming of Christ unto his people, in the ministration of the Gospel in the latter day, which will drop as the rain, and distil as the dew, as the small rain on the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass; and in the discoveries of his favour and love to them, and in the distribution of the blessings of his grace among them. Much the like phrases are used of the spiritual coming of Christ in the latter day, Psal. lxxii. 6. The Targum is, "and we shall "learn, and we shall follow on, to know the fear of the "Lord, as the morning light, which darts in its going "out; and blessings will come to us as a prevailing "rain, and as the latter rain which waters the earth."

Ver. 4. *O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee?* &c.] Or, *for thee*^? The Lord having observed the effect and consequence of his going and returning to his place, of his leaving his people for a long time under afflictions and in distress; namely, their thorough conversion to him in the latter day, and the blessings attending it; returns to the then present times again, and to the state and condition in which Ephraim and Judah, the ten and two tribes, were; and speaks as one at a loss, and under difficulties, to know what to do with them and for them; how as it were to give them up to ruin and destruction; and yet, having tried all ways with them, and in vain, asks what further was to be done, or could be done, to bring them to a sense of their sins, to reform them, and cause them to return to him. *For your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth way;* meaning not the goodness of God bestowed upon them, and the mercy he shewed to them; but the goodness that appeared in them, and all the good things done by them, their repentance, reformation, holiness, and righteousness; these, which were only in shew, did not last long, came to nothing, and disappeared; like a light cloud in the morning, which vanishes away when the sun rises; or like the dew that falls in the night, which is quickly dried up and gone, after the sun has been up a small time. Thus it was with Ephraim, or the ten tribes, in the time of Jehu; there was a shew of zeal for religion, and a reformation from idolatry; but it did not go on, nor last long; and with the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin in the times of Hezekiah and Josiah, who did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord; but then the Jews, in the times of their successors, returned to their former evil ways. And so the best works, holiness and righteousness of men, can no more stand before the justice of God, and the strict examination of it, than a thin light morning cloud, or the small drops of dew, before the light, force, and heat of the sun; nor do formal and carnal professors continue in these things; they may run well for a while, and then drop their profession and religion, and turn from the holy commandment. And this being the case, what can they expect from the Lord?

Ver. 5. *Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets: I have slain them by the words of my mouth,* &c.] Sharply reproved them for their sins by the prophets, who were as lapidaries that cut stone, or as hewers of timber that cut off the knotty parts; so these by preaching the terrors of the law, which is a killing letter, and by delivering out the threatenings of the Lord, and denouncing his judgments upon them for their sins, cut them to the heart, and killed them; for their foretelling and prophesying of their being slain, ruined, and destroyed, was a slaying of them; see Jer. i. 10. The Targum is, "because I admonished them by the message of "my prophets, and they returned not, I will bring "upon them those that slay, because they have trans- "gressed the word of my will." But the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, and so Aben Ezra and Joseph Kimchi, understand these words, not of hewing, and cutting, and slaying of the people by the prophets, but of the cutting and slaying the prophets themselves, and read the words, *therefore have I cut off the prophets, and slain them,* &c.; either the false prophets, some of them that caused the people to err, that they might not repent, as Aben Ezra; as the prophets of Baal in the times of Elijah, and the Scribes and Pharisees in Christ's time, who were in the way of the people's repentance, reformation, and reception of Christ; these he cut off, and their doctrine, and condemned by his own, and the doctrine of his apostles, the words of the Lord's mouth; see Zech. xi. 8. and this he did for the good of his people, in answer to the question put by himself in the preceding verse; so Schmidt interprets it: or else the true prophets of God, who were exposed to death, to be cut off and slain, for the messages they were sent with: or those messages were such as were killing to them to carry them, and deliver them; and they were

* [נכון] firmum certum notat, sic quidam in Schmidt; firmatus ac stabilitus, Tarnovius.

^ לך in tuum commodum, Schmidt.

so constantly employed, early and late, in such service, that for the work of the Lord they were often nigh unto death: but our version, and the sense agreeable to it, seem best. *And thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth;* that is, their judgments, the people's, a sudden change of person: meaning either the statutes and judgments prescribed them by the Lord, and to be observed by them; which were clear and plain as the light at noon-day, and therefore could not plead any excuse of ignorance of them, that they did not observe them: or the judgments of God upon them for their sins; which were open and manifest to all, and increasing like the light, more and more, and no more to be resisted than that; and the righteousness of God in them was very conspicuous; his judgments were manifest, and the justice of them. Some understand this of the judgments or righteousnesses of the saints, both imputed and inherent, Rom. v. 16. Luke i. 6. which appear light and clear, the darkness of pharisaism being removed by Christ. The Targum is, "my judgment goes forth as the light."

Ver. 6. *For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice,* &c.] That is, the one rather than the other, as the next clause explains it. Sacrifices were of early use, even before the law of Moses; they were of divine appointment, and were approved and accepted of by the Lord; they were types of Christ, and led to him, and were continued unto his death; but in comparison of moral duties, which respect love to God, and to our neighbour, the Lord did not will them, desire them, and delight in them; or he had more regard for the former than the latter; see 1 Sam. xv. 22. Mark xii. 33, 34. nor did he will or accept at all of the sacrifices offered to the calves at Dan and Beth-el; nor others, when they were not such as the law required, or were not offered up in the faith of Christ, attended with repentance for sin, and in sincerity, and were brought as real expiatory sacrifices for sin, and especially as now abrogated by the sacrifice of Christ. And as these words are twice quoted by our Lord, at one time to justify his mercy, pity, and compassion, to the souls of poor sinners, by conversing with them, Matt. ix. 13. and at another time to justify the disciples in an act of mercy to their bodies when hungry, by plucking ears of corn on the sabbath-day, Matt. xii. 7. *mercy* may here respect both acts of mercy shewn by the Lord, and acts of mercy done by men; both which the Lord wills, desires, and delights in: he takes pleasure in shewing mercy himself, as appears by his free and open declarations of it; by the throne of grace and mercy he has set up; by the encouragement he gives to souls to hope in his mercy; by the objects of it, the chief of sinners; by the various ways he has taken to display it, in election, in the covenant of grace, in the mission of Christ, in the pardon of sin by him, and in regeneration; and by his opposing it to every thing else, in the affair of salvation. And he likewise has a very great regard to mercy as exercised by men; as this is one of the weightier matters of the law, and may be put for the whole of it, or however the second table of it, which is love to our neighbours, and takes in all kind offices done to them; and especially designs acts of liberality to necessitous persons; which are sacrifices God is well-pleased with, even more than with the ceremonious ones; these being such in which men resemble him the merciful God, who is kind to the unthankful, and to the evil. *And the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings;* which were reckoned the greatest and most excellent sacrifices, the whole being the Lord's; but knowledge of God is preferred to them; by which is meant, not the knowledge of God by the light of nature, which men might have, and not glorify him; nor by the law of Moses, as a lawgiver, judge, and consuming fire; but a knowledge of him in Christ, as the God and Father of Christ, as the God of all grace, gracious and merciful in him; as a covenant God and Father in him, which is through the Gospel by the Spirit, and is eternal life, John xvii. 3. this includes in it faith and hope in God, love to him, fear of him and his goodness, and the whole worship of him, both internal and external. These words seem designed to expose and remove the false ground of trust and confidence in sacrifices the people of Israel were prone unto; as we find they were in the times of Isaiah, who was cotemporary with Hosea; see Isa. i. 12—15. The Targum interprets them of those that exercise mercy, and do the law of the Lord.

Ver. 7. *But they, like men, have transgressed the covenant,* &c.] The false prophets, as Aben Ezra, whom he threatened to cut off and slay, ver. 5. or rather Ephraim and Judah, whose goodness was so fickle and unstable; and who, instead of doing acts of mercy, and seeking after the true knowledge of God and his worship, which are preferable to all sacrifices, they transgressed the law of God, which they promised at Mount Sinai to obey; the precepts of the moral law, even of both tables, which concern both God and man; and also the ceremonial law, by appointing priests to sacrifice who were not of the tribe of Levi, as did Ephraim or the ten tribes under Jeroboam; and by offering sacrifices to their calves, and by not observing the solemn feasts; and the precepts relating to both these laws constitute the covenant made with the children of Israel at Sinai, Exod. xxiv. 3—8. which they transgressed, either *like Adam* [y] the first man, as Jarchi; who transgressed the covenant of works in paradise God made with him, and all mankind in him: or like the men of old, the former generations, as the Targum; meaning either the old inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites; or the men of the old world at the time of the flood, who were a very wicked and abandoned generation of men; or like men in common, depraved and degenerated, fickle and inconstant, vain and deceitful, and not at all to be depended upon; especially like the lower sort of men, the common people, who have no regard to their word, covenant, and agreement; or particularly like such men that are given to perjury, and make no conscience of oaths and covenants ever so solemnly made: or, as others read the words, *but they have transgressed the covenant like man's* [z]; making no more account of it than if it was a man's covenant. *There have they dealt treacherously against me;* in the

[y] כאדם sicut Adam, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Tigur. version, Castalio, Grotius, Cocceius.

[z] Tanquam hominis, *sub.* pactum, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Zanchius.

covenant they entered into, by breaking it, not performing their promises; and even in the very sacrifices they offered, and were so fond of, and put their confidence in; either by offering such sacrifices as were not legal, or by offering them to idols, under a pretence of offering them to God, which was dealing treacherously against him; and in all other acts of religion, in which they would be thought to have regard to the covenant of God, his laws and precepts, and to be very serious and devout, yet acted the hypocritical part, were false and deceitful, and devoid of all sincerity: or there, in the promised land, where the Lord had so largely bestowed his favours on them; so Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbinel, agreeably to the Targum, which paraphrases it thus, "and in the good land, which I gave unto "them to do my will, they have dealt falsely with my "word."

Ver. 8. *Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity,* &c.] The chief city in the land of Gilead, which lay beyond Jordan, inhabited by Gad and Reuben, and the half-tribe of Manasseh; and so belonged to the ten tribes, whose sins are here particularly observed. It had its name from the country, or the country from that, or both from the mountain of the same name. It is thought to be Ramoth-gilead, a city of refuge, and put for all the cities of refuge in those parts, which were inhabited by priests and Levites; and who ought to have had knowledge of the laws, and instructed the people in them, and observed them themselves, and set a good example to others; but, instead of this, the whole course of their lives was vicious; they made a trade of sinning, did nothing else but work iniquity; and this was general among them, the city or cities of them consisted of none else; and all manner of iniquity was committed by them, particularly idolatry; for so the words may be rendered, *a city of them that serve an idol* [a]: not only at Dan and Beth-el, but in the cities of the priests, idols were set up and worshipped; this shews the state to be very corrupt: *and is polluted with blood;* with the blood of murderers harboured there, who ought not to have been admitted; or with the blood of such who were delivered up to the avenger of blood, that ought to have been sheltered, and both for the sake of money; or with the blood of children, sacrificed to Moloch: the word used has the signification of supplanting, lying in wait, and so is understood of a private, secret, shedding of blood, in a deceitful and insidious way: hence some render it, *cunning for blood* [b]; to which the Targum seems to agree, calling it a city "of them that secretly or deceitfully shed innocent "blood." It has also the signification of the heel of a man's foot, and is by some rendered, *trodden by blood* [c]; that is, by bloody men: or *footed* or *heeled by blood* [d]; that is, such an abundance of it was shed, that a man could not set his foot or his heel any where but in blood.

Ver. 9. *And as troops of robbers wait for a man,* &c.] As a gang of highwaymen or footpads lie in wait in a ditch, or under a hedge, or in a cave of a rock or mountain, for a man they know will come by that way, who is full of money, in order to rob him; or, as Saadiah interprets it, as fishermen stand upon the banks of a river, and cast in their hooks to draw out the fish; and to the same purpose is Jarchi's note from R. Meir: so *the company of priests murder in the way by consent:* not only encourage murderers, and commit murders within the city, but go out in a body together upon the highway, and there commit murders and robberies, and divide the spoil among them; all which they did unanimously, and were well agreed, being brethren in iniquity, as well as in office: or, *in the way of Shechem* [e]; as good people passed by Gilead to Shechem, and so to Jerusalem, to worship there at the solemn feasts, they lay in wait for them, and murdered them; because they did not give into the idolatrous worship of the calves at Dan and Beth-el: or, *in the manner of Shechem* [f]; that is, they murdered men in a deceitful treacherous manner, as the Shechemites were murdered by Simeon and Levi: Joseph Kimchi interprets this of the princes and great men, so the word *cohanim* is sometimes used; but the context seems to carry it to the priests: *for they commit lewdness;* or *enormity;* the most enormous crimes, and that purposely, with deliberation devising and contriving them.

Ver. 10. *I have seen an horrible thing in the house of Israel,* &c.] Idolatry, the calves set up at Dan and Beth-el, which God saw with abhorrence and detestation; or the prophet saw it, and it made his hair stand upright as it were, as the word [g] signifies, that such wickedness should be committed by a professing people: *there is the whoredom of Ephraim;* in the house of Israel is the whoredom of Jeroboam, who was of the tribe of Ephraim, and caused Israel to sin, to go a whoring after idols; or the whoredom of the tribe of Ephraim, which belonged to the house of Israel, and even of all the ten tribes; both corporeal and spiritual whoredom, or idolatry, are here meant: *Israel is defiled;* with whoredom of both kinds; it had spread itself all over the ten tribes; they were all infected with it, and polluted by it; see ch. v. 3.

Ver. 11. *Also, O Judah, he hath set an harvest for thee,* &c.] That is, God hath set and appointed a time of wrath and vengeance for thee, which is sometimes signified by a harvest, Rev. xiv. 15. because thou hast been guilty of idolatry also, as well as Ephraim or the ten tribes: or rather it may be rendered, *but, O Judah* [h], *he,* that is, God, *hath set an harvest for thee;* appointed a time of joy and gladness, as a time of harvest is: *when I returned,* or *return the captivity of my people* [i]; the people of Judah from the Babylonish captivity; so that here is a prophecy both of their captivity, and of their return from it: and it may be applied unto their return from their spiritual captivity to sin, Satan, and the law, through the Gospel of Christ and his apostles, first published in Judea, by means of which there was a large harvest of souls gathered in, and was an occasion of great joy.

[a] קרית פעלי און civitas operantium idolum, V. L.
[b] עקבה מדם callida & astuta sanguine, so some in Vatablus; callida sanguine, Castalio.
[c] Calcata a sanguine, Piscator.
[d] Vestigiata a sanguine, Capellus, Tarnovius; vestigiis sanguinolentis, Junius & Tremellius.
[e] שכמה Sichemam versus, Gussetius, Schmidt; approved by Reinbeck. De Accent. Heb. p. 412. qua itur Sichem, Tigurine version; qua via ad Shechemum *factum* occidunt, Junius & Tremellius; quæ ducit ad Sichemum, Piscator. So Abendana.
[f] Siccimice, so some in Drusius.
[g] שערוריה a שער pilus.
[h] גם sed, V. L. Munster, Grotius.
[i] בשובי cum ego reduco, Calvin.

CHAP. VII.

THIS chapter either begins a new sermon, discourse, or prophecy, or it is a continuation of the former; at least it seems to be of the same argument with the latter part of it, only it is directed to Israel alone; and consists of complaints against them because of their manifold sins, and of denunciations of punishment for them. They are charged with ingratitude to God, sinning in a daring manner against mercy, and with falsehood, thefts, and robberies, ver. 1. with want of consideration of the omniscience of God, and his notice of their sins, which surrounded them, ver. 2. with flattery to their king and princes, ver. 3. with adultery, which lust raged in them like a heated oven, ver. 4. with drunkenness, aggravated by drawing their king into it, ver. 5. with raging lusts, which devoured their judges, made their kings to fall, and brought on such a general corruption, that there were none that called upon the Lord, ver. 6, 7. with mixing themselves with the nations of the earth, and so learning their ways, and bringing their superstition and idolatry into the worship of God, so that they were nothing in religion, like a half-baked cake, ver. 8. with stupidity and insensibility of their declining state, ver. 9. with pride, impenitence, and stubbornness, ver. 10. with folly, in seeking to Egypt and Assyria for help, and not to the Lord; for which they would be taken as birds in a net, and sorely chastised, ver. 11, 12. with ingratitude, hypocrisy, and deceitfulness; for all which they are threatened with destruction, ver. 13, 14, 15, 16.

Ver. 1. *When I would have healed Israel*, &c.] Or rather, *when I healed Israel*[k]; for this is not to be understood of a velleity, wish, or desire of healing and saving them, as Jarchi; nor of a bare attempt to do it by the admonitions of the prophets, and by corrections in Providence; but of actual healing them; and by which is meant, not healing them in a spiritual and religious sense, as in ch. vi. 1. but in a political sense, of the restoring of their civil state to a more flourishing condition; which was done in the times of Jeroboam the son of Joash, as Kimchi rightly observes; who restored the coast of Israel, from the entering of Hamath, unto the sea of the plain, 2 Kings xiv. 25, 26: *then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness of Samaria*: some refer this to the times of Jeroboam the first, and that the sense is, that the Lord having cured Israel of the idolatry introduced by Solomon, quickly a new scene of idolatry broke out in Ephraim, or the ten tribes, of which Samaria was the metropolis; for Jeroboam soon set up the calves at Dan and Beth-el to be worshipped; but it does not appear that Israel was corrupted with the idolatry of Solomon, and needed a cure then; nor was Samaria built in Jeroboam's time: others apply it to the times of Jehu, who, though he slew the worshippers of Baal, and broke his images, and destroyed him out of Israel, yet retained the worship of the calves at Dan and Beth-el, 2 Kings x. 25—30. so, though they were healed of one sort of idolatry, another prevailed. It is right, in both these senses, that the iniquity of Ephraim, and wickedness or wickednesses of Samaria, are taken for the idolatrous worship of the golden calves; but then it respects the times of Jeroboam the second, the son of Joash, in whose days Israel was prosperous; and yet these superstitious and idolatrous practices of worship were flagrant and notorious, were countenanced by the king and his courtiers that dwelt at Samaria, as is clear from Amos vii. 10—13. which was an instance of great ingratitude to the Lord. *For they commit falsehood*: among themselves, lying to one another, and deceiving each other; or to God, deal falsely with him, are guilty of false worship, worshipping idols, which are vanities and lies: *and the thief cometh in, and the troop of robbers spoileth without*; which may be interpreted either of their sins, their sins in general, both private and public; and their sins of theft and robbery in particular; both such as were committed in houses by the thief privately entering there, and by a gang of robbers in the streets, or on the highway: so the Targum, " in the night they thieve in houses, and " in the day they rob on the plain," or fields: or else of punishment for their sins; and then the words may be rendered[l], *therefore the thief entereth in, and the troop* or *army spreads without*: this thief was Shallum, who came in to kill and to steal; he slew Zachariah the son of Jeroboam, after he had reigned six months, and usurped the kingdom, and so put an end to the family of Jehu, according as the Lord had threatened, 2 Kings viii. 12. the troop or army is the Assyrian army under Pul, who came against Menahem, king of Israel, of whom he exacted a tribute, and departed, 2 Kings xv. 19, 20. so Cocceius.

Ver. 2. *And they consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness*, &c.] That is, the people of the ten tribes, and the inhabitants of Samaria, whose iniquity and wickedness are said to be discovered, and to be very notorious: and yet *they said not to their hearts*[m], as in the original text; they did not think within themselves; they did not commune with their own hearts; they did not put themselves in mind, or put this to their consciences, that the Lord saw all their wicked actions, their idolatry, falsehood, thefts, and robberies, and whatsoever they were guilty of; that the Lord took notice of them, and put them down in the book of his remembrance, in order to call them to an account, and punish them for them: *now their own doings have beset them about*; or, *that now their own doings*, &c.[n]; they don't consider in their hearts that their sins are all around them, on every side, committed by them openly, and in abundance, and are notorious to all their neighbours, and much more to

[k] כרפאי dum curo, Junius & Tremellius; dum medeor, Piscator, Zanchius, Calvin; quando sanavi, vel sano, Schmidt.

[l] ונגב יבוא פשט גדוד בחוץ ideo fur ingreditur, Munster. So some in Drusius.

[m] ובל יאמרו ללבבם & non dicebant ad cor suum, Cocceius; & non dicunt cordi suo, Schmidt.

[n] עתה סבבום מעלליהם quod circumdent ipsos opera eorum, Schmidt.

the omniscient God: and that *they are before my face*; so the Targum, "which are revealed before me;" were manifest in his sight, before whom all things are; but this they did not consider, and therefore went on in that bold and daring manner they did. Some understand these clauses of the punishment of their sins, which should surround them on every side, that they should not be able to escape, like persons closely besieged in a city, that they cannot get out; alluding to the future siege of Samaria, when it would be a plain case, though they did not now think of it, that all their sins were before the Lord, and were observed by him.

Ver. 3. *They make the king glad with their wickedness*, &c.] Not any particular king; not Jeroboam the first, as Kimchi; nor Jehu, as Grotius; if any particular king, rather Jeroboam the second; but their kings in general, as the Septuagint render it, in succession, one after another; who were highly delighted and pleased with the priests in offering sacrifice to the calves, and with the people in attending to that idolatrous worship, by which they hoped to secure the kingdom of Israel to themselves, and prevent the people going to Jerusalem to worship: it made them glad to the heart to hear them say that God was as well pleased with sacrifices offered at Dan and Beth-el, as at Jerusalem: *and the princes with their lies*: with their idols and idolatrous practices, which are vanity and a lie; though some interpret this of their flatteries, either of them, or their favourites; and of their calumnies and detractions of such they had a dislike of.

Ver. 4. *They are all adulterers*, &c.] King, princes, priests, and people, both in a spiritual and corporeal sense; they were all idolaters, given to idolatry, eager of it, and constant in it, as the following metaphors shew; and they were addicted to corporeal adultery; this was a prevailing vice among all ranks and degrees of men. So the Targum, "they all desire to lie with "their neighbours' wives;" see Jer. v. 7, 8. and ix. 2: *as an oven heated by the baker*; which, if understood of spiritual adultery or idolatry, denotes their eagerness after it, and fervour in it, excited by their king, or by the devil and his instruments, the priests and false prophets; and if of bodily uncleanness, it is expressive of the heat of that lust, which is sometimes signified by *burning*; and is stirred up by the devil and the corrupt hearts of men to such a degree as to be raised to a flame, and be like a raging fire, or a heated oven; see Rom. i. 27. 1 Cor. vii. 9: *who ceaseth from raising*: that is, the baker, having heated his oven, ceaseth from raising up the women to bring their bread to the bakehouse; or he ceaseth from waking, or from watching his oven; he lays himself down to sleep, and continues in it: *after he hath kneaded the dough, until it be leavened*; having kneaded the dough, and put in the leaven, he lets it alone to work till the whole mass is leavened, taking his rest in the mean while: as the former clause expresses the vehement desire of the people after adultery, spiritual or corporeal, this may signify their continuance in it; or rather the wilful negligence of the king, priests, and prophets, who, instead of awaking them out of their sleep on a bed of adultery, let them alone in it, until they were all infected with it.

Ver. 5. *In the day of our king*, &c.] Either his birth-day, or his coronation-day, when he was inaugurated into his kingly office, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi; or the day on which Jeroboam set up the calves, which might be kept as an anniversary: or, *it is the day of our king*[s]; and may be the words of the priests and false prophets, exciting the people to adultery; and may shew by what means they drew them into it, saying this is the king's birth-day, or coronation-day, or a holy day of his appointing, let us meet together, and drink his health; and so by indulging to intemperance, through the heat of wine, led them on to adultery, corporeal or spiritual, or both: *the princes have made him sick with bottles of wine*; that is, the courtiers who attended at court on such a day to compliment the king upon the occasion, and to drink his health, drank to him in bumpers, perhaps a bottle of wine at once; which he pledging them in the same manner, made him sick or drunk: to make any man drunk is criminal, and especially a king; as it was also a weakness and sin in him to drink to excess, which is not for kings, of all men, to do: or it may be rendered, *the princes became sick through the heat of wine*[t], so Jarchi; they were made sick by others, or they made themselves so by drinking too much wine, which inflamed their bodies, gorged their stomachs, made their heads dizzy, and them so *weak*, as the word[u] also signifies, that they could not stand upon their legs; which are commonly the effects of excessive drinking, especially in those who are not used to it, as the king and the princes might not be, only on such occasions: *he stretched out his hand with scorners*; meaning the king, who, in his cups, forgetting his royal dignity, used too much familiarity with persons of low life, and of an ill behaviour, irreligious ones; who, especially when drunk, made a jest of all religion; scoffed at good men, and every thing that was serious; and even set their mouths against the heavens; denied there was a God, or spoke very indecently and irreverently of him; these the king made his pot-companions, took the cup, and drank to them in turn, and shook them by the hand; or admitted them to kiss his hand, and were all together, hail fellows well met. Joseph Kimchi thinks these are the same with the princes, called so before they were drunk, but afterwards *scorners*.

Ver. 6. *For they have made ready their heart like an oven, whiles they lie in wait*, &c.] The prince, people, and scorners before mentioned, being heated with wine, and their lust enraged, they were ready for any wickedness; for the commission of adultery, lying in wait for their neighbours' wives to debauch them; or for rebellion and treason against their king, and even the murder of him, made drunk by them, whom they now despised, and waited for an opportunity to dispatch him: *their baker sleepeth all the night: in the morning it burneth as a flaming fire*; as a baker having put wood into his oven, and kindled it, leaves it, and sleeps all

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[s] יום מלכנו dies regis nostri, Vulg. Lat. Calvin, Tigurine version, Tarnovius, Cocceius, Schmidt.

[t] החלו שרים חמת מיין ægrotarunt principes a calore vini, Livelcus; morbo afficiunt se calore ex vino, Tarnovius.

[u] Quem infirmant principes æstu a vino, Cocceius, infirmum reddunt, Munster; infirmant, Schmidt.

night, and in the morning it is all burning, and in a flame, and his oven is thoroughly heated, and fit for his purpose; so the evil concupiscence in these men's hearts, made hot like an oven, rests all night, devising mischief on their beds, either against the chastity of their neighbours' wives, or against the lives of others, they bear an ill will to, particularly against their judges and their kings, as the next verse seems to intimate; and in the morning this lust of uncleanness or revenge is all in a flame, and ready to execute the wicked designs contrived; see Mic. ii. 1. Some by *their baker* understand Satan; others, their king asleep and secure; others Shallum, the head of the conspiracy against Zachariah.

Ver. 7. *They are all hot as an oven*, &c.] Eager upon their idolatry, or burning in their unclean desires after other men's wives; or rather raging and furious, hot with anger and wrath against their rulers and governors, breathing out slaughter and death unto them: *and have devoured their judges*: that stood in the way of their lusts, reproved them for them, and restrained them from them; or were on the side of the king they conspired against, and were determined to depose and slay: *all their kings have fallen*: either into sin, the sin of idolatry particularly, as all from Jeroboam the first did, down to Hoshea the last; or they fell into calamities, or by the sword of one another, as did most of them; so Zachariah by Shallum, Shallum by Menahem, Pekahiah by Pekah, and Pekah by Hoshea; see 2 Kings xv. So the Targum, "all their kings are "slain:" *there is none among them that calleth unto me*; either among the kings, when their lives were in danger from conspirators; or none among the people, when their land was in distress, either by civil wars among themselves, or by a foreign enemy; such was their stupidity, and to such a height was irreligion come to among them!

Ver. 8. *Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people*, &c.] Either locally, by dwelling among them, as some of them at least might do among the Syrians; or carnally, by intermarrying with them, contrary to the command of God; or civilly, by entering into alliances and confederacies with them, as Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel did with Rezin king of Syria, Isa. vii. 2, 5. or by seeking to them for help, calling to Egypt, and going to Assyria, as in ver. 11. so Aben Ezra; or morally, by learning their manners, and conforming to their customs, especially in religious things: though some understand this as a punishment threatened them for their above sins, that they should be carried captive into foreign lands, and so be mixed among the people, and which is Jarchi's sense: but it is rather to be considered as their evil in joining with other nations in their superstition, idolatry, and other impieties; and it is highly offensive to God when his professing people mix themselves with the world, keep company with the men of it, fashion themselves according to them, do as they do, and wilfully go into their conversation, and repeat it, and continue therein, and resolve to do so: for so it may be rendered, *he will mix himself*[r]; it denotes a voluntary act, repeated and persisted in with obstinacy. *Ephraim is a cake not turned*; like a cake that is laid on coals, if it is not turned, the nether part will be burnt, and the upper part unbaked, and so be good for nothing; not fit to be eaten, being nothing indeed, neither bread nor dough; and so may signify, that Ephraim having introduced much of the superstition and idolatry of the Gentiles into religious worship, was nothing in religion, neither fish nor flesh, as is proverbially said of persons and things of which nothing can be made; they worshipped the calves at Dan and Beth-el, and yet swore by the name of the Lord; they halted between two opinions, and were of neither; they were like the hotch-potch inhabitants of Samaria in after-times, that came in their room, that feared the Lord, and served their own gods: and such professors of religion there are, who are nothing in religion; nothing in principle, they have no scheme of principles; they are neither one thing nor another; they are nothing in experience; if they have a form of godliness, they deny the power of it; they are nothing in practice, all they do is to be seen of men; they are neither hot nor cold, especially not throughout, or on both sides, like a cake unturned; but are lukewarm and indifferent, and therefore very disagreeable to the Lord. Some take this to be expressive of punishment, and not of fault; either of their partial captivity by Tiglath-pileser, when only a part of them was carried captive; or of the swift and total destruction of them by their enemies, who would be like hungry and half-starved persons, who meeting with a cake on the coals half-baked, snatch it up, and eat it, not staying for the turning and baking it on the other side; and thus it should be with them. So the Targum, "the house of "Ephraim is like to a cake baked on coals, which be- "fore it is turned is eaten."

Ver. 9. *Strangers have devoured his strength*, &c.] Or his substance, as the Targum; his wealth and riches, fortresses and strong holds: these strangers were either the Syrians, who, in the times of Jehoahaz, destroyed Ephraim or the Israelites, and so weakened them, as to make them like the dust by threshing, 2 Kings xiii. 7. or the Assyrians, first under Pul king of Assyria, who came out against Menahem king of Israel, and exacted a tribute of a thousand talents of silver, and so drained them of their treasure, which was their strength, 2 Kings xv. 19, 20. and then under Tiglath-pileser, another king of Assyria, who came and took away from them many of their fortified places, and carried the inhabitants captive, ver. 29: *and he knoweth it not*; is not sensible how much he is weakened by such exactions and depredations; or does not take notice of the hand of God in all this; does not consider from whence it comes, what is the cause of it, and for what ends; *yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not*: or, *old age has sprinkled itself upon him*[s]; or, *gray hairs are sprinkled on him*: gray hairs, when thick, are a sign that old age is come; and, when sprinkled here and there, are symptoms of its coming on, and of a person's being on the decline of life; and

[r] הוא יתבולל miscebit sese, Zanchius.

[s] שיבה זרקה בו canities sparsit se in eo, Pagninus, Montanus, Coccelus, Schmidt; cani sparsk runt, Tigurine version; canities aspergit eum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Latin writers: sparserit & nigras alba senecta comas. Propert. l. 2. Eleg. 4. Jam mihi deterior canis aspergitur ætas. Ovid. de Ponto, l. 1. Eleg. 4.

here it signifies the weak and declining state of Israel, through the exactions and depredations of their neighbours, and that their utter ruin was near; and yet they did not know nor consider their latter end, nor repent of their sins and acknowledge them, and return unto the Lord, and implore his mercy: so carnal professors, who mix with the men of the world, that are strangers to God and godliness, and every thing that is divine and good, are devoured by them; they lose their time and substance, and their precious souls, and are not aware of it. The symptoms of the declining state of the church of God are at this time upon us, and yet not taken notice of; such as great departures from the faith; a number of false teachers risen up; great fallings off of professors, and of such who have made a great figure in the church; a small number of faithful men; great coldness and lukewarmness to spiritual things; little faith on the earth; great neglect of Gospel worship and ordinances; much sleepiness and drowsiness; great immorality and profaneness: as also the symptoms of the declining state of the world, and of its drawing to its period; as wars, and rumours of wars, famine, pestilence, and earthquakes in divers places; volcanos, burning mountains, eruptions of subterraneous fire, which portend the general conflagration; and yet these things are little attended to.

Ver. 10. *And the pride of Israel testifieth to his face, &c.*] See the note on ch. v. 5. notwithstanding their weak and declining state, they were proud and haughty; entertained a high conceit of themselves, and of their good and safe condition; and behaved insolently towards God, and were not humbled before him for their sins. Their pride was notorious, which they themselves could not deny: they were self-convicted, and self-condemned: *and they do not return to the Lord their God;* by acknowledgment of their sins, repentance for them, and reformation from them; and by attendance on his worship, from which they had revolted; so the Targum, "they return not to the worship of the "Lord their God:" *nor seek him for all this*, though they are in this wasting, declining, condition, and just upon the brink of ruin, yet they seek not the face and favour of the Lord; they don't ask help of him, or implore his mercy; and though they have been so long in these circumstances, and have been gradually consuming for many years, yet in all this time they have made no application to the Lord, that he would be favourable, and raise their sinking state, and restore them to their former glory.

Ver. 11. *Ephraim also is like a silly dove, without heart, &c.*] Or understanding; which comes and picks up the corns of grain, which lie scattered about, and does not know that the net is spread for it; and when its young are taken away, it is unconcerned, and continues its nest in the same place still; and, when frightened, repairs not to its dovehouse, where it would be safe, but flies about here and there, and so becomes a prey to others. Thus Ephraim, going to Egypt and Assyria for help, were insnared by them, not having sense enough to perceive that this would be their ruin; and though they had heretofore suffered by them, yet still they continued to make their addresses to them; and instead of keeping close to the Lord, and to his worship and the place of it, and asking counsel and help of him they ran about and sought for it here and there: *they call to Egypt;* that is, for help; as Hoshea king of Israel, when he sent messengers to So or Sabacon king of Egypt, for protection and assistance, 2 Kings xvii. 4. Such a foolish part, like the silly doves, did they act; since the Egyptians had been their implacable enemies, and their fathers had been in cruel bondage under them: *they go to Assyria;* send gifts and presents, and pay tribute to the kings thereof, to make them easy; as Menahem did to Pul, and Hoshea to Salmaneser, 2 Kings xv. 19. and xvii. 3. Some understand this last clause, not of their sin in going to the Assyrian for help; but of their punishment in going or being carried captive thither; and so the Targum seems to interpret it, "they go captive, or are carried captive, "into Assyria."

Ver. 12. *When they shall go, &c.*] That is, to Egypt or Assyria: *I will spread my net upon them:* bring them into great straits and difficulties; perhaps the Assyrian army is meant, which was the Lord's net, guided, and directed, and spread by his providence, and according to his will, to take this silly dove in; and which enclosed them on all sides, that they could not escape; see Ezek. xii. 13. Hoshea the king of Israel was taken by the Assyrian, and bound and shut up in prison; Samaria the capital city was besieged three years, and then taken, 2 Kings xvii. 4, 5, 6: *I will bring them down as the fowls of the heaven;* though they fly on high, soar aloft, and behave proudly, and fancy themselves out of all danger; yet, as the flying fowl, the eagle, and other birds, may be brought down to the earth by an arrow from the bow, or by some decoy; so should they be brought down from their fancied safe and exalted state, and be taken in the net, and become a prey to their enemies: *I will chastise them, as their congregation hath heard:* what was written in the law, and in the prophets, were read and explained in the congregations of Israel on their stated days they met together on for religious worhip; in which it was threatened, that if they did not observe the laws and statutes of the Lord their God, but neglected and broke them, they should be severely chastised and corrected with his sore judgments, famine, pestilence, the sword of the enemy, and captivity: and now the Lord would fulfil his word, agreeably to what had often been heard by them, but not regarded; see Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii.

Ver. 13. *Woe unto them, for they have fled from me, &c.*] From the Lord, from his worship, and the place of it; from obedience to him, and the service of him; as birds fly from their nests, and leave their young, and wander about; so they had deserted the temple at Jerusalem, and forsaken the service of the sanctuary, and set up calves at Dan and Beth-el, and worshipped them; and, instead of fleeing to God for succour in time of distress, fled further off still, even out of their own land to Egypt or Assyria: the consequence of which was, nothing but ruin, and so lamentation and woes: *destruction unto them, because they have transgressed against me;* against the laws which God gave them; setting up idols, and worshipping them, and so broke the first table of the law; committing murder, adultery, thefts and robberies, with which they are charged in the preceding part of this chapter, and so transgressed

the second table of the law; and by all brought destruction upon themselves, which was near at hand, and would certainly come, as here threatened; though they promised themselves peace, and expected assistance from neighbouring nations, but in vain, having made the Lord their enemy, by breaking his laws: *though I have redeemed them;* out of Egypt formerly, and out of the hands of the Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines, and others, in the times of the judges; and more lately in the times of Joash and Jeroboam the second, who recovered many cities out of the hands of the Syrians. Aben Ezra, Jarchi, and Kimchi, interpret this of the good disposition of God towards them, having it in his heart to redeem them now from their present afflictions and distresses, but that they were so impious and wicked, and so unfaithful to him: *yet they have spoken lies against me*, against his being and providence, being atheistically inclined; or pretending repentance for their sins, when they were hypocrites, and returned to their former courses; or setting up idols in opposition to him, which were vanity to him; attributing all their good things to them, and charging him with all their evils. Abendana reads the words interrogatively, *should I redeem them, when they have spoken lies against me*[t]? no, I will not.

Ver. 14. *And they have not cried unto me with their heart*, &c.] In their distress, indeed, they cried unto the Lord, and said they repented of their sins, and promised reformation, and made a shew of worshipping God; as invocation is sometimes put for the whole worship of God; but then this was not heartily, but hypocritically; their hearts and their mouths did not go together, and therefore was not reckoned prayer; nothing but howling, as follows: *when they howled upon their beds;* lying sick or wounded there; or, as some, in their idol-temples, those beds of adultery, where they pretended to worship God by them, and to pray to him through them; but such idolatrous prayers were no better than the howlings of dogs to him; even though they expressed outwardly their cries with great vehemency, as the word used denotes, having one letter more in it than common: *they assemble themselves for corn and wine;* either at their banquets, to feast upon them, as Aben Ezra; or to the markets, to buy them, as Kimchi suggests; or rather to their idol-temples, to deprecate a famine, and to pray for rain and fruitful seasons; or if they gather together to pray to the Lord, it is only for carnal and worldly things; they only seek themselves, and their own interest, and not the glory of God, and ask for these things, to consume them on their lust. The Septuagint version is, *for corn and wine they were cut*, or cut themselves, as Baal's priests did, when they cried to him, 1 Kings xviii. 28. and Theodoret here observes, that they performed the Heathen rites, and in idol-temples made incisions on their bodies: *and they rebel against me;* not only flee from him, transgress his laws, but cast off all allegiance to him, and take up arms, and commit hostilities against him. The Targum joins this with the preceding clause, "because of the multitude of corn and "wine which they have gathered, they have rebelled "against my word;" and to the same sense Jarchi; thus, Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked.

Ver. 15. *Though I have bound and strengthened their arms*, &c.] As a surgeon sets a broken arm, and swathes and binds it, and so restores it to its former strength, or at least to a good degree of strength again, so the Lord dealt with Israel; their arms were broken, and their strength weakened, and they greatly distressed and reduced by the Syrians in the times of Jehoahaz; but they were brought into a better state and condition in the times of Joash and Jeroboam the second; the former retook several cities out of the hands of the Syrians, and the latter restored the border of Israel, and greatly enlarged it; and as all this was done through the blessing of divine Providence, the Lord is said to do it himself. Some render it, *though I have chastised, I have strengthened their arms*[u]; though he corrected them for their sins in the times of Jehoahaz, and suffered their arms to be broken by their enemies, for their instruction, and in order to bring them to repentance for their sins; yet he strengthened them again in the following reigns: *yet do they imagine mischief against me;* so ungrateful were they, they contrived to do hurt to his prophets that were sent to them in his name, to warn them of their sins and danger, and exhort them to repent, and forsake their idolatrous worship, and other sins; and they sought by all means to dishonour the name of the Lord, by imputing all their success in the reigns of Joash and Jeroboam to their idols, and not unto him; and so hardened themselves against him, and in their evil ways.

Ver. 16. *They return, but not to the most High*, &c.] To Egypt, and not to Jerusalem, and the temple there, and the worship of it; to their idols, and not to him whose name alone is Jehovah, and is the most High in all the earth, the God of gods, and Lord of lords, and King of kings; though they made some feint as if they would return, and did begin, and take some steps towards repentance and reformation; but then they presently fell back again, as in Jehu's time, and did not go on to make a thorough reformation; nor returned to God alone, and to his pure worship they pretended to, and ought to have done: or, *not on high, upwards, above*[w]; their affections and desires are not after things above; they don't look upwards to God in heaven for help and assistance, but to men and things on earth, on which all their affection and dependence are placed: *they are like a deceitful bow*, which misses the mark it is directed to; which being designed to send its arrow one way, causes it to go the reverse; or its arrow returns upon the archer, or drops at his feet; so these people deviated from the law of God, acted contrary to their profession and promises, and relapsed into their former idolatries and impieties, and sunk into earth and earthly things; see Psal. lxxviii. 57: *their princes shall fall by the sword;* either of their conspirators, as Zachariah, Shallum, Pekahiah, and Pekah; or by the sword of the Assyrians, as Hoshea, and the princes with him, by Salmaneser; *for the rage of their*

[t] ואנכי אפדם & ego redimerem eos! so some in Rivet.
[u] ואני יסרתי חזקתי זרועתם castigavi, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Vatablus, Cocceius, Tarnovius.

[w] לא על non supra, Montanus; non sursum, De Dieu, Gussetius; non erecte, Cocceius.

tongue: their blasphemy against God, his being and providences; his worship, and the place of it; his priests and people that served him, and particularly the prophets he sent unto them to reprove them. *This shall be their derision in the land of Egypt*; whither they sent, and called for help; but now, when their princes are slain, and they carried captive into a foreign land, even those friends and allies of theirs shall laugh and mock at them. The Targum is, "these "were their works while they were in the land of "Egypt;" or rather the words may be rendered, *this is their derision, as of old in the land of Egypt*[r]; that is, the calves they now worshipped, and to which they ascribed all their good things, were made in imitation of the gods of Egypt, their Apis and Serapis, which were in the form of an ox, and which their fathers derided there; and these were justly to be derided now, and they to be derided for their worship of them, and ascribing all their good things to them; and which would be done when their destruction came upon them.

CHAP. VIII.

THIS chapter treats of the sins and punishment of Israel for them, as the preceding; it is threatened and proclaimed that an enemy should come swiftly against them, because of their transgression of the covenant and law of God, ver. 1. their hypocrisy is exposed, ver. 2. they are charged with the rejection of that which is good, and therefore should be pursued by the enemy, ver. 3. with setting up kings and princes, without consulting the Lord, ver. 4. and with making of idols, particularly the golden calves, which would be of no use to them, disappoint them, and at last be broke to pieces, ver. 4, 5, 6. their seeking to their neighbours for help, and entering into alliances with them, are represented as vain and fruitless, and issuing in their ruin and destruction, ver. 7, 8, 9, 10. their sins of multiplying altars, contrary to the law of God, and in contempt of it, and offering sacrifices not acceptable to the Lord, are observed; and they are threatened with a visitation from him, ver. 11, 12, 13. and the chapter is concluded with some notice both of Israel and Judah, the one building temples, and the other multiplying fenced cities, which should be devoured by fire, ver. 14.

Ver. 1. Set *the trumpet to thy mouth*, &c.] Or, *the trumpet to the roof of thy mouth*[s]; a concise expression denoting haste, and the vehemence of the passions in speaking; they are either the words of the Lord to the prophet, as the Targum, "O prophet, cry with thy "throat as with a trumpet, saying;" so Jarchi and Aben Ezra take them to be the words of the Lord to the prophet, and the sense agrees with Isa. lviii. 1. The prophet is here considered as a watchman, and is called upon to blow his trumpet; either to call the people together, *as an eagle to the house of the Lord*[t], as the next clause may be connected with this; that is, to come as swiftly to the house of the Lord, and hear what he had to say to them, and to supplicate the Lord for mercy in a time of distress: or to give the people notice of the approach of the enemy, and tell them that he shall come *flying as an eagle over*[v] or *against the house of the Lord*: or they are the words of the Lord, or of the prophet, to the enemy, to blow his trumpet, and sound the alarm of war, and call his army together, and bid them fly like an eagle, with that swiftness and fierceness as that creature does to its prey, against the house of the Lord; meaning not the temple at Jerusalem, but the nation of Israel, formerly called the house and family of God, and still pretended to be so. There may be some allusion to Beth-el, which signifies the house of God, where they practised their idolatry. This is to be understood, not of Nebuchadnezzar, sometimes compared to an eagle, Ezek. xvii. 3. for not the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem is here meant; nor of the Romans, as Lyra seems to understand it, the eagle being the ensign of the Romans; but of Salmaneser, king of Assyria, compared to this creature for his swiftness in coming, his strength, fierceness, and cruelty; this creature being swift in flight, and a bird of prey. So the Targum interprets it of a king and his army, "behold, as an eagle flieth, so shall a king with his "army come up and encamp against the house of the "sanctuary of the Lord." Some reference seems to be had to Deut. xxviii. 49: *because they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law*; the law that was given to Israel by Moses at the appointment of God, to which they assented, and promised to observe; and so it had the form of a covenant to them: the bounds of this law and covenant they transgressed, and dealt perfidiously with, and prevaricated in, and wilfully broke all its commands, by their idolatry, murder, adultery, theft, and other sins.

Ver. 2. *Israel shall cry unto me, my God, we know thee.*] In their distress they shall cry to the Lord to help them, and have mercy on them, as they used to do when in trouble, Isa. xxvi. 16. when the eagle is come upon them, and just ready to devour them; when Samaria is besieged with the Assyrian army, their king taken prisoner, and they just ready to fall into the hands of the enemy, then they shall cry to God, though in a hypocritical manner; own him to be the true God, and claim their interest in him, and pretend knowledge of him, and acquaintance with him; though they have not served and worshipped him, but idols, and that for hundreds of years; like others who profess to know God, but in works deny him, Tit. i. 16. Israel

[r] זו לעגם בארץ מצרים hæc, seu quæ est subsannatio, sicut olim in terra Ægypti, Schmidt.

[s] אל חכך שופר adhibita palato tuo buccinâ, Junius & Tremellius; adhibe palato buccinam, De Dieu; ad palatum tuum buccinam, Schmidt.

[t] כנשר על בית יהוה similis aquilæ in domum Jehovæ, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[v] Super domum Domini, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Schmidt; contra domum Jehovæ, Livelcus.

is the last word in the verse, and occasions different versions: *they shall cry unto me:* these transgressors of the covenant and the law, these hypocrites, shall pray to God in trouble, saying, *my God, we Israel*, or Israelites, *know thee;* or, *we know thee* who are *Israel*[s]; and to this sense is the Targum, "in every time that "distress comes upon them, they pray before me, and "say, now we know that we have no God besides thee; "redeem us, for we are thy people Israel;" why may they not be rendered thus, *they shall cry unto me; my God, we know thee, Israel* shall say? Castalio renders them to this sense, *my God*, say they; but *we know thee, Israel;* we, the three Persons in the Trinity, Father, Son, and Spirit, we know thy hypocrisy and wickedness, that it is only outwardly and hypocritically, and not sincerely, that thou criest unto and callest upon God.

Ver. 3. *Israel hath cast off* the thing that is *good*, &c.] Or *rejected* him that is *good*[t]; that is, God, as Kimchi observes; for there is none good but him, Matt. xix. 17. he is the *summum bonum*, the chiefest good to men, and is essentially, originally, and infinitely good in himself, and the fountain of all goodness to his creatures; and yet Israel has rejected him with detestation and contempt, as the word[u] signifies, though they pretended to know him, which shews their hypocrisy; and therefore 'tis no wonder that their prayers were rejected by him: or they rejected the good word of God, the law, or doctrine contained in it, and the good worship, service, and fear of God, and indeed every thing that was good, just, and right. Cocceius renders it, *the good* One, or he that is God, the good God, *hath cast off Israel*. This reading of the words Drusius also mentions, and seems to like best, and as agreeing with what follows; so Rivet; but the position of the words in the Hebrew text, and the accents, do not favour it. *The enemy shall pursue him;* who is before compared to an eagle, which flies swiftly, and pursues its prey with eagerness and fierceness: Salmaneser is meant, who should invade the land, come up to Samaria, besiege and take it; nothing should stop him, nor should Israel escape from him, since they had cast off the Lord, and every thing that was good. The Targum is, "the house of Israel "have erred from my worship, for the sake of which "I brought good things upon them; henceforward "the enemy shall pursue them."

Ver. 4. *They have set up kings, but not by me*, &c.] Not by his authority, order, and command; not by asking advice of him, or his leave, but of themselves, and of their own accord: this refers to the case of Jeroboam their first king, after their separation from the house of David, and from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; for though his becoming king of Israel was according to the secret will of God, and by his overruling providence; yet it was done without his express orders, and without asking counsel of him, or his consent, and of their own heads; and many of his successors were conspirators, and set up themselves with the consent of the people, to the dethroning of others, and upon the slaughter of them, as Shallum, Menahem, Pekah, and Hoshea: the people of Israel had no right to choose a king for themselves; the right was alone in the Lord; it was he that chose, appointed, and constituted their kings, Deut. xvii. 15. thus Saul, David, and Solomon, were chose and appointed by him, 1 Sam. x. 24. 2 Sam. v. 2. 1 Chron. xxviii. 5. it was not the person of Jeroboam chosen God disliked; but their taking it upon them to choose and set him up without his leave. *They have made princes, and I knew it not;* that is, they set up subordinate governors, judges, civil magistrates, elders of the people, over them, without his approbation, and such as were very disagreeable to him; otherwise he knew what was done by them, as being the omniscient God, but he did not approve of what they did. Some observe, that ש, in the word used, is put for ס, and should be rendered, *they have removed*, so Jarchi and Japhet; that is, they have set up kings, and they have removed them; they have took it upon them to make and depose kings at pleasure, without seeking the Lord about it, when this is his prerogative, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, Dan. ii. 21. which sense makes a strong and beautiful antithesis. *Of their silver and their gold have they made their idols;* some of their idols were made of silver, others of gold; particularly the calves at Dan and Beth-el, which are called the golden calves, because made of gold; as was the calf in the wilderness, 1 Kings xii. 28. see Isa. xlvi. 6. and ch. ii. 8: *that they may be cut off;* which denotes not the end, intention, and design of making these idols of silver and gold, but the event thereof; namely, either the destruction of the idols themselves, which, for the sake of the silver and gold they were made of, were cut in pieces by a foreign enemy; or the gold and silver were cut off from the people, their riches and wealth were wasted by such means; or rather the people were cut off, every one of them, because of their worship of them, or this would be the case.

Ver. 5. *Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off*, &c.] Or, is the cause of thy being cast off by the Lord, and of being cast out of thine own land, and carried captive into another; the past tense is used for the future, as is common in prophetic writings, to denote the certainty of the thing: or *thy calf hath left thee*[w]; in the lurch; it cannot help thee; it is gone off, and forsaken thee; it has *removed* itself from thee, according to the sense of the word in Lam. iii. 17. as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe; or is removed far from thee, being carried captive itself into Assyria; for, when the king of Assyria took Samaria, he seized on the golden calf for the sake of the gold, and took it away; see ch. x. 5, 6. and Isa. x. 11. or *he hath removed thy calf*[x]; that is, the enemy, taking it away when he took the city; or God has rejected it with the utmost contempt and abhorrence: the calf is here, and in the following verse, called the calf of Samaria, because this was the metropolis of the ten tribes, in which the calf was wor-

[s] לי יזעקו אלהי ידענוך ישראל ad me clamant, Deus mi, novimus te nos Israel, De Dieu; clamabunt ad me, O Deus meus, nos Israelitæ cognoscimus te, Tigurine version, so Tarnovius; mihi vocant, Deus mi, cognoscimus, *vel* agnoscimus te Israel, *vel* nos Israel, seu Israelitæ, Schmidt.

[t] זנח ישראל טוב deseruit Israel bonum, i. e. Deum, Vatablus, Munster, Tarnovius, Zanchius.

[u] Abominatus est, Calvin, Zanchius.

[w] זנח עגלך dereliquit vitulus te, Lutherus; deseruit te vitulus tuus, Schmidt.

[x] Elongavit sc. hostis, vitulum tuum, Schindler.

shipped, and because it was worshipped by the Samaritans; and it may be, when Samaria became the chief city, the calf at Beth-el might be removed thither, or another set up in that city: *mine anger is kindled against them*: the calves at Dan and Beth-el, the singular before being put for the plural; or against the calf of Samaria, and Samaria itself; or the inhabitants of it, because of the worship of the calf, which was highly provoking to God, it being a robbing him of his glory, and giving it to graven images: *how long will it be ere they attain to innocency?* or *purity*[r]; of worship, life, and conversation: the words may be rendered thus, *how long*[s]? for there is a large stop there; and this may be a question of the prophet's, asking how long the wrath of God would burn against the people, what would be the duration of it, and when it would end? to which an answer is returned, as the words may be translated, *they cannot bear purity*[t]; of doctrine, of worship, of heart, and life; when they can, mine anger will cease burning: or, as the Targum, "as long as they cannot purify themselves," or be purified; so long as they continue in their sins, in their superstition and idolatry, and other impieties, and are not purged from them.

Ver. 6. *For from Israel was it also*, &c.] That is, the calf was from Israel; it was an invention of theirs, as some say; they did not borrow it from their neighbours, as they did other idols, but it was their own contrivance: but this does not seem to be fact; for the calf, the making of it indeed, was of themselves, but the worship of it they borrowed from the Egyptians; with this difference, the Egyptians worshipped a living cow or ox, these the golden image of a calf: but rather the sense is, that this calf was made by the advice of Israel, by the advice of Jeroboam their king, and of their princes, they assenting to it, so Aben Ezra; or the gold and silver of which it was made was exacted on them, and collected from them, as the Targum and Jarchi; or workmen were employed by them to make it; and so it was of them *also*, as any other work that was done by their advice and direction, and at their expense; and therefore could never have any divinity in it, any more than other things they did; though this is commonly interpreted as having respect to the making of the golden calf by Aaron, that this also was of Israel as well as that: *the workman made it; therefore it is not God*: a strong and invincible reason this; for, since the calf was the work of an artificer, of the goldsmith or founder, it could not be God; there could not be deity in it; for a creature cannot make a God, or give that which itself has not; if the workman was not God, but a creature, if deity was not in him, he could never give it to a golden image, a lifeless statue fashioned by him: this, one would think, should have been a clear, plain, striking, and convincing argument to them, that their calf was, as the Targum has it, "a deity in which "there was no profit:" *but the calf of Samaria shall be broken to pieces*; or *for*[u] *the calf of Samaria*, &c. being another reason to prove it could not be God; if the former would not convince them, this surely would, when they should see it broke to pieces by the enemy, from whom it could not save itself; and therefore could not be a god that could be of any service to them, or save them. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, *for the calf of Samaria shall become spiders' webs*; and Jerom says he learned it of a Jew that the word so signifies; but his Jew imposed upon him: it does not appear to be any where so used, either in the Bible, or in any other writings. Kimchi interprets it shivers, fragments, broken pieces of any thing. Jarchi says it signifies, in the Syriac language, beams, planks, and boards, pieces of them; so the Targum and Ben Melech from the Rabbins; or rather the dust which falls from them in sawing, saw-dust; to dust as small as that should this calf be reduced, as the golden calf was ground to powder by Moses, to which, 'tis thought, there is an allusion.

Ver. 7. *For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind*, &c.] The sense is, the Israelites took a great deal of pains in the idolatrous worship of the calves, and made a great stir, bustle, and noise in it, like the wind; were very vain-glorious and ostentatious, made a great shew of religion and devotion, and promised themselves great things from it, peace and plenty, wealth and riches, all prosperity and happiness, enjoyed by Heathen nations; but this was all lost labour, it was labouring for the wind, or sowing that; they got nothing by it, or what was worse than nothing; it proved not only useless, but hurtful, to them; for, for their idolatry, and continuance in it, the whirlwind of God's wrath would be raised up against them, and the Assyrian army, like a vehement storm of wind, would rush in upon them, and destroy them; so they that sow to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption, Gal. vi. 8: *it hath no stalk*; what they sowed did not rise up above ground; or, if it did, it did not spring up in a blade or stalk, which was promising of fruit; no real good, profit, and advantage, sprung from their idolatrous practices: *the bud shall yield no meal*; yea, though it rise up into a stalk, and this stalk produced ears of corn, yet those so thin, that no meal or flour could be got out of them, and so of no worth and use: *and if so be it yield*; any meal or flour: *the strangers shall swallow it up*; the Israelites should not be the better for it; it should all come into the hands of foreigners, the Assyrian army. The meaning is, that if they did prosper and increase in riches, yet they should not long enjoy them themselves, but be pillaged and spoiled of them; as they were by the exactions of Pul, and by the depredations of Salmaneser, kings of Assyria. So the Targum, "if they got substance, the nations shall "spoil them of it."

Ver. 8. *Israel is swallowed up*, &c.] Not only their substance, but their persons also, the whole nation of them, their whole estate, civil and ecclesiastic: it denotes the utter destruction of them by the Assyrians, so that nothing of them and theirs remained; just as any one is swallowed up and devoured by a beast of prey; the present is put for the future, because of the

[r] נקיון munditiem, Calvin, Rivet, Schmidt.
[s] עד מתי quousque? Zanchius, Pareus, Cocceius.
[t] לא יוכלו נקיון non possunt innocentiam præstare, Coccejus; quamdiu non poterunt animum adjungere ad innocentiam, Zanchius; usquedum non poterunt ferre innocentiam, Pareus.
[u] כי nam, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Coccejus; quia, Schmidt; quoniam, Pagninus, Montanus.

certainty of it: *now shall they be among the Gentiles as a vessel wherein is no pleasure*; when Salmaneser took Samaria, and with it swallowed up the whole kingdom of Israel, he carried captive the inhabitants of it, and placed them among the nations, in *Halah, Habor, by the river Gozan*, and in the cities of the Medes, 2 Kings xvii. 6. where they lived poor, mean, and abject, and were treated with the utmost neglect and contempt: no more regarded than a broken useless vessel, or than a vessel of dishonour, that is made and used for the ease of nature, for which no more regard is had than for that service: thus idolaters, who dishonour God by their idolatries, shall, sooner or later, be brought to disgrace and dishonour themselves.

Ver. 9. *For they are gone up to Assyria*, &c.] Or, *though they should go up to Assyria*[g]; to the king of Assyria, to gain his friendship, and enter into alliance with him; as, when Pul king of Assyria came against them, Menahem king of Israel went forth to meet him, and gave him a thousand talents of silver to be his confederate, and strengthen his kingdom, 2 Kings xv. 19. yet this hindered not but that Israel was at length swallowed up by that people, and scattered by them among the nations; for this is not to be understood of their going captive into the land of Assyria, as the Targum interprets it: *a wild ass alone by himself*; which may be applied either to the king of Assyria, and be considered as a description of him, to whom Israel went for help and friendship; who, though he took their present, and made them fair promises, yet was perfidious, unsociable, and inhuman, studied only his own advantage, and not their good: or to the Israelites that went to him, who were as sottish and stupid as the ass, and as headstrong and unruly as that, and, like it, lustful, and impetuous in their lusts; running to and fro for the satisfying of them, and taking no advice, nor suffering themselves to be controlled, and, being alone, became an easy prey to the Assyrian lion: or yet they should be as *a wild ass alone by itself*[h]; notwithstanding all the methods they took to obtain the friendship and alliance of the king of Assyria, yet they should be carried captive by him, and dwell in the captivity like a wild ass in the wilderness; and so it is to be understood here, agreeably to Job xxiv. 5. Jer. ii. 24. otherwise, as Bochart[i] has proved from various writers, these creatures go in flocks: *Ephraim hath hired lovers*: by giving presents to the kings of Assyria and Egypt, to be their allies and confederates, patrons and defenders, 2 Kings xv. 19. and xvii. 3, 4. who are represented as their gallants, with whom Ephraim or the ten tribes committed adultery, departing from God their Husband, and liege Lord and King, and from his true worship; see Ezek. xvi. 23, 28, 33, and xxiii. 4, 5. R. Elias Levita[k] observes, that some interpret the words, *Ephraim made a covenant with lovers*.

Ver. 10. *Yea, though they have hired among the nations*, &c.] That is, lovers, as before; got into confederacies and alliances with the nations about them, thinking thereby to strengthen their hands, and secure themselves and their kingdom; particular regard may be had to the Egyptians, as distinct from the Assyrians, whom they privately engaged on their side to shake off the Assyrian yoke, or their obligation to send yearly presents to the Assyrian king: *now will I gather them*; either the Assyrians against them, to invade their land, besiege their city, and take and carry them captive; or the Israelites in a body into the city of Samaria, and there be cooped up, and taken and destroyed, or carried captive; for this is not to be interpreted of the collection of them out of their captivity, as the Targum and Jarchi, but of the gathering of them together for their destruction: *and they shall sorrow a little for the burden of the king of princes*: the tax or tribute imposed upon them by the king of Assyria, whose princes were altogether kings, Isa. x. 8. and who used to be called king of kings, being at the head of a monarchy, which had many kings subject to it; as the kings of Babylon were afterwards called, Ezek. xxvi. 7. this may refer to the yearly present or tribute, which Hoshea king of Israel was obliged to give to the king of Assyria, which he was very uneasy at, and did not pay it, which drew upon him the resentment of the Assyrian king; and that sorrow and uneasiness which that tribute gave the king of Israel and his people were but little and small in comparison of what they after found; it was the beginning of sorrows to them; and so some render the words, *they began*[l]; that is, to sorrow and complain *a little*; or this may refer to their burdens and oppressions when in captivity, which were laid upon them by the king of Assyria, and the princes, the rulers, and governors of the several places where the Israelites were carried captive: even the *few* that *shall remain*[m], as some render it; and not die by famine, pestilence, and sword. Kimchi and Ben Melech think there is a deficiency of the copulative *and* between king and princes; which is supplied by the Targum, and by the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, which read, *the king and princes*.

Ver. 11. *Because Ephraim hath made many altars to sin*, &c.] Not with an intention to commit sin, but to offer sacrifice for sin, and make atonement for it, as they thought; but these altars being erected for the sake of idols, and sacrifices offered on them to them, they sinned in so doing, and were the cause of sin in others, who were drawn into it by their example; as they were made to sin, or drawn into it, by Jeroboam their king. These altars were those set up at Dan and Beth-el, and in all high places, and tops of mountains, where they sacrificed to idols; and which was contrary to the express command of God, who required sacrifice only at one place, and on one altar, Deut. xii. 5, 6. typical of the one altar Christ, and his alone sacrifice, who is the only Mediator between God and man; and they are guilty of the same crime as Ephraim here, who make use of more, or neglect him. *Altars shall be unto him for sin*, either these same altars, and the sacrifices offered on them, shall be reckoned and im-

[g] כי המה עלו quamvis, etiamsi ascenderint; so Schmidt observes it may be rendered, though he chooses to render it by *quando, when they should go up, &c.*

[h] פרא בודד לו erunt onager, qui solitarius sibi est, Schmidt.

[i] Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 3. c. 16. col. 870.

[k] Tishbi, p. 267.

[l] ויחלו incipient, Calvin; ceperunt enim paululum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Zanchius, Drusius, Tarnovius, so Ben Melech.

[m] ויחלו מעט et remanebunt pauci, Schmidt; a rad. חיל durare, permanere.

puted to him as sins, and shall be the cause of his condemnation and punishment: or, *let the altars be unto him for sin*, so some[*]; since he will have them, let him have them, and go on in sinning, till he has filled up the measure of his sins, and brought on him just condemnation; or else other altars are meant, even in the land of Assyria, where, since they were so fond of multiplying altars, they should have altars enow to sin at, whereby their sins would be increased, and their punishment for them aggravated. The Targum is, "seeing the house of Ephraim hath multiplied altars "to sin, the altars of their idols shall be to them "for a stumbling-block," or ruin; so sin is taken in a different sense, both for guilt, and the punishment of it.

Ver. 12. *I have written to him the great things of my law*, &c.] Which was given by Moses to Israel at the appointment of God, in which were many commands, holy, just, and true; a multiplicity of them, as the Targum, relating to the honour of God, and the good of men; many excellent and useful ones of a moral nature, and others of a ceremonial kind; and particularly concerning sacrifices, shewing what they should be, the nature and use of them, and where and on what altar they should be offered; and which pointed at the great sacrifice of the Messiah, who is both altar, sacrifice, and priest: and these things were frequently inculcated by the prophets, who from time to time were sent unto them; so that the Lord was continually writing these things to them by them, as Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech interpret it: hence they could not plead ignorance, and excuse themselves on that account. The law sometimes not only designs the law of the decalogue, and the ceremonial law, respecting sacrifices, &c.: but all the books of Moses, in which are written many great and excellent things concerning Christ, his person, offices, and grace: yea, all the books of the prophets, the whole of Scripture, which is by inspiration of God, and is the writing and word of God, and not men; and of which holy men of God were the *amanuenses*; and in which many valuable and precious things are recorded, even all the works of God, of creation, providence, and grace; yea, the various thoughts, counsels, and purposes of his heart, relating to the salvation of men, are transcribed here; and the manifold grace of God, or the several doctrines of grace, are contained herein, especially in the doctrinal and evangelical part of it, which is sometimes called the law of the Lord, even of Christ; and the law or doctrine of faith; see Psal. cxix. 18. Isa. ii. 3. and xlii. 4. Rom. iii. 27. here are delivered and held forth the great doctrines of a trinity of Persons in the Godhead; of the everlasting love of God to his people, and of their choice in Christ before the world began; of the covenant of grace; of the incarnation of Christ; of redemption by him; of peace, pardon, righteousness, and atonement, through him; of eternal salvation by him; these things are written, and to be read and referred unto, and observed as the rule of faith and practice, and not unwritten traditions, pretended revelations, reveries, and dreams of men; and written they were, not for the use of the Israelites only under the former dispensation, but for the learning and instruction of us Gentiles also, Rom. iii. 2. and ix. 4. and xv. 4: but *they were counted as a strange thing*; the laws respecting sacrifices more especially, and the place where they were to be offered, which are the things mentioned in the context, had been so long disregarded and disused by Ephraim or the ten tribes, that when they were put in mind of them by the prophets, they looked upon them as things they had no concern with; as laws that belonged to another people, and not to them: and so the great things of divine revelation, the great doctrines of the Gospel, are treated by many as things they have nothing to do with, not at all interesting to them; yea, as nauseous and despicable things, deserving their scorn and contempt, very ungrateful and disagreeable, and in this sense strange, as Job's breath was to his wife, ch. xix. 17. and also as foreign to reason and good sense, and what can't be reconciled thereunto: so the Athenians charged the doctrines of the Apostle Paul as strange, irrational, and unaccountable, Acts xvii. 20.

Ver. 13. *They sacrifice flesh for the sacrifices of mine offerings, and eat it*, &c.] Or, *as to the sacrifices of mine offerings* or *gifts, they sacrifice flesh, and eat it*[*]; these sacrifices, which, according to the law, should be given to God when they offered them, they did not give them to him, they took them to themselves, and ate them; they were carnal offerings, and offered with a carnal mind, without faith and piety, without any regard to the glory of God, but merely for the sake of eating: the Targum interprets it of sacrifices got by rapine, which God hates, Isa. lxi. 8: *but the Lord accepteth them not*; neither the sacrifices, nor the sacrificers, but despised and abhorred them; no sacrifice was acceptable to God but what was offered according to law, and where he directed, and in the faith of Christ, and through him: *now will he remember their iniquities, and visit their sins*: he will not pardon them, but punish for them; so far were their sacrifices from making atonement for them, as they expected, they added to the measure of their iniquities: *they shall return into Egypt*: either flee thither for refuge, as many of them it seems did, when the king of Assyria entered their land, and besieged Samaria; where they lived miserably, as in exile, and were there buried, and never returned to their own land any more; see ch. ix. 3, 6. and Deut. xxviii. 68. or they should be carried captive into Assyria, where they should be in a like state of bondage as their fathers were in Egypt. Some render it, *they return into Egypt*[†]; and consider it not as their punishment, but as their sin; that when the Lord was about to visit them for their transgressions, they being made tributary to the Assyrians, instead of returning to the Lord, and humbling themselves before him, they sent to the king of Egypt for help, 2 Kings xvii. 4.

Ver. 14. *For Israel hath forgotten his Maker*, &c.] The Creator and Preserver of every one of them, and

[*] היו לו מזבחות לחטא anno ergo illi altaria ad peccandum. Rivet.
[*] זבחי הבהבי יזבחו בשר ויאכלו quod attinet ad sacrificia donariorum meorum, sacrificant illi quidem carnem, & comedunt, Piscator, De Dieu; quantum ad sacrificia, &c. Schmidt. So Rembeck. De Accent. Hebr. p. 445.
[†] המה מצרים ישובו illi in Ægyptum redeunt, Cocceius; revertuntur, Schmidt. So Tarnovius.

who had raised them up to a state and kingdom, and had made them great and rich, and populous, and bestowed many favours and blessings on them; and yet they forgot him, to give him glory, and to serve and worship him: *and buildeth temples;* to idols, as the Targum adds; to the calves at Dan and Beth-el, at which places, as there were altars set up, and priests appointed, so temples and houses of high places built to worship in; see 1 Kings xii. 31, 32. Amos vii. 10, 13: *and Judah hath multiplied fenced cities;* to protect them from their enemies, which was not unlawful; but that they should put their trust and confidence in them, and not in the Lord their God, which was their sin; when they saw the ten tribes carried captive by the Assyrians, they betook themselves to such methods for their security, but were not careful to avoid those sins which brought ruin upon Israel: *but I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the palaces thereof;* that is, an enemy, that should set fire to their cities, particularly Jerusalem their chief city, and burn the temple of the Lord, the palaces of their king and nobles, and all the fine houses of the great men; which was done many years after this prophecy, by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Jer. lii. 13.

CHAP. IX.

THIS chapter is an address to Israel or the ten tribes, and contains either a new sermon, or is a very considerable part of the former upon the same subject, the sins and punishment of that people. It begins with an instruction to them, not to rejoice in their prosperity, as others did; since it would soon be at an end, because of their idolatry, which was everywhere committed, and for which they expected a reward of temporal good things, ver. 1. but, on the contrary, they are threatened with famine, with want both of corn and wine, ver. 2. and with an ejection out of their land into foreign countries; where they should be obliged to eat things unclean by their law, ver. 3. and where their sacrifices and solemnities should be no more attended to, ver. 4, 5. yea, where their carcasses should fall and be buried, whilst their own country and houses lay waste and desolate, ver. 6. for, whatsoever their foolish and mad prophets said to the contrary, who pretended to be with God, and know his will, and were a snare to them that gave heed unto them, and brought hatred on them, the time of their punishment would certainly come, ver. 7, 8. and their iniquities would be remembered and visited; seeing their corruptions were deep, like those that appeared in Gibeah, in the days of old, ver. 9. they acting the same ungrateful part their fathers had done, of whom they were a degenerate offspring, ver. 10. wherefore for these, and other offences mentioned, they are threatened with being bereaved of their children, and drove out of their land, to wander among the nations, ver. 11—17.

Ver. 1. *Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy, as other people,* &c.] But rather mourn and lament, since such a load of guilt lay upon them, and they had so highly provoked the Lord to anger by their sins, and punishment would quickly be inflicted on them; and though they might be now in prosperity, through Jeroboam's success against their enemies, who by his victories had enlarged their border; yet they should not rejoice at it, as other people used to do on such occasions, by illumination of houses, making fires in the streets, feasting, and the like, since this prosperity would be but shortlived: or if it was on account of the league made by Menahem with the king of Assyria, this would not last long; or on account of a good harvest, they need not so much rejoice as they that rejoice in harvest, since there would quickly be a famine among them: or rather it may respect rejoicing at their idols, and in their idolatrous worship, as other people, which is forbidden; such as instituting plays to the honour of them, making feasts before them, and dancing about them; whatever others might do, who knew not the true God, had not his law before them, nor his prophets sent to them to make known his will; who had been brought up in idolatry, adhered to their gods, and never forsook them; it ill became Israel to do the like. So the words may be rendered, *rejoice not, O Israel,* at an idol [s], or idols, *as other people:* idolatrous ones; for the word signifies similitude [t] or likeness, which an idol is: *for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God;* playing the harlot with many lovers; committing adultery with stocks and stones; worshipping idols, and so departing from God, the true God, they had professed to be their God, their God in covenant; who stood in the relation of a husband to them, but they proved treacherous to him, and were guilty of spiritual adultery, which is idolatry; and therefore had no cause to rejoice as other nations that never left their gods, but to take shame to themselves, and mourn over their sad departure; see ch. i. 3: *thou hast loved a reward upon every corn-floor;* alluding to the hire of a harlot, prostituting herself for it on a corn-floor, or any where else, and that for a measure of corn, or for bread: it may point either at their giving the tithes of their corn-floors to their idols, instead of giving them to the Lord; or to their ascribing their plenty of corn, and all good things, to their worship of them, which they called their rewards, or hires their lovers gave them, Hos. ii. 5, 12. or to their erecting of altars on their corn-floors; as David erected one to the true God on the threshing-floor of Araunah, 2 Sam. xxiv. 24, 25. and which they might do, either by way of thanksgiving for a good harvest, which they imputed to them: or in order to obtain one, but in vain, as follows. The Targum is, "for you have erred from the worship "of your God; you have loved to serve idols on all "corn-floors."

Ver. 2. *The floor and the wine-press shall not feed them,* &c.] Though their expectations from their

[s] אל כגיל super similitudine, seu idolo, Schmidt.
[t] גיל signifies a likeness of age, stature, and complexion, in Dan. i. 10. an idol is the similitude or likeness of any thing in heaven or in earth, Exod. xx. 4.

worship of idols were large, they should find themselves mistaken; for there would not be a sufficiency of corn on the floor, nor of wine in the press, to supply them with what was necessary for their sustenance; either through a blast upon their fields and vineyards, or through the invasion of an enemy, treading them down, and spoiling and foraging them: or else supposing a sufficient quantity of corn and wine got in; yet those blessings should be either turned into curses, or carried off by the enemy, that they should do them no good; or if they enjoyed them, yet they should receive no nourishment from them; but should become lean, and look like starved and famishing creatures in the midst of plenty; by all which it would appear that their idols could neither give them a sufficiency of provisions, nor make those nourishing to them they had: *and the new wine shall fail in her*; in the congregation or land of Israel: or, *shall lie to her*[*]; shall not answer their expectations, but disappoint and deceive them; whereas they expected great plenty from the promising prospect of the vines, these by one means or another should be destroyed, so that they would yield but little, and baulk them; see Hab. iii. 17. Hagg. i. 6, 10, 11. and ii. 16.

Ver. 3. *They shall not dwell in the Lord's land*, &c.] The land of Israel, or Canaan; which, though all the earth is the Lord's, was peculiarly his; which he had chose for himself, and for his people; where he had his temple, and caused his Shechinah or divine Majesty to dwell in a very special manner, and where his worship and service were performed. So the Targum calls it the land of the Shechinah or majesty of the Lord. Sometimes it is called Immanuel's land, where the Messiah Immanuel, God with us, was to be born, and dwell, and where he did. Kimchi wrongly interprets this of Jerusalem only; and others of Judea; but it designs the whole land of promise, which God gave by promise to the fathers of this people, and put them in the possession of, the tenure of which they held by their obedience; but they not living according to his will, and in obedience to his laws, who was Lord of the land, sole Proprietor and Governor of it, he turned them out of it, and would not suffer them to continue any longer in it; and which was a great punishment indeed, to be driven out of such a land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and where they had been favoured with privileges and blessings of every kind. *But Ephraim shall return to Egypt*; or the ten tribes; that is, some of them, who should flee thither for refuge and sustenance; when the Assyrian should invade their land, and besiege Samaria, they should go thither again, where their ancestors had formerly been in a state of bondage: this is prophesied of them, Deut. xxviii. 68: *and they shall eat unclean things in Assyria*; that is, Ephraim or the ten tribes, the far greater part of them, should be taken captive, and carried into Assyria, and there eat food which by their law was unclean, as things sacrificed to idols, swine's flesh, and many others; or food that was not fit for men to eat, which nature abhorred; such bread as Ezekiel was bid to make and eat, ch. iv. 9, 12, 13. This may be understood even of them that went to Egypt for help against the Assyrians, or for shelter from them, or for food to eat in the time of famine; who should be brought back again, and carried into Assyria, and there live a miserable and an uncomfortable life; who had been used to enjoy corn and wine, and plenty of all good things, to which these unclean things may be opposed.

Ver. 4. *They shall not offer* wine-offerings *to the Lord*, &c.] This is either a threatening of the cessation of sacrifices, being carried into Assyria, a strange land, where it was not lawful to offer sacrifice, there being no temple nor altar to offer in or at; and so as they would not offer to the Lord when they should, now they shall not if they would: or this respects not the future time of their exile, but their present time now, as Kimchi observes; and so is a reproof of their present sacrifices, which are forbidden to be observed; because they were offered not in faith, nor in sincerity, but hypocritically, and before their calves: besides, the future tense is sometimes put for the present; and this way goes Schmidt. *Neither shall their sacrifices be pleasing unto him*; unto the Lord, if they were offered; and is a reason why they should not, because unacceptable to him, and that for the reasons before mentioned: *their sacrifices* shall be *unto them as the bread of mourners; all that eat thereof shall be polluted*; as all that ate of the bread of such who were mourning for their dead, that partook of their funeral feasts, or ate bread with them at any time during their mourning, were defiled thereby, according to the Levitical law, and were unqualified for service, Lev. xxi. 1. Deut. xxvi. 14. so the sacrifices of these people being offered up with a wicked mind, instead of atoning for their sins, more and more defiled them; and, instead of being acceptable to God, were abominable to him: *for their bread for their soul shall not come into the house of the Lord*; in the captivity there was no house of the Lord for them to bring it into; and, when in their own land, they did not bring their offerings to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, as they should have done, but offered them before their calves at Dan and Beth-el; and which is the thing complained of, that the bread for their souls, that is, the offerings accompanied with the *minchah*, or bread-offering, for the expiation of the sins of their souls, were not brought into the house of the Lord (the future for the present); or else, this being the case, their sacrifices were reckoned by the Lord as no other than common bread, which they ate for the sustenance of their lives.

Ver. 5. *What will ye do in the solemn day, and in the day of the feast of the Lord?*] Since their sacrifices now were so disagreeable and displeasing to the Lord, and so unavailable to themselves, what would they do when in captivity, *in the solemn day*, the seventh day of the week, appointed by the Lord for rest and religious worship; and in the first day of the month, which also was to be solemnly observed, by offering sacrifice, &c.: and on feast-days of the Lord's instituting, as the feasts of the passover, pentecost, and tabernacles? seeing those that carried and held them captive would not allow them time for such solemnities; nor would they be furnished with proper

[*] יכחש בה mentietur in ea, Pagninus, Montanus, Zanchius; mentietur isti, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Liveleus, Schmidt.

sacrifices; nor could they be accommodated with a proper place to offer them at; nor be able, in a strange land, and under hardships and miseries, to express that joy that is suitable to such occasions: thus should they learn, by sad experience, the want of those means and opportunities of serving the Lord, which in their own land they rejected and despised. Jarchi and Kimchi interpret this of the destruction of Israel, and of punishment inflicted on them at the time appointed by the Lord; and which would be a solemn time, a feast with the Lord, to which he should invite their enemies, and they should spill their blood as the blood of sacrifices; and when he would display the glory of his justice, truth, and faithfulness, before all the world. And it is asked, what will you do then? whither will you flee for help? or what sacrifice can you offer up to the Lord to atone for sin, or appease his wrath? will you be able to rejoice then? no, your joy will be turned into mourning; see Isa. x. 3. and xxxiv. 6.

Ver. 6. *For, lo, they are gone, because of destruction,* &c.] That is, many of the people of Israel were gone out of their own land to others, particularly to Egypt, because of the destruction that was coming upon them, and to avoid it; because of the Assyrian army which invaded their land, and besieged Samaria, and threatened them with entire destruction; and upon which a famine ensued, and which is thought by Kimchi to be here particularly meant. *Egypt shall gather them up* being dead; for they shall die there, perhaps by the pestilence, and never return to their own country, as they flattered themselves; and they shall make preparations for their funeral: *Memphis shall bury them*: or they shall be buried there; which was a principal city in Egypt, here called Moph, in Isa. xix. 13. Noph. It was the metropolis of upper Egypt, and the seat of the Egyptian kings. In it, as Plutarch says [t], was the sepulchre of Osiris; and some say its name so signifies. Near to it were the famous pyramids, as Strabo [u] says, supposed to be built for the sepulture of them. Herodotus [w] places these pyramids at Memphis, and says there were three of them; the largest had several subterraneous chambers in it; the next in bigness had none; the smallest was covered with Ethiopic marble. Strabo, in the place referred to, speaks of many pyramids near it, of which three were very remarkable, and expressly says they were the burying-places of the kings. Diodorus [x] agrees with these as to the number of them, but places them a hundred and twenty furlongs from Memphis. Pliny [y] places them between Memphis and the Delta, six miles from Memphis; pretty near to which is Strabo's account, who in the above place says, they stood forty furlongs, or five miles, from the city. Near it was the lake of Charon or Acherusia, over which he ferried dead bodies from Memphis to the pyramids, or to the plains of the mummies, the Elysian fields. Now since this was so famous for the burying-places of kings, there may be an allusion to it in this expression. Here also were buried their deities, the Apis or ox when it died. *The pleasant places for their silver, nettles shall possess them*: such beautiful edifices as were made for the repositories or treasure-houses for their silver; or were built or purchased at great expense of silver; or were decorated with it; now should lie in ruins, and be like a waste, desert, and desolate place, all overrun with nettles, and uninhabited: *briers shall be in their tabernacles*: their dwelling-houses, which being demolished, briers shall grow upon the ground where they stood, and overspread it; another token of desolation. The Targum interprets it of living creatures, beasts of prey, that should dwell there; wild cats particularly.

Ver. 7. *The days of visitation are come, the days of recompense are come,* &c.] In which the Lord would punish the people of Israel for their sins, and reward them in a righteous manner, according as their evil works deserved; which time, being fixed and appointed by him, are called *days*; and these, because near at hand, are said to be *come*; and this is repeated for the certainty of it: *Israel shall know it*: by sad experience, that these days are come; and shall acknowledge the truth of the divine predictions, and the righteousness of God in his judgments. Schultens [z], from the use of the phrase in the Arabic language, interprets it of Israel's suffering punishment; with which agrees the Septuagint version, *Israel shall be afflicted*, or it shall go ill with him; and to the same purpose the Arabic version: *the prophet is a fool*; so Israel said, before those days came, of a true prophet of the Lord, that he was a fool for prophesying of evil things, but now they shall find it otherwise. So the Targum, "they "of the house of Israel shall know that they who had "prophesied to them were true prophets;" but rather this is to be understood of false prophets, who, when the day of God's visitation shall come on Israel in a way of wrath and vengeance, will appear both to themselves and others to be fools, for prophesying good things to them, when evil was at hand: *the spiritual man is mad*: he that was truly so, and prophesied under the inspiration of the spirit of God, was accounted a madman for speaking against the idolatry of the times, and foretelling the judgments of God that would come upon the nation for it; but now it would be manifest, that not he, but such who pretended to be spiritual men, and to be directed and dictated by the spirit of God, when they promised the people peace, though they walked after the imagination of their hearts, were the real madmen; who pursued the phrensies and fancies of their own minds, to the deception of themselves and the people, and called these the revelations of God, and pretended they came from the spirit of God: *for the multitude of thine iniquities, and the great hatred*: that is, either those evil days come upon them for their manifold sins and transgressions, which were hateful to God, and the cause of his hatred of them; or they were suffered to give heed to those foolish and mad prophets, because of their many sins, especially idolatry; and because of their great hatred of God, and of his true prophets, and of his laws and ordinances, of his word, will, and worship, and of one another, God gave them up to a reprobate mind,

[t] De Iside & Osir. p. 359.
[u] Geograph. l. 17. p. 555.
[w] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 8. 126, 127.
[x] Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 57.
[y] Nat. Hist. l. 36. c. 12.
[z] Animadv. Philol. in Job, p. 78.

to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart, to believe a lie, and whatsoever those false prophets declared unto them, because they did not like to retain him in their knowledge, to walk according to his law, and to believe his prophets. The Targum is, "but the false "prophets besotted them, so as to increase thy trans-"gression, and strengthen thine iniquities."

Ver. 8. *The watchman of Ephraim was with my God, &c.*] Formerly the watchmen of Ephraim, or the prophets of Israel, were with the true God, whom the prophet calls his God; as Elijah and Elisha, who had communion and intimacy with him; had revelations and instructions from him; and were under the direction and inspiration of his spirit, and prophesied in his name things according to his will, and for the good of his people: or *the watchman of Ephraim* should be *with my God*: on his side, and promote his worship and service, his honour and interest; and give the people warning from him, having heard the word at his mouth: but now they were not with him, nor for him, nor did as they should: or one that bore this character of a watchman in the ten tribes, pretended to be such a one, and would be thought to be with God, and to have his mind and will, and to be sincere for his glory: but *the prophet is a snare of a fowler in all his ways*; the false prophet, the same with the watchman, instead of guiding and directing Ephraim in the right way in which he should go, lays snares for him in all the ways he takes, to lead him wrong, and draw him into sin, particularly into idolatry, both by his doctrine and example: and *hatred in the house of his God*: and so became detestable and execrable in the house of his own god, the calf at Beth-el, in the temple there: prophesying such things as in the event proved false, and drawing into such practices as brought on ruin and desolation. The Targum interprets it of laying snares for their prophets, their true prophets; and Kimchi and Jarchi of slaying Zechariah the prophet in the temple.

Ver. 9. *They have deeply corrupted* themselves, *as in the days of Gibeah, &c.*] Not the false prophets and watchmen only; but rather Ephraim, or the ten tribes, through their means became extremely corrupt in principle and practice; they had most sadly degenerated, and were deeply sunk and immersed in all manner of wickedness, and rooted in it, and continued obstinate and incorrigible, so that there was no hope of reformation among them: they had got to as great a pitch of wickedness, and were guilty of the like uncleanness, lewdness, barbarity, and cruelty, as were acted by the men of Gibeah, with respect to the Levite and his concubine, Judg. xix. for Gibeah of Benjamin is here meant, where the people asked a king, and rebelled against the words of the prophet, as some in Jarchi interpret it: therefore *he will remember their iniquity, he will visit their sins*: that is, God, my God, as the prophet calls him in the preceding verse, will not forgive and forget their sins; pardon being often expressed by a non-remembrance of sins; but will make inquiry after them, and visit them in a way of wrath and vengeance, and punish for them as they deserve; they being obstinate and impenitent, and persisting in their sins, like the men of Gibeah and Benjamin.

Ver. 10. *I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness, &c.*] Not Jacob or Israel personally, with the few souls that went down with him into Egypt: for these died in Egypt, and never returned from thence, or came into the wilderness to be found; nor Israel in a spiritual sense, the objects of electing, redeeming, and calling grace; though it may be accommodated to them, who in their nature-state are as in a wilderness, in a forlorn, hopeless, helpless, and uncomfortable condition; in which the Lord finds them, seeking them by his Son in redemption, and by his Spirit in effectual vocation; when they are like grapes, not in themselves, being destitute of all good, and having nothing but sin and wickedness in them; for, whatever good thing is in them at conversion, it is not found, but put there; but the simile may serve to express the great and unmerited love of God to his people, who are as agreeable to him as grapes in the wilderness to a thirsty traveller; and in whom he takes great delight and complacency, notwithstanding all their sinfulness and unworthiness; and bestows abundance of grace upon them, and makes them like clusters of grapes indeed; and such were many of the Jewish fathers, and who are here intended, even the people of Israel brought out of Egypt into the wilderness of Arabia, through which they travelled to Canaan: here the Lord found them, took notice and care of them, provided for them, and protected them, and gave them many tokens of his love and affection; see Deut. xxxii. 10. and they were as acceptable to him, and he took as much delight and pleasure in them, as one travelling through the deserts of Arabia, or any other desert, would rejoice at finding a vine laden with clusters of grapes. The design of this metaphor is not to compare Israel with grapes, because of any goodness in them, and as a reason of the Lord's delight in them; for neither for quantity nor quality were they like them, being few, and very obstinate and rebellious; but to set forth the great love of God to them, and his delight and complacency in them; which arose and sprung, not from any excellency in them, but from his own sovereign good will and pleasure; see Deut. vii. 6, 7, 8. and ix. 5, 6. and x. 15: *I saw your fathers as the first ripe in the fig-tree at her first time*: the Lord looked upon their ancestors, when they were settled as a people, in their civil and church state, upon their being brought out of Egypt, with as much pleasure as a man beholds the first ripe fig his fig-tree produces after planting it, or the first it produces in the season, the fig-tree bearing twice in a year; but the first is commonly most desired, as being most rare and valuable; and such were the Israelites to the Lord at first, Mic. vii. 1. Jer. ii. 2. This is observed, to aggravate their ingratitude to the Lord, which soon discovered itself; and to suggest that their posterity were like them, who, though they had received many favours from the Lord, as tokens of his affection to them, and delight in them; yet behaved in a most shocking and shameful manner to him: but *they went to Baal-peor* or *went into Baal-peor*[a]; committed whoredom with that idol, even in the wilderness where the Lord found them, and shewed so much regard to

[a] המה באו ingressi sunt, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Drusius.

them; this refers to the history in Numb. xxv. Baal-peor is by some interpreted *the lord* or *god of opening*; and was so called, either from his opening his mouth in prophecy, as Ainsworth[b] thinks, as Nebo, a god of Babylon, had his name from prophesying: or from his open mouth, with which this idol was figured, as a Jewish writer[c] observes; whose worshippers took him to be inspired, and opened their mouths to receive the divine afflatus from him: others interpret it *the lord* or *god of nakedness*; because his worshippers exposed to him their posteriors in a shameful manner, and even those parts which ought to be covered; and this is the sense of most of the Jewish writers. So, in the Jerusalem Talmud[d], the worship of Peor is represented in like manner, and as most filthy and obscene, as it is by Jarchi[e], who seems to have taken his account from thence; and even Maimonides[f] says it was a known thing that the worship of Peor was by uncovering of the nakedness; and this he makes to be the reason why God commanded the priests to make themselves breeches to cover their nakedness in the time of service, and why they might not go up to the altar by steps, that their nakedness might not be discovered; in short, they took this Peor to be no other than a Priapus; and in this they are followed by many Christians, particularly by Jerom on this place, who observes that Baal-peor is the god of the Moabites, whom we may call Priapus; and so Isidore[g] says, there was an idol in Moab called Baal, on Mount Fegor, whom the Latins call Priapus, the god of gardens; but Mr. Selden[h] rejects this notion, and contends that Peor is either the name of a mountain, of which Isidore, just now mentioned, speaks: see Numb. xxiii. 28. where Baal was worshipped, and so was called from thence Baal-peor; as Jupiter Olympius, Capitolinus, *&c.* is so called from the mountains of Olympus, Capitolinus, *&c.* where divine honours are paid him; or else the name of a man, of some great person in high esteem, who was deified by the Moabites, and worshipped by them after his death; and so Baal-peor may be the same as *Lord Peor*; and it seems most likely that Peor is the name of a man, at least of an idol, since we read of Beth-peor, or the temple of Peor, in Deut. xxxiv. 6: and *separated themselves unto that shame*; they separated themselves from God and his worship, and joined themselves to that shameful idol, and worshipped it, thought by many, as before observed, to be the Priapus of the Gentiles, in whose worship the greatest of obscenities were used, not fit to be named; so that this epithet of *shame* is with great propriety given it, and aggravates the sin of Israel, that such a people should be guilty of such filthy practices; though Baal, without supposing him to be a Priapus, may be called *that shame*; for Baal and Bosheth, which signifies shame, are sometimes put for each other; so Jerub-baal, namely Gideon, is called Jerub-besheth, Judg. viii. 35. 2 Sam. xi. 21. and Esh-baal appears plainly to be the same son of Saul, whose name was Ish-bosheth, 1 Chron. viii. 33. 2 Sam. ii. 10. and Merib-baal is clearly the same with Mephi-bosheth, 1 Chron. viii. 34. 2 Sam. ix. 6. yea, it may be observed, that the prophets of Baal are called, in the Septuagint version of 1 Kings xviii. 25, προφῆται τῆς αἰσχύνης, *the prophets of that shame*; every idol, and all idolatry, being shameful, and the cause of shame, sooner or later, to their worshippers; especially when things obscene were done in their religious rites, as were in many of the Heathens' in which the Jews followed them; see Jer. iii. 24, 25. and xi. 13: *and their abominations were according as they loved*; or, *as they loved them*, the daughters of Moab; for it was through their impure love of them that they were drawn into these abominations, or to worship idols, which are often called abominations; or, as Joseph Kimchi reads the words, and gives the sense of them, *and they were abominations as I loved them*; that is, according to the measure of the love wherewith I loved them, so they were abominations in mine eyes; they were as detestable now as they were loved before.

Ver. 11. *As for Ephraim, their glory shall flee away like a bird*, &c.] That is, suddenly, swiftly, and irrecoverably, and never return more; which some understand of God their glory, and of his departure from them, as in the next verse; others of their wealth and riches, and whatever was glorious and valuable among them, which should fly away from them in a moment, when taken and carried captive; rather their numerous posterity, in which they were very fruitful, according to their name, and in which they gloried, as children are the glory of their parents, Prov. xvii. 6. which sense agrees with what follows, and which explains the manner of their fleeing away, and the periods of it: *from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception*; that is, some of them, as soon as they were born; others whilst in the womb, being abortives; or, however, when they should, or as soon as they did, come from thence; and others, as soon as conceived, never come to any thing; or not conceived at all, as Kimchi interprets it, the women being barren.

Ver. 12. *Though they bring up their children*, &c.] Though this be the case of some, as to be conceived, carried in the womb to the full time, and be born, and brought up to a more adult age, and appear very promising to live, and perpetuate the names of their fathers and their families: *yet will I bereave them*: their parents of them, by the sword, famine, pestilence, or by carrying them captive into a foreign country: that there shall *not* be *a man* left; in the whole land of Israel, but all shall be destroyed, or carried captive; or, *from men*[i]; that is, either from being men, as the Targum; though they are brought up to some ripeness, and a more adult age than others, yet arrive not to such a time and age as to be called men, as Kimchi observes; or from being among men, being either taken away by death, or removed from the society of men to live among beasts, and to be slaves

[b] Annotations on Numb. xxv. 3.
[c] Racenatensis in Capito, apud Drusium in loc.
[d] T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 28. 4.
[e] Perush in Numb. xxv. 3.
[f] Moreh Nevochim, par. 3. c. 45. p. 477.
[g] Origin. l. 8. c. 11. p. 70.
[h] De Dis Syris, Syntagma 1. c. 5. p. 162, 163. See Cumberland's Sanchoniatho, p. 73, &c.
[i] מאדם ab homine, Montanus, Tigurine version, Schmidt; ut non sint homines, Pagninus.

like them: *yea, woe also to them, when I depart from them:* withdraw my presence, favour, and protection from them; or remove my Shechinah from them, as the Targum; and leave them to the spoil and cruelty of their enemies, which would be a greater calamity and judgment than the former. The Septuagint, and so Theodotion, render it, *woe is to them, my flesh is of them;* which some of the ancients interpret of the incarnation of Christ, not considering that the words are spoken of Ephraim, or the ten tribes; whereas the Messiah was to spring, and did, from the family of David, and tribe of Judah.

Ver. 13. *Ephraim, as I saw Tyrus, is planted in a pleasant place,* &c.] That is, either as the city of Tyre, a very famous city in Phœnicia, was situated in a very pleasant place by the sea, and abounded in wealth and riches, and was well fortified, and seemed secure from all danger, and from all enemies; so Ephraim or the ten tribes, the kingdom of Israel, were in like circumstances, equal to Tyre, as the Targum paraphrases it, in prosperity and plenty; yet as the prophet in the vision of prophecy saw that Tyre, notwithstanding all its advantages by power and wealth, by art and nature, would be destroyed, first by Nebuchadnezzar, and then by Alexander; so by the same prophetic spirit he saw that Ephraim or the ten tribes, notwithstanding their present prosperity, and the safety and security they thought themselves in, yet should be given up to ruin and destruction by the hand of the Assyrians; or it may be rendered thus, *Ephraim as,* or *when I saw it, unto Tyre*[k]; reaching unto that place, and bordering upon it, as part of the ten tribes did; I saw it, I observed it, took a survey of it, and I perceived it was *planted in a pleasant place;* like a tree planted in a fruitful soil, well rooted, and in a flourishing condition; so were they, abounding with all good things, and having a numerous offspring; from all which they promised themselves much happiness for ages to come: *but Ephraim shall bring forth his children to the murderer;* to sacrifice them to Moloch, as some; so the Targum, "they "of the house of Ephraim have sinned in slaying their "children to the service of idols;" with which Jarchi agrees; but rather the sense is, with Kimchi, and others, when their enemies shall come against them, as the Assyrian army, they shall go out with their sons to fight with them, and these shall be destroyed and murdered by them; it will be like leading lambs to the slaughter to be butchered and devoured by them.

Ver. 14. *Give them, O Lord: what wilt thou give them?* &c.] The prophet foreseeing the butchery and destruction of their children, his heart ached for them; and, to shew his tender affection for this people, was desirous of putting up a supplication for them; but was at a loss what to ask, their sins were so many, and so aggravated, and the decree gone forth for their destruction: or, *give them what thou wilt give them*[l]; so Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbinel, what thou hast threatened before to give them, ver. 11. don't give them to be butchered and murdered before the eyes of their parents by their enemies; but rather let them die in the womb, or as soon as born; so it follows: *give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts;* the latter being a sign of the former, as physicians observe; or the words may be rendered disjunctively, give them one, or the other; that is, to the wives of the people of Israel, if they conceive, let them miscarry, prove abortive, rather than bring forth children to be destroyed in such a cruel manner by murderers; or if they bear them to the birth, and bring them forth, let their breasts be dried up, and afford no milk for their nourishment; and so die for lack of it, rather than fall into the hands of their merciless enemies; thus, of two evils, the prophet chooses and prays for the least. Some interpret this as a prediction of what would be, or an imprecation of it; but it rather seems a pathetic wish, flowing from the tender affection of the prophet, judging such a case to be preferable to the former; see Luke xxiii. 29. though the other sense seems best to agree with what follows, and which is favoured by the Targum, "give "thou, O Lord, the recompense of their works; give "them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts."

Ver. 15. *All their wickedness is in Gilgal,* &c.] A place in the ten tribes, where the covenant of circumcision was renewed in Joshua's time; the first passover was kept in the land of Canaan, and the people of Israel ate the first-fruits of the land; where the tabernacle was for a while, and sacrifices were offered up to the Lord; but now things were otherwise; all manner of iniquity was committed in it, especially idolatry; for which it was chosen by idolaters, because it had formerly been famous for religious worship: here, though not to the exclusion of other places, as Dan and Beth-el, was the above sin committed; here it begun and spread itself, and had the measure of it filled up; here began the first departure from the Lord, rejecting him, and asking a king in the days of Samuel, as Kimchi and Abarbinel observe; and here were high places and altars erected for idolatry; and this is now the reason of the above threatenings of God, and the predictions of the prophet. Grotius thinks there is a mystical sense in the words, and that they have reference to the sin of the Jews in crucifying Christ on Golgotha; which, in the Syriac language, is the same with Gilgal; but both the people spoken of, and the place, are different: *for there I hated them;* or *therefore*[m], because they sinned so greatly against him in a place where they had formerly worshipped him; their sacrifices there, instead of being acceptable, were the more abominable to him, as they were offered there where his tabernacle once was, and sacrifices were offered to him according to his will: *for the wickedness of their doings I will drive them out of mine house;* not out of the house of my sanctuary, or the temple, as the Targum; unless this is to be understood of losing the opportunity of going to the temple at Jerusalem, which those of the ten tribes had whilst they were in their own land, which the few godly persons among them then took, and made use of; but now their idolatry increasing in Gilgal, and other places, they should be carried cap-

[k] כאשר ראיתי לצור quando vidi usque ad Tyrum, Schmidt.

[l] תן להם מה תתן da eis quod daturus es, Junius & Tremellius, Vatablus, Grotius; da illis id quod dabis, Schmidt.

[m] כי ideo, Rivet.

tive; and, if they would, could not go up to the house of the Lord, and worship him there: or rather this may design, either the visible church of God, out of which they would be now ejected; or their native country, where they had been, as the family and household of God; but now should be so no more, but, as afterwards said, wanderers among the nations, and no more reckoned as belonging to the Lord, and under his paternal care and protection: *I will love them no more;* which is not to be understood of the special love and favour the Lord bears to his own people in Christ, which is everlasting and unchangeable; but of his general and providential favour and regard unto these people, which he had manifested in bestowing many great and good things upon them; but now would do so no more; he would do nothing to them, or for them, that looked like love, or be interpreted of it, but all the reverse; and, by his behaviour to them, shew that they were the objects of his aversion and hatred; and this was to continue, and has continued, and will continue unto the time of their conversion in the latter day, when *all Israel shall be saved,* Rom. xi. 26: *all their princes* are *revolters;* from God and his worship, who should have set a good example to the people; and since these were perverse and rebellious against God, it is no wonder that the people in general apostatized. This is to be understood of their king as supreme, and all subordinate rulers; of their judges and magistrates of every order; of all their governors, both civil and ecclesiastic; and not at Gilgal only, but in all the land. There is an elegant paronomasia* in the original, the beauty of which cannot be expressed in the translation.

Ver. 16. *Ephraim is smitten,* &c.] The people of the ten tribes, the kingdom of Israel, who had been like a tree planted in a pleasant place, ver. 13. and were in very flourishing circumstances in the times of Jeroboam the second; but now were like a tree smitten with thunder and lightning, or hail-stones, and beat to pieces; or with the heat of the sun, or with blasting winds, or by worms; as in the succeeding reigns, by the judgments of God upon them; by civil wars, conspiracies, and murders among themselves; and by the exactions of Pul and depredations of Tiglath-pileser kings of Assyria; and quickly would be smitten again; the present being put for the future, because of the certainty of it, as usual in prophetic writings; or be utterly destroyed by Salmaneser, and be no more a kingdom: *their root is dried up;* like the root of a tree that has no sap and moisture in it, and can communicate none to the body and branches of the tree, which in course must die. This may be understood of their king, princes, nobles, and chief men, the support and strength of the nations; and of parents and heads of families, cut off by one judgment or another: *they shall bear no fruit;* as a tree thus smitten, and its root dried up, cannot; so neither, this being their case, there would be none to beget, nor any to bear children, and bring them forth; called the fruit of the womb, in allusion to the fruit of trees: *yea, though they bring forth;* though some of them should be spared, women with their husbands, and should procreate children: *yet will I slay even the beloved fruit of their womb;* their children they should bring forth, on whom their affections were strongly set; and the rather, as they were but few, and from whom they had raised expectations of building up their families; even these the Lord would slay, or suffer to be slain, either by the sword of the enemy, or by famine, or by pestilence, or by some disease or another; so that there should be no hope of a future posterity, at least of no great number of them.

Ver. 17. *My God will cast them away,* &c.] With loathsomeness and contempt, having sinned against him, and done such abominable things; cast them out of their own land, as men not fit to live in it; cast them out of his sight, as not able to endure them; cast them away, as unprofitable and good for nothing; reject them from being his people; no more own them in the relation they had stood in to him; nor shew them any more favour, at least until the conversion of them in the times of the Messiah. These are the words of the prophet, who calls the Lord his God, whom he worshipped, by whom he was sent, and in whose name he prophesied; and this in opposition to, and distinction from, Israel, who worshipped other gods, and who had cast off the true God, and were now, or would be, cast away by him, and so no longer their God: *because they did not hearken unto him;* to his word, as the Targum; to him speaking by his prophets; to the instructions, admonitions, threatenings, and predictions delivered to them from him; they did not obey his law, regard his will, or attend his worship; which was the cause of the rejection of them, and a just one: *and they shall be wanderers among the nations;* being dispersed by the Assyrians in the several nations of the world, where they were fugitives and vagabonds; as their posterity are to this day.

CHAP. X.

THIS chapter is of the same argument with the former, and others before that; setting forth the sins of the ten tribes, and threatening them with the judgments of God for them; and exhorting them to repentance, and works of righteousness. They are charged with unfruitfulness and ingratitude; increasing in idolatry, as they increased in temporal good things, ver. 1. with a divided heart, and with irreverence of God, and their king; and with false swearing, covenant-breaking, and injustice, ver. 2, 3, 4. and are threatened with a removal of their king, and with the destruction of their idols, and places of idolatry, which should cause fear in the common people, and mourning among the priests, ver. 1, 5, 6, 7, 8. It is observed, that their sin had been of long continuance, though the Lord had been kind and good unto them, in chastising

* שריהם סררים Sharehem Sorerim.

them in love, giving them good laws, sending his prophets to exhort them to repentance and reformation, but all in vain, ver. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. wherefore they are threatened with the spoiling of their fortresses, the destruction of the people, and the cutting off of their king, ver. 14, 15.

Ver. 1. *Israel* is *an empty vine*, &c.] The people of Israel are often compared to a vine, and such an one from whence fruit might be expected, being planted in a good soil, and well took care of; see Psal. lxxx. 8. Isa. v. 1, 2, 3. Jer. ii. 21. but proved an *empty vine*, empty of fruit; not of temporal good things, for a multitude of such fruit it is afterwards said to have; but of spiritual fruit, of the fruit of grace, and of good works, being destitute of the spirit of God, and his grace; and, having no spiritual moisture, was incapable of bringing forth good fruit: or, *an emptying vine* [o]; that casts its fruit before it is ripe; these people, what fruit they had, they made an ill use of it; even of their temporal good things; they emptied themselves of their wealth and riches, by sending presents, or paying tribute, to foreign princes for their alliance, friendship, and help; or by consuming it on their idols, and in their idolatrous worship. The Targum renders it, "a spoiled vine [p];" spoiled by their enemies, who robbed them of their wealth and riches, and trampled them under foot. The Septuagint version, and those that follow that, understand it in a sense quite the reverse, rendering it, *a flourishing vine*: putting forth branches, leaves, and fruit; and which the learned Pocock confirms from the use of the word in the Arabic language: but then it follows, *he bringeth forth fruit unto himself*: all the good works done by them were not to the praise and glory of God, as fruits of righteousness are, which come by Jesus Christ; but were done to be seen of men, and to gain their applause and esteem, and so were for themselves; and all their temporal good things they abounded with were not made use of in the service of God, and for the promoting of his glory, and of true religion among them; but either consumed on their own lusts, or in the service of idols: or, *the fruit is like unto himself* [q]; as was the vine, so was its fruit: the vine was empty, and devoid of goodness, and so the fruit it produced. The Targum is, "the fruit of their works "was the cause of their being carried captive:" *according to the multitude of his fruit he hath increased the altars*: as the Israelites increased in riches and wealth, their land bringing forth in great abundance, they erected the greater number of altars to their idols, and multiplied their sacrifices to them; this was the ill use they made of what fruit they did produce: *according to the goodness of his land they have made goodly images*; of richer metal, and more ornamented, and more of them, according to the plenty of good things, corn, and wine, and oil, their land produced; thus abusing the providential goodness of God to such vile purposes!

Ver. 2. *Their heart* is *divided*, &c.] Some say from Hoshea their king, who would have reformed them from their idolatry, and returned them to the true worship of God; but of that there is no proof; better from one another, their affections being alienated from each other, by their discords and animosities, their conspiracies against their kings, and the murders of them, and the civil wars among themselves; they also not being of one mind, but disagreeing in their sentiments about their idols; some being for one, and some for another; or rather from God himself, from the fear of him, from his worship and service; or from the law, as the Targum; or their hearts were divided between God and their idols, as in Ahab's time between God and Baal; they pretended to worship God when they worshipped the calves, and so shared the service between them; or it may be rendered, *their heart flatters* [r] them; as if they had done that which was right and good, and were guilty of no evil, nor would any punishment be inflicted on them: *now shall they be found faulty*; be convicted of their sin and folly, and appear guilty; when they shall be punished for their idolatry, and their idols not able to save them, as the destruction of them next mentioned will fully evince: or, *now shall they become desolate* [s]; their land shall be desolate, and they carried captive: *he shall break down their altars, he shall spoil their images*; that is, the king of Assyria shall do all this, or God by him: or, *behead their altars* [t]; take off the top of them, as the Targum; the horns of them, which might be made of gold, or other ornaments which were of value; and therefore became the plunder of the enemy; and who also would break in pieces their images, for the sake of the metal, gold or silver, of which they were made; as was usually done by conquerors, and to shew their entire power over the conquered, that even their gods could not deliver them out of their hands.

Ver. 3. *For now they shall say, we have no king*, &c.] This they would say, either when they had one; but by their conduct and behaviour said they had none; because they had no regard unto him, no affection for him, and reverence of him; but every one did what was right in his own eyes: or during the interregnum, between the murder of Pekah, which was in the twentieth year of Jotham, and the settlement of Hoshea, which was in the twelfth of Ahaz; see 2 Kings xv. 30. and xvii. 1. or when the land of Israel was invaded, and their king was shut up in prison, and Samaria besieged, so that it was as if they had no king; they had none to protect and defend them, to sally out at the head of them against the enemy, and fight their battles for them; or rather when the city was taken, the altars broke down, their images spoiled, and they and their king carried captive: *because we feared not the Lord*: did not serve and worship him, but idols; and this sin, casting off the fear of the Lord, was the source and cause of all their troubles and sorrows; of the invasion of their land; of the besieging and taking their city, and having no king to rule over them, and protect them: *what then should a king do to us?* if

[o] גפן בוקק vitis evacuans, Drusius, Rivetus, Schmidt; so Stockius, p. 149.

[p] So Calvin.

[q] פרי ישוה לו fructum æquat sibi, Mercerus; fructum facit similem sibi, Schmidt.

[r] חלק לבם adblanditur cor eorum, Schmidt.

[s] עתה יאשמו nunc desolabuntur, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Drusius; so Kimchi and Ben Melech.

[t] יערף decollabit, Drusius, Piscator, Tarnovius, De Dieu; decervicabit, Cocceius.

they had one, he could be of no service to them; fo since they had offended God, the King of kings, and made him their enemy, what could an earthly king, a weak mortal man, do for them, or against him? it was now all over with them, and they could have no expectation of help and deliverance.

Ver. 4. *They have spoken words, swearing falsely in making a covenant*, &c.] These are other crimes they were guilty of, for which the wrath of God could not be awarded from them by a king, if they had one, or by any other. They had used vain and idle *words* in their common talk and conversation; and lying and deceitful ones to one another in trade and commerce, in contracts and promises; and so had deceived and overreached one another: they had belched out many *oaths of vanity*[s]: or vain oaths and curses; their mouths had been full of cursing and bitterness; and they made covenants with God, and their king, and with other kings and princes, and with one another, and had not kept them; and now for these things God had a controversy with them: *thus judgment springeth up as hemlock in the furrows of the field;* either the judgment of God, his wrath and vengeance for the above sins, rose up and spread itself in all their cities, towns, and villages; or rather the judgment and justice they pretended to execute, instead of being what it should have been, useful and beneficial to the people, like a wholesome herb, sprung up like hemlock, bitter and poisonous, and spread itself in all parts of the kingdom. Injustice is meant; see Amos vi. 12.

Ver. 5. *The inhabitants of Samaria shall fear because of the calves of Beth-aven*, &c.] Or, *the cow-calves*[v], as in the original; so called by way of derision, and to denote their weakness and inability to help their votaries; and so Beth-el, where one of these calves was, is here, as elsewhere, called Beth-aven; that is, the house of iniquity, or of an idol, by way of contempt; and may take in Dan also, where was the other calf, since both are mentioned; unless the plural is put for the singular: now the land of Israel being invaded by the enemy, the inhabitants of Samaria, which was the metropolis of the nation, the king, nobles, and common people that dwelt there, and were worshippers of the calves, were in pain lest they should be taken by the enemy; or because they were, these places falling into his hands before Samaria was besieged, or at least taken; and these calves being broken to pieces, which they had worshipped, and put their trust in, they were afraid the ruin of themselves and children would be next, and was not very far off: *for the people thereof shall mourn over it;* either the people of Samaria, the same with the inhabitants of it; or rather the people of Beth-aven, where the idol was; but now was broke to pieces, or carried away; though it is generally interpreted of the people of the calf, the worshippers of it, who would mourn over it, or for the loss of it, being taken away from them, and disposed of as in the following verse. The Jews[x] have a tradition, that, in the twentieth year of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria came and took away the golden calf in Dan; and, in the twelfth year of Ahaz, another king of Assyria (Salmaneser) came and took away the golden calf at Beth-el: *and the priests thereof* that *rejoiced on it;* the Chemarim, as in Zeph. i. 4. or *black*[y] ones, because of their meagre and sordid countenances, or black clothing: the same word the Jews use for Popish monks: here it designs the priests of Beth-aven, or the calf, who before this time rejoiced on account of it, because of the sacrifices and presents of the people to it, and the good living they got in the service of it; but now would mourn, as well as the people, and more, because of being deprived of their livelihood. Some read the words without the supplement *that, the priests thereof rejoiced on it;* which some interpret according to a tradition of the Jews mentioned by Jerom, though by no other, as I can find; that the priests stole away the golden calves, and put brasen and gilded ones in the room of them; so that when they were carried away the people mourned, taking them to be the true golden calves; but the priests made themselves merry with their subtle device, and rejoiced that their fraud was not detected; but rather the word here used, as Pocock and others have observed, is of that kind which has contrary senses, and signifies both to mourn and to rejoice; and here to mourn, as perhaps also in Job iii. 22. Psal. ii. 11. and so Ben Melech observes, that there are some of their interpreters who understand it here in the sense of mourning: *for the glory of it, because it is departed from it;* either because of the glory of the calf, which was gone from it, the veneration it was had in, the worship which was given to it, and the gems and ornaments that were about it; or rather the glory of Beth-aven, and also of Samaria, and indeed of all Israel, which was carried captive from them; that is, the calf, which was their god, in which they gloried, and put their trust and confidence in.

Ver. 6. *It shall also be carried unto Assyria for a present to King Jareb*, &c.] Or, *he himself*[z]; not the people of Samaria, or of Beth-aven, or of the calf, but the calf itself; which, being all of gold, was sent a present to the king of Assyria, here called Jareb; either Assyria, or the king of it; see the note on ch. v. 13. this was done either by the people of Israel themselves, to appease the king of Assyria; or rather by the Assyrian army, who reserved the plunder of this as a proper present to their king and conqueror, to whom not only nations, but the gods of nations, were subject: *Ephraim shall receive shame;* for worshipping such an idol, when they shall see it broke to pieces, and the gold of it made a present to the Assyrian king, and that it could not save them, nor itself: *and Israel shall be ashamed of his own counsel;* of giving in to such idolatry, contrary to the counsel, mind, and will of God; or of the counsel which they and Jeroboam took to set up the calves at Dan and Beth-el, and thereby to keep the people from going up to Jerusalem, 1 Kings xii. 28. as well as of their counsel and

[s] אלות שוא execrationes vanitatis, Schmidt.

[v] לעגלות vaccas, Vulg. Lat.; ad vitulas, Pagninus, Montanus; propter vitulas, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; ob vitulas, Cocceius.

[x] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 22. p. 60, 61.

[y] כמריו atrati ejus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[z] גם אותו etiam ipsemet, Pagninus, Montanus; etiam ipse, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; etiam ille, Cocceius; etiam ille ipse, Schmidt.

covenant with the king of Egypt against the king of Assyria, 2 Kings xvii. 4.

Ver. 7. *As for Samaria*, &c.] The metropolis of the ten tribes of Israel, and here put for the whole kingdom: *her king is cut off*; which some understand of Pekah, who was killed by Hoshea; others of several of their kings cut off one after another, very suddenly and quickly, as the metaphor after used shews; or rather Hoshea the last king is meant, who was cut off by the king of Assyria; the present tense is used for the future, to denote the certainty of it. Aben Ezra thinks the verb *cut off* is to be repeated, Samaria *is cut off, her king* is *cut off*; both king and kingdom destroyed. So the Targum, "Samaria is cut off "with her king:" *as the foam upon the water*; as any light thing flowing upon it; as the bark of a tree, as Kimchi and Abarbinel; or as the scum upon a boiling pot of water, as Jarchi, and the Targum; or as foam, which is an assemblage of bubbles upon the water; such are kings and kingdoms, swell, look big and high for a while; but are mere bubbles, empty things; and are often suddenly, quickly, and easily destroyed; so Samaria and her king were by the Assyrian army; the Lord of hosts, the King of kings, being against them.

Ver. 8. *The high places also of Aven*, &c.] Beth-el, which is not only as before called Beth-aven, the house of iniquity; but Aven, iniquity itself; the *high places* of it were the temple and altars built there for idolatrous service, which were usually set on hills and mountains: *the sin of Israel shall be destroyed*; that is, which high places are the sin of Israel, the occasion of sin unto them; and where they committed sin, the sin of idolatry, in worshipping the calves; these should be thrown down, demolished, and no longer used: *the thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars*; lying in ruins, these shall grow upon them, the people and priests being carried captive that used to sacrifice upon them; but now they shall lie deserted by them, being destroyed by the enemy: *and they shall say to the mountains, cover us; and to the hills, fall on us*: not that the high places and altars shall say so in a figurative sense, according to R. Moses in Aben Ezra; but, as Japhet, they that worshipped there, the priests and people of Samaria, Beth-aven, and even of all Israel, because of their great distress; and, as persons in the utmost consternation, and in despair, and confounded, and ashamed, shall call to the mountains and hills where they have been guilty of idolatry to hide and cover them from the wrath of God; see Luke xxiii. 30. Rev. vi. 16.

Ver. 9. *O Israel, thou hast sinned from the days of Gibeah*, &c.] This has no respect, as the Targum, and others, to Gibeah of Saul, of which place he was, and the choosing him to be king; but to the affair of the Levite and his concubine at Gibeah in the days of the judges, and what followed upon it, Judg. xix. and xx. suggesting, that the sins of Israel were not new ones; they were the same with what were committed formerly, as early as the history referred to, and had been continued ever since; the measure of which were now filling up: or, as Aben Ezra and Abarbinel interpret it, *thou hast sinned more than the days of Gibeah*, were guilty of more idolatry, inhumanity, and impurity, than in those times; and yet the grossest of sins, particularly unnatural lusts, were then committed: *there they stood*; either the men of Gibeah continued in their sins, and did not repent of them; and stood in their own defence against the tribes of Israel, and the Benjamites stood also with them, and by them; and stood two battles, and were conquerors in them; and, though beaten in the third, were not wholly destroyed, as now the Israelites would be: or the tribes of Israel stood, and continued in, and connived at, the idolatry of the Levite; or rather stood sluggish and slothful, and were not forward to fight with the Benjamites, who took part with the men of Gibeah; which were their sins, for which they were worsted in the two first battles, and in which the present Israelites imitated them: *the battle in Gibeah against the children of iniquity did not overtake them*; the two first battles against the men of Gibeah and the Benjamites, who are the children of iniquity, the one the actors, and the other the abettors and patrons of it, did not succeed against them, but the Israelites were overcome; and the third battle, in which they got the day, did not overtake them so as utterly to cut them off; for six hundred persons made their escape; but, in the present case prophesied of, 'tis suggested, that as their sins were as great or greater than theirs, their ruin should be entire and complete: or the sense is, that they were backward to go to battle; they were not eager upon it; they did not at once espouse the cause of the Levite; they did not stir in it till he had done that unheard-of thing, cutting his concubine into twelve pieces, and sending them to the twelve tribes of Israel; and then they were not over-forward, but sought the Lord, as if it was a doubtful case; which backwardness was resented in their ill success at first; and the same slow disposition to punish vice had continued with them ever since; so Schmidt.

Ver. 10. It is *in my desire that I should chastise them*, &c.] Or, *bind them* *, and carry them captive; and by so doing correct them for their sins they have so long continued in: this the Lord had in his heart to do, and was determined upon it, and would do it with pleasure, for the glorifying of his justice, since they had so long and so much abused his clemency and goodness: *and the people shall be gathered against them*; the Assyrians, who, at the command of the Lord, would come and invade their land, besiege their city, and take it, and bind them, and carry them captive: *when they shall bind themselves in their two furrows*; when, like heifers untamed, and bound in a yoke to plough, don't make and keep in one furrow, but turn out to the right or left, and make cross furrows; so it is intimated that this was the reason why the Lord would correct Israel, and suffer the nations to gather together against them, and carry them captive, because they did not plough in one furrow, or keep in the true and pure worship of God; but made two furrows, worshipping partly God, and partly idols: or, *when they*, their enemies, *shall bind them*, being gathered against them, and carry them captive, they shall make them plough in *two furrows*, the one up,

* ואסרם et, vel ut vinciam eos, *Junius* & Tremellius, Drusius, Grotius; colligabo eos, Cocceius.

and the other down; and to this hard service they shall keep them continually. There is a double reading of this clause; the Cetib, or textual writing or reading, is, *to their two eyes*, or *fountains*; alluding, as Jarchi observes, to the binding of the yoke on oxen on each side of their eyes: or to the fountains in the land of Israel, the abundance of wine, milk, and honey; for the sake of which the people got together, broke in upon them, and bound them, in order to drink of. So Gussetius[b] renders the words, *and they shall bind them to drink of their fountains*. The Keri or marginal reading is, *their two iniquities*; which the Septuagint follows, rendering it, "in chastising them, or "when they are chastised for their two iniquities;" so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions; meaning either their worshipping the two calves at Dan and Beth-el; or their corporeal and spiritual adultery; or their forsaking the true God, and worshipping idols; see Jer. ii. 13. Schmidt understands all this, not as a punishment threatened, but as an instance of the love of God to them, in chastising them in a loving and fatherly way; which had a good effect upon them, and brought them to repentance; partly in the times of the judges, but more especially in the days of Samuel, when they behaved well; and particularly in the reigns of David and Solomon; and when the people were gathered, not *against*, but *to* them; either became proselytes to them, or tributaries, or coveted their friendship; and when they themselves lived in great concord, in one kingdom, under one king, like oxen ploughing in two contiguous furrows.

Ver. 11. *And Ephraim is as an heifer that is taught, and loveth to tread out the corn*, &c.] Like a heifer taught to bear the yoke, and to plough; but learned it not, as the Targum; does not like it; chooses to tread out the corn where it can feed upon it, its mouth not being then muzzled, according to the law; oxen or heifers were used both in ploughing and treading out corn, to which the allusion is. The sense is, that Ephraim or the ten tribes were taught to bear the yoke of the law, and yield obedience to it, and perform good works; but did not like such a course of life; had no further regard for religion than as they found their own worldly profit and advantage in it: or they did not care to labour much in it; they liked the fruit and advantage arising from working, rather than the work itself; and thus, like a heifer, doing little, and living well, they grew fat, increased in power, wealth, and riches; and so became proud and haughty, and kicked against the house of David, and rent themselves from it; and set up a kingdom of their own, and lived and reigned according to their own will and pleasure, like a heifer without yoke and muzzle: *but I passed over upon her fair neck*; or, *the goodness of her neck*[c]; which is expressive of the flourishing and opulent state and condition of the ten tribes, especially in the times of Jeroboam the second, which made them proud and haughty: but the Lord was determined to humble them, and first in a more light and gentle manner; or caused the rod of correction to pass over them more lightly; or put upon them a more easy yoke of affliction, by causing Pul king of Assyria to come against them; and to get rid of whom a present was given him, exacted of the people; and afterwards Tiglath-pileser, another king of Assyria, who carried captive part of their land; and this not having its proper effect, the Lord was determined to proceed against them in a heavier manner: *I will make Ephraim to ride*; some, taking the future for the past, render it, *I have made Ephraim to ride*[d]; that is, to rule and govern, having royal dignity and power given them, and that greater than that of Judah; and ride over the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who were sometimes very much afflicted by them; and this is thought to be the sense of the following phrases, *Judah shall plough, and Jacob shall break his clods*; or, *break the clods for him*[e]; for Ephraim whilst he rides, and uses them very hardly; as in the days of Joash and Pekah, kings of Israel, when many of the tribes of Judah were slain by them, 2 Kings xiv. 12, 13. 2 Chron. xxviii. 6, 8. but rather the meaning is, *I will cause to ride on Ephraim*[f]; that is, the Assyrians shall ride upon them, get the dominion over them, carry them captive, and use them to hard service and bondage, as a heifer rid upon by a severe rider whilst ploughing; and the other tribes shall not escape, though they shall not be so hardly dealt with: *Judah shall plough, and Jacob shall break his clods*; these shall be carried captive into Babylon, and employed in hard and servile work, but more tolerable; as ploughing and breaking clods are easier than to be rid upon; and as they had hope of deliverance at the end of seventy years; whereas no promise of return was made to the ten tribes, which is the sense some give; but Pocock and others think that these words regard the tender and gentle methods God took with these people to bring them to obedience to his law. Ephraim being teachable like a heifer, he took hold of her fair neck, and stroked it to encourage her, and accustom her to the hand, and to the yoke; and then put the yoke of his law upon them, and trained them up in his institutions, and used also gentle methods to keep them in obedience; and also set Judah to *plough*, and Jacob to *break the clods*, prescribed for them; and employed them in good works, in the duties of religion, from whence answerable fruit might have been expected; saying to them, by his prophets, as follows:

Ver. 12. *Sow to yourselves in righteousness*, &c.] Not the seed of grace, which bad men have not, and cannot sow it; and which good men need not, it being sown in them already, and remaining; rather the seed of the word, which should be laid up in their hearts, dwell richly in them, and be kept and retained by them; though 'tis best of all to understand it of works of righteousness; as sowing to the flesh is doing the works of the flesh, or carnal and sinful acts; so sowing *unto righteousness*[g], as it may be rendered, is doing works of righteousness; living soberly and righteously:

[b] Comment. Ebr. p. 591, 892.
[c] על טוב צוארה super bonitatem cervicis ejus, Montanus; super bonitatem colli ipsius, Schmidt; super præstantiam, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[d] ארכיב equitare feci, Munster, Rivet.
[e] ישדד לו occabit ei, De Dieu; occabit illi! Schmidt.
[f] Equitare faciam in Ephraimo, Lyra, Tarnovius; equitare faciam super Ephraim, so some in Calvin.
[g] לצדקה ad justitiam, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Calvin, Junius & Tremellius, Drusius, Tarnovius, Cocceius.

doing works according to the word of righteousness, from good principles, and with good views, with a view to the glory of God: and which will be *sowing to themselves*, turn to their own account; for though such works are not profitable to God, as to merit any thing at his hands; yet they are not only profitable to others, but to those that do them; for though not *for*, yet *in keeping* the commands of God there is *great reward*, Psal. xix. 11. *Reap in mercy;* or *according to mercy*[h]; not according to the merit of works, for there is none in them; but according to the mercy of God, to which all blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, are owing; and such who sow to the spirit, or spiritual things, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting; not as the reward of debt, but of grace; not as of merit, but as owing to the mercy of Christ, Gal. vi. 9. Jude, ver. 21: *break up your fallow ground;* that is, of their hearts; which were like ground unopened, unbroken, not tilled and manured, nor sown with seed, but overrun with weeds and thistles; and so were they, hard and impenitent, destitute of grace, and full of sin and wickedness, and stood in need of being renewed in the spirit of their minds; which this exhortation is designed to convince them of, and to stir them up to make use of proper methods of obtaining it, through the efficacious grace of God; see Jer. iv. 3: *for it is time to seek the Lord;* for his grace; as the husbandman seeks, prays, and waits for rain, when he has tilled his ground, and sowed his seed, to water it, and make it fruitful, that he may have a good reaping-time, a plentiful harvest; and as there is a time to seek for the one, so for the other: *till he come and rain righteousness upon you;* that is, Christ, whose coming is as the rain, ch. vi. 3. Psal. lxxii. 6. and who, when he should come, whether personally by his incarnation, or spiritually by his gracious presence, would rain a plentiful rain of the doctrines of grace, and the blessings of it, such as peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life by him; particularly the justifying righteousness wrought out by him, which is fully manifested in the Gospel, the ministration of that righteousness, and is applied unto, and put upon, all them that believe: or *till he come and teach you righteousness*[i]; as Christ did when come; he taught the word of righteousness in general, and the righteousness of God in particular, and directed men to seek it; declared he came to fulfil all righteousness, and taught men to believe in him for it, and that he is their righteousness, and the end of the law for it; as well as he taught them to live righteously and godly; see Joel ii. 23. The Targum is, "O house of Israel, do for yourselves good works; " walk in the way of truth; establish for yourselves " the doctrine of the law; behold, at all times the " prophets say to you, return to the fear of the Lord; " now shall he be revealed, and bring righteousness to " you." But these exhortations were vain and fruitless, as appears by what follows:

Ver. 13. *Ye have ploughed wickedness*, &c.] Contrived it, and took a great deal of pains to commit it; by ploughing sowed it, and which sprung up in a plentiful crop: it may denote their first sins, from whence all others arose; as their irreligion and infidelity; their apostacy from God; their idolatry and contempt of his word and prophets: *ye have reaped iniquity;* abundance of other sins have sprung up from thence; a large harvest of them have been reaped and got in; or great numbers of other sins have been committed; one sin leads on to another, and these proceed *ad infinitum;* wickedness is of an increasing nature, and grows worse and worse, and proceeds to more ungodliness: many understand this of the punishment or reward of sin: *ye have eaten the fruit of lies;* as a sweet morsel, though bread of deceit; which could not profit them, nor yield them in the issue the pleasure it promised them, and they hoped for from it: *because thou didst trust in thy way;* in the worship of their idols, and in their alliances with neighbouring nations, and promised themselves great prosperity and happiness from hence: *and in the multitude of thy mighty men;* their valiant soldiers, their numerous armies, and the generals of them, well skilled in war, and courageous; and also in their auxiliaries, which they had from the Egyptians and others; these they put their confidence in, to protect them; and so in their garrisons and fortresses, as the following words shew:

Ver. 14. *Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people*, &c.] Because of their wickedness and vain confidence, the Assyrian army should invade them; which would cause a tumultuous noise to be made throughout the tribes in all cities and towns, a cry, a howling, and lamentation; especially among fearful and timorous ones, as women and children; who would be thrown into a panic at hearing the news of a powerful foreign enemy entering their country, and laying waste all before them; a voice of clamour, as Jarchi observes, crying, flee, flee: *and all thy fortresses shall be spoiled;* the strong holds, in which they put their confidence for safety; every one of these should be taken and demolished by the enemy, in all parts of the kingdom; so that there should be none left to flee unto, no place of retreat: *as Shalman spoiled Beth-arbel in the day of battle;* that is, Salmaneser king of Assyria, his name being abbreviated, as Beth-aven is called Aven, ver. 8. who had lately, though there is no account of it elsewhere, spoiled this place, demolished its fortresses, and destroyed the inhabitants of it; which is thought to be either the city of Arbel beyond Jordan, 1 Maccab. ix. 2. which Josephus[k] calls a city of Galilee, and sometimes a village; and which, according to him, was not far from Sipphore, and in lower Galilee, near to which thieves and robbers dwelt in caves and dens, difficult to come at; and so a Jewish writer[l] places Arbel between Sipphore and Tiberias; and elsewhere[m] mention is made of the valley of Arbel, near to those places: and Jerom[n] says, there was the village Arbel beyond Jordan, on the borders of Pella, a city of Palestine; and another of this name in the large plain, nine miles from the town of Legio: and

[h] לפי חסד ad os misericordiæ, Montanus; secundum misericordiam, Pagninus; secundum pietatem, Cocceius, Schmidt.

[i] ויורה צדק לכם et doceat justitiam vos, Pagninus, Montanus, rinus, Cocceius, Schmidt.

[k] Antiqu. l. 12. c. 11. sect. 1. & l. 14. c. 15. sect. 4. In Vita sua, sect. 60. p. 922, 924.

[l] Juchasin, fol. 65. 1.

[m] T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 2, 3. & Taaniot, fol. 69. 2. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 34. 3.

[n] De locis Heb. fol. 87. L.

he also speaks of an Arbela, the border of the tribe of Judah to the east; perhaps the same with Har-baalah, whence Arbela, or the mount of Baalah, Josh. xv. 11. now one or other of these places might be laid waste by this king of Assyria, in the first year of Hoshea, when he came up against him, and made him tributary: though some think Arbela in Assyria or Armenia is meant, famous for the utter defeat of Darius by Alexander, four hundred years after this, when it might have been rebuilt, and become considerable again: some of the Jewish writers[a] say there was a place near Nineveh so called; Benjamin of Tudela says[b], from Nineveh to Arbel is one *parsa*, or four miles: and others[c] think Samaria itself is meant; but that cannot be, since the destruction of that city is here prophesied of, which should be as this: some conjecture it was the temple of a deity called Arbel, as Schmidt: but, be it what or where it will, here was a great devastation and slaughter made; which at this time was well known, and to which the desolation that would be made in the land of Israel is compared. The Vulgate Latin version is, *as Salmana was wasted by the house of him who judged Baal in the day of battle;* which the patrons and defenders of interpret of the slaughter of Zalmunna by Jerubbaal, that is, Gideon; but the names of the one and the other are very different; nor does the text speak of the slaughter of a prince, but of the destruction of a city, and not of Shalman, but of Arbel; and refers not to an ancient, but recent history. Mr. Whiston[d] places the spoil of Arbela in the year of the Julian period 3982, and before Christ 732. *The mother was dashed in pieces with her children;* women big with-child, or having their children in their arms, had no mercy shewn them, but were destroyed together; so it had been at Arbel, and would be again in Israel, which was dreadful to think of: according to Kimchi and Ben Melech, Arbel was the name of a great man in those days, whose family, meant by *beth* or a house, was thus cruelly destroyed.

Ver. 15. *So shall Beth-el do unto you, because of your great wickedness,* &c.] Or, *because of the evil of your evil*[e]; their extreme wickedness, and exceeding sinfulness; the evil of evils they were guilty of was their idolatry, their worshipping the calf at Beth-el; and this was the cause of all their ruin: God was the efficient of it; the king of Assyria the instrument; but the procuring or meritorious cause was their abominable wickedness at Beth-el; which therefore should be as Beth-arbel; yea, the whole land should be, on the account of that, like unto it, or be spoiled as that was. Or the words may be rendered, *so will he do unto you, O Beth-el*[f]; that is, either God, or Shalman or Salmaneser, shall do the same to Beth-el as he did to Beth-arbel; utterly destroy it and its inhabitants, shewing no mercy to age or sex. *In a morning shall the king of Israel be utterly cut off:* meaning Hoshea the last king of Israel, and the kingdom entirely destroyed; so that afterwards there was no more king in Israel, nor has been to this day; there was not only an utter destruction of that king, but of all kingly power and government, and ever since the children of Israel have been without a king, ch. iii. 4. and this was to be done, and was done, in a *morning;* in the beginning of his reign, as Joseph Kimchi; but this seems not so well to agree with the history, since it was in the ninth year of his reign that Samaria was taken: but the sense is, either that it would be certainly done, as sure as the morning came; or suddenly and quickly, as the morning light breaks forth; or in the morning of prosperity, when they were expecting light and good days, from their alliance with the king of Egypt, against the king of Assyria.

CHAP. XI.

THIS chapter gives an account of the free and ancient love of God to Israel, and of the benefits and blessings of goodness he bestowed upon them; and of their ingratitude in not owning them, nor hearkening to his prophets, but sacrificing and burning incense to idols, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. wherefore they are threatened with disappointment of relief from Egypt, with captivity into Assyria, and with the ravages of the sword in all places, being a people bent to backsliding, and incorrigible, ver. 5, 6, 7. and yet, notwithstanding all this, the bowels of the Lord yearn after them, and promises of mercy are made to them; that they shall not utterly be destroyed, but a remnant shall be spared; which in the latter day shall be called and follow after the Lord, the King Messiah, and be returned from their captivity, and be resettled in their own land, and replaced in their own houses, ver. 8, 9, 10, 11. the chapter is concluded with an honourable character of Judah, ver. 12.

Ver. 1. *When Israel was a child, then I loved him,* &c.] Or, *for Israel was a child*[g]; a rebellious and disobedient one, therefore his king was cut off in a morning, and he has been, and will be, without a king many days; yet still *I loved him:* or, *though Israel was a child*[h]; a weak, helpless, foolish, and imprudent one, *yet I loved him:* or, *when a child;* in the infancy of his civil and church state, when in Egypt, and in the wilderness; the Lord loved him, not only as his creature, as he does all the works of his hands, but with a more special love than he loved others; choosing them to be a special people above all others; giving them his law, his statutes, and his judgments, his word and his worship, which he did not give to other nations. So he loves spiritual and mystical Israel, all the elect of God, whether Jews or Gentiles, when children, as soon as born, and though born in sin, carnal and corrupt; yea, before they are born, and

[a] Juchasin, ut supra.
[b] Itinerar. p. 62.
[c] Juchasin, ib. R. Joseph Kimchi in David Kimchi in loc.
[d] Chronological Tables, cent. 8.
[e] מפני רעת רעתכם propter malitiam malitiæ vestræ, Pagninus, Cocceius, Schmidt.

[f] ככה עשה לכם בית־אל sic faciet vobis *Deus*, O Beth-el, Drusius; sic faciet vobis *Salman*, O Beth-el, Schmidt.
[g] כי quia, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius.
[h] Quamvis sit puer, Tarnovius, Rivet.

when having done neither good nor evil; and so may be expressive both of the earliness and antiquity of his love to them, and of the freeness of it, without any merits or motives of theirs. *And called my son out of Egypt*, not literal Israel, as before, whom God called his son, and his first-born, and demanded his dismission from Pharaoh, and called him, and brought him out of Egypt with a mighty hand and stretched-out arm; and which was a type of his calling spiritual Israel, his adopted sons, out of worse than Egyptian bondage and darkness: but his own natural and only-begotten son, our Lord Jesus Christ; for these words are expressly said to be fulfilled in him, Matt. ii. 15. not by way of allusion; or by accommodation of phrases; or as the type is fulfilled in the antitype; or as a proverbial expression, adapted to any deliverance; but literally: the first and only sense of the words respects Christ, who in his infancy was had to Egypt for shelter from Herod's rage and fury, and, when he was dead, and those that sought the life of Jesus, he was by an angel of the Lord, warning Joseph of it, called out of Egypt, and brought into Judea, Matt. ii. 19—23. and this as a proof of the love of God to Israel; which as it was expressed to him in his infancy, it continued and appeared in various instances, more or less, unto the coming of Christ: who, though obliged for a while to go into Egypt, must not continue there, but must be called from thence, to be brought up in the land of Judea; to do his miracles, preach his doctrines, and do good to the bodies and souls of men there, being sent particularly to the lost sheep of the house of Israel: and, above all, in order to work out the salvation and redemption of his special people among them, and of the whole Israel of God everywhere else; which is the greatest instance of love to them, and to the world of the Gentiles, that ever was known, John iii. 16. 1 John ii. 2. and iv. 9, 10.

Ver. 2. As *they called them, so they went from them*, &c.] That is, the prophets of the Lord, the true prophets, called Israel to the worship and service of God; but they turned a deaf ear to them, and their backs upon them; and the more they called to them, the further they went from them, and from the way of their duty; see ver. 7. So the Targum, "I sent the prophets to teach them, but they wandered from them;" Moses and Aaron were sent unto them, and called them out of Egypt, but they hearkened not unto them; see Exod. vi. 9, 12. in after-times the prophets were sent unto them, to exhort them to their duty, and to reclaim them from their evil ways, but they despised and refused to attend to their advice and instructions; and this was continued to the times of Israel, or the ten tribes, departing from the house of David, and setting up idolatrous worship; and during their revolt and apostacy; but all in vain. So after Christ was called out of Egypt, he and his apostles, and John the Baptist before them, called them to hearken to him, but they turned away from them. Aben Ezra interprets it of the false prophets, who called them to idolatry, and they went after them. Schmidt understands it of the Israelites calling one another to it, and going after it, for their own sakes, and because it pleased them, and was agreeable to them. *They sacrificed to Baalim, and burnt incense to graven images*; they joined themselves to Baal-peor, and worshipped the golden calf, fashioned with a graving tool, in the wilderness; they sacrificed to Baalim, one or another of them, in the times of the judges, and of Ahab, and committed idolatry with other graven images, of which burning incense is a part. And the Jews in Christ's time, instead of hearkening to him and his apostles, followed the traditions of the elders, and the dictates of the Scribes and Pharisees, who were their Baals, their lords and masters; and they sought for life and righteousness by their own works, which was sacrificing to their net, and burning incense to their drag; all this was great ingratitude. Next follows a narrative of other benefits done to this people.

Ver. 3. *I taught Ephraim also to go*, &c.] All the tribes of Israel and Ephraim, or the ten tribes with the rest; these the Lord instructed in the way of his commandments, and taught them to walk therein; he sent his angel before them, to conduct them through the wilderness; yea, he himself went before them in the pillar of cloud by day, and in the pillar of fire by night, to which history this seems to refer. So the Targum, "I, by an angel sent by me, led Israel in the right "way." The allusion seems to be to a mother or nurse accommodating herself to her child, beginning to go; she stoops down, sets it on its feet, and one foot before another, forms its steps, teaches it how to go, and walks its pace with it. And in like manner the Lord deals with his spiritual Israel, his regenerated ones, who become like little children, and are used as such; as in regeneration they are quickened, and have some degree of spiritual strength given them, they are taught to go; they are taught what a Saviour Christ is, and their need of him; they are instructed to go to him by faith for every thing they want, and to walk by faith on him, as they have received him; and having heard and learned of the Father, they go to Christ, John vi. 45. and are taught also to go to the throne of grace for all supplies of grace; and to the house of God, to attend the word and ordinances, for the benefit of their souls; and to walk in the ways of the Lord, for his glory, and their good. *Taking them by their arms*; or *on his own arms*[a]; bearing and carrying them in his arms, as a father his son; see Deut. i. 31. and xxxii. 10, 11, 12. Numb. xi. 12. so the Lord deals with his spiritual Israel, either holding them by their arms while walking, as nurses their children, to help and ease them in walking, and that they may not stumble and fall; so the Lord holds up the goings of his people in his ways, that their footsteps slip not, and upholds them with the right hand of his righteousness: or taking them up in his own arms when weary, he carries them in his bosom; or, when they are falling or fallen, lays hold on them, and takes them up again; and so they are not utterly cast down, whether the fall is into sin, or into some calamity and affliction; when he puts underneath his everlasting arms, and bears them up, and keeps them from sinking, as well as from a final and total falling away. Abarbinel, and others after him, interpret this of Ephraim taking up and carrying

[a] על זרועתיו super brachiis suis, Montanus; super brachia sua, Piscator; in brachia sua, Cocceius.

in his arms Baalim, the graven images and golden calves; which is mentioned as an instance of ingratitude; but very wrongly. *But they knew not that I healed them;* of the diseases of Egypt, or preserved them from them: this includes the whole of their salvation and deliverance from Egypt, and all the benefits and favours accompanying it, which they imputed to their idols, and not to the Lord; see Exod. xv. 26. and xxxii. 4. *Healing*, in a spiritual sense, generally signifies the forgiveness of sin, which the Lord's people may have, and not know it; and, through want of better light and knowledge, may also ascribe it to their repentance, humiliation, and tears, when it is alone owing to the grace of God, and blood of Christ.

Ver. 4. *I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love*, &c.] As Ephraim is compared to a heifer in the preceding chapter, here he is said to be drawn; but not with such cords and bands as cattle are, but with such as men are; in a rational and gentle way, in a kind, loving, tender, humane, friendly, and fatherly, way and manner; so the Lord drew Israel on in the wilderness, till he was brought to Canaan's land, by bestowing kind favours upon them, and by making precious promises to them. So the Lord deals with his spiritual Israel; he draws them out of the present state and circumstances, in which they are by nature, to himself, and to his son, and to follow after him, and run in the ways of his commandments; and which he does not by force and compulsion against their wills, nor by mere moral suasion, but by the invincible power of his grace, sweetly working upon them, and attracting them; he does it by revealing Christ in them, in the glories of his person, and in the riches of his grace, and by letting in his love into their hearts; and by kind invitations, precious promises, and divine teachings, attended with his powerful and efficacious grace; see Jer. xxxi. 3. John vi. 44. Cant. i. 4. *And I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws;* as one that is merciful to his beast; as a kind and humane husbandman, when his cattle have been hard at work, takes off their bridles or muzzles, or the yokes on them, fastened with a halter about their jaws, that they may have liberty to feed on food set before them, as the next clause shews. So the Targum, "my word "was to them as a good husbandman, who lightens "the shoulder of oxen, and looses *the bridles* on their "jaws." This may refer to Israel's deliverance from their bondage in Egypt; and be spiritually applied to Christ, the essential Word of God, breaking and taking the yoke of sin, Satan, and the law, from off his people, and bringing them into the liberty of the children of God. Schmidt reads and interprets the words quite otherwise, *and I was to them as they that lift up the yoke upon their jaws:* not remove it from them, but put it on them; expressing their ignorance and ingratitude, who, when the Lord drew them in the kind and loving manner he did, reckoned it as if he put a yoke upon them, and treated them rather as beasts than men; but this seems not to agree with what follows: *and I laid meat unto them:* or declined, or brought it down to them, to their very mouths; referring to the manna and quails he rained about their tents. So the Targum, "and, even when they were in "the wilderness, I multiplied to them good things to "eat." And thus in a spiritual sense the Lord gives meat to them that fear him, whilst in the wilderness of this world; he brings it near, and sets it before them, in the ministry of the word and ordinances; even that meat which endures to everlasting life, the flesh of Christ, which is meat indeed; and the doctrines of the Gospel, which are milk for babes, and strong meat for more experienced saints.

Ver. 5. *He shall not return into the land of Egypt*, &c.] Ephraim or Israel, the ten tribes: and the Septuagint and Arabic versions express them by name, though they give a wrong sense of the words, rendering them, *and Ephraim dwelt in Egypt;* he did so indeed with the other tribes formerly; but here it is said he shall not go thither again to be a captive there, but shall go into bondage more severe than that in Egypt, even into captivity in Assyria: rather the sense is, they should not go thither for shelter, at least not as a body, though some few of them might, as in ch. ix. 3. the far greater part of them should be carried captive by the Assyrians: or they should not return to Egypt to seek for help and succour, as they had done; either they ought not to do it, nor would there be any need of it, did they but return to the Lord, as Kimchi observes; or rather they should now be so straitly shut up in Samaria, besieged so closely by the enemy, or else carried into distant lands, that, if they would, they could not apply to Egypt for relief. *But the Assyrian shall be his king;* the king of Assyria shall be king over the ten tribes, whether they will or no; they shall be forced to acknowledge him as their king, and be subject to him, being taken and carried captive into his land: *because they refused to return;* to the Lord, from whom they had backslidden, and to his pure worship, word, and ordinances, they had departed from, setting up the calves at Dan and Beth-el; they refused to relinquish worshipping idols instead of the true God; thus ungratefully behaving to him for all the above favours bestowed upon them; wherefore they are righteously threatened with captivity and bondage in Assyria.

Ver. 6. *And the sword shall abide on the cities*, &c.] Or *shall fall*[r], and continue; meaning the sword of the Assyrians, whereby Ephraim should be brought into subjection to them, and the king of Assyria become king over them; his sword should be drawn, and rest upon them, not only on their chief city Samaria, besieged three years by him, but upon all their other cities, which would fall into his hands, with the inhabitants of them: *and shall consume his branches, and devour* them; that is, the towns and villages adjoining to the cities; which were to them as branches are to a tree, sprung from them, and were supported by them; and, being near them, prospered or suffered as they did: some render it, *his bars*[s], as the word is sometimes used, and interpret it of the great men and nobles of the land. So the Targum, "and it shall slay his "mighty men, and destroy his princes:" with which Jarchi agrees. *Because of their own counsels;* which

[r] חלה cadet, Calvin; incidet, Schmidt; irruet, Zanchius, Drusius, Livelcus.

[s] בדיו vectes ejus, Schmidt. So some in Drusius.

they took and pursued, contrary to the counsel of God, the revelation of his mind and will; particularly in setting up idolatrous worship, and continuing in it, notwithstanding all the admonitions, exhortations, counsels, and threatenings of God by his prophets; or else because of their counsels with the Egyptians, and their covenants with them, for help against the Assyrian, whose yoke they were for casting off, and refused to pay tribute to; which provoked him to draw his sword upon them, which made the havoc it did in their cities, and the inhabitants of them.

Ver. 7. *And my people are bent to backsliding from me, &c.*] There is a propensity in them to it, through prevailing corruption in them; they are inclined unto it, the bias of their minds is that way; they are bent upon it, and pertinaciously abide in it; nor will they be reclaimed from it, by all the means and methods made use of, even though they had been, and professed themselves to be, the people of God. Some understand this, not of their backsliding and aversion from God; but either of his return to them, or of their return to him, rendering the words, *and my people are in suspense* [a]; like a man that hangs in the air, as Aben Ezra, neither ascends nor descends; that is, they are in doubt of what should be done to them, or they themselves should do: either *about my return* [b]; that is, to them; whether after all they may expect that God would be kind and merciful to them, so Abarbinel: or *about return to me* [c]; whether they should or no, inclining rather not to return. So the Targum, "my people divide (or hesitate) to return to my law;" with which Jarchi agrees, paraphrasing it, "when "the prophets instruct them to return unto me, "they are in suspense whether to return or no;" but Aben Ezra and Kimchi observe the word is always used in a bad sense, of aversion or backsliding, and that the word is in another form when used for repentance or returning. *Though they called them to the most High* that is, the prophets of the Lord called them to turn from their idols, and return to the most high God, the true and the living God, from whom they had backslidden, and to his true worship, they had neglected and forsaken: *none at all would exalt him*; the most high God, and give him the praise and glory due to his name; but, on the other hand, extolled their idols, and ascribed all their good things to them: or *none would exalt them* [d]; the prophets of the Lord that called them; would not give that honour to them that was due to their office, or pay any regard to them, or to their admonitions and advice, but depreciated them, and reproached and persecuted them: or *none at all would lift up*; that is, their head, as Aben Ezra, toward the heaven, and to God in it, to whom they were called; but kept looking on the earth, and to earthly things, particularly to their idols; and did not lift up or erect their ears, to hearken to what was said to them, but were deaf to all counsel and reproof. The Targum is, "they walked not in an erect "stature." Agreeably to which the former clause may be rendered, as by some, *and they called them to things above*; but none would look upwards; see the note on ch. vii. 16.

Ver. 8. *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? &c.*] That is, as usually interpreted, into the hand of the enemy, or unto wrath, ruin, and destruction; for, notwithstanding all the sins of this people before observed, and the punishment threatened to be inflicted on them, the Lord is pleased here, and in the following verses, to give some intimations of his goodness, grace, and mercy to them; not to the whole body of them, for they as such were given and delivered up to the enemy, and carried captive, and dispersed among the nations, and were never recovered to this day; but to a remnant among them, according to the election of grace, that should spring from them, for the sake of which they were not all cut off by the sword; but were reserved as a seed for after-times, the times of the Messiah, which the prophecy in this and the following words has respect unto; not only the first times of the Gospel, when some of the dispersed of Israel were met with by it, and converted under it; but the last times of it, times yet to come, when all Israel shall be saved; and may be applied to the elect of God, in all ages, and of all nations. The words are generally understood as a debate in the divine mind, struggling within itself between justice and mercy; justice requiring the delivery of these persons unto it, and mercy being reluctant thereunto, pleading on their behalf; and which at last gets the victory, and rejoices against judgment. There is a truth in all this; justice seems to demand that sinners, as such, who have injured and affronted him, be given up to him, and suffer the curse of the law, according to their deserts, and be delivered unto death, even eternal death, as well as to temporal punishments; and which might be expected would be the case, by the instances and examples of the angels that sinned, and of the men of the old world, and of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah; but mercy cannot bear it, pleads against it, and asks how can it be done, since these are my children, my dear children, pleasant ones, as Ephraim was, my chosen and my covenant ones, and, besides, for whom provision is made in Christ for the satisfaction of justice? But the sense is rather this, *how might* or *could I give thee up, Ephraim? how might* or *could I deliver thee, Israel* [e]? that is, with what severity might I deal with thee? and how justly and righteously could I do it? since thy sins are so many, and so great. *How shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim?* two cities that were utterly destroyed by fire from heaven, along with Sodom and Gomorrah, Deut. xxix. 23. how justly could I have made thee, and put thee in the same condition and circumstances, as those two cities, and the inhabitants of them, who were so severely punished for their sins, and were never restored again? signifying, that inasmuch as they were guilty of the same or like-heinous sins, was he utterly to destroy them, and cut them off from the face of the earth, he should not exceed the due bounds of justice. To this sense Schmidt interprets the words. The design

[a] תלואים suspensi hærent, Junius & Tremellius; suspensi, Montanus, Schmidt.
[b] למשובתי ad reditum meum, V. L.
[c] Circa redire ad me, Castalio.
[d] לא ירומם eos non exaltabit, Schmidt.
[e] איך אתנך quam juste & misere desolatum te dabo? dare jure deberem & possem? Schmidt. So Luther and Tarnovius.

of which is to shew the greatness of Ephraim's sins, as deserving the uttermost wrath and vengeance of God, and to magnify the riches of God's grace in their salvation, as next expressed; and it is true of all God's elect, who, considered as sinners in Adam, and by their own transgressions, both before and after conversion, deserved to be treated according to the rigour of justice; but God is merciful to them, according to his choice of them, covenant with them, and provision he has made in Christ, and upon the foot of his satisfaction. *Mine heart is turned within me:* not changed; for there is no shadow of turning with the Lord, neither in his mind and purposes, which he never turns from, nor can be turned back; nor in his affections for them: as his heart is never turned from love to hatred, so neither from hatred to love; or his love would not be from everlasting, as it is, and he rest in it as he does; but this expresses the strong motion of mercy in him towards his people, springing from his sovereign will and pleasure, and what is elsewhere signified by the troubling, soundings, and yearnings of his bowels towards them; see Jer. xxxi. 20. Isa. lxiii. 15. with which compare Lam. i. 20. *My repentings are kindled together;* not that repentance properly belongs to God, who is neither man, nor the son of man, that he should repent of any thing, Numb. xxiii. 19. 1 Sam. xv. 29. he repents not of his love to his people, nor of his choice of them, nor of his covenant with them, nor of his special gifts and grace bestowed on them; but he sometimes does what men do when they repent, he changes his outward conduct and behaviour in the dispensations of his providence, and acts the reverse of what he had done, or seemed to be about to do; as, with respect to the old word, the making of Saul king, and the case of the Ninevites, Gen. vi. 6. 1 Sam. xv. 11. Jon. iii. 4, 10. so here, though he could, and seemed as if he would, go forth in a way of strict justice, yet changes his course, and steers another way, without any change of his will. The phrase expresses the warmth and ardour of his affections to his people: how his heart burned with love to them, his bowels and inward parts were inflamed with it; from whence proceeded what is called repentance among men, as in the case of Jeremiah, ch. xx. 9. The Targum is, "the "word of my covenant met me; my mercies (or bowels "of mercies) were rolled together."

Ver. 9. *I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, &c.*] That is, his wrath and fury to the uttermost; his people are deserving of his wrath as others, being by nature children of wrath as the rest; which they are sensible of under spiritual conviction, and therefore flee from it, where they may be safe: and though the Lord often chastises and afflicts them, yet not in wrath; or however but in a little wrath, as it seems to them; he does not stir up all his wrath, nor any in reality; all being poured upon his son, their surety, who saves and delivers them from wrath to come. *I will not return to destroy Ephraim:* or *again*, or *any more, destroy*[f] him; not twice; he might be destroyed when carried captive into Assyria; but the remnant that shall spring from him in the latter day shall not be destroyed, but saved. The Targum is, "my word "shall not return to destroy the house of Israel;" or I will not return from my love and affections to them, I'll never be wroth with them any more; nor from my mercy to them, which is from everlasting to everlasting; or from my covenant, promise, and resolution to save them, they shall not be punished with everlasting destruction: *for I am God, and not man;* a God gracious and merciful, long-suffering, slow to anger, and pardoning sin, and not man, cruel, revengeful, implacable, who shews no mercy when it is in the power of his hands to avenge himself; or God that changes not in his purposes and counsels, in his love and affections, and therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed, and not man that repents, is fickle, inconstant, and mutable; or God that is faithful to his covenant and promises, and not man that lies and deceives, promises and never performs. The Targum is, "seeing "I am God, my word remains for ever, and my "works are not as the works of the flesh (or of "men) who dwell upon the earth." *The holy One in the midst of thee:* being in the midst of his people, he protects and defends them, and so they are safe; and being the holy One there, he sanctifies them, and saves them, in a way consistent with his own holiness and justice: or there is *a holy One*, or holy Ones, the singular put for the plural, *in the midst of thee*[g]; and therefore thou shalt not be destroyed for their sakes, as Sodom would not, had there been ten righteous persons in it, to which some think the allusion is: *and I will not enter into the city:* in a hostile way to destroy or plunder it; but this is not to be understood either of Samaria or Jerusalem, which were entered into in this manner. The Targum is, "I "have decreed by my word that my holy Shechinah "shall be among you, and I will not change Jerusalem "again for another city;" which sense the Jewish commentators follow; but, as this respects Gospel times, the meaning seems to be, that God would dwell among his people everywhere, and would not be confined to any city or temple as heretofore; but wherever his church and people were, there would be his temple, and there he would dwell.

Ver. 10. *They shall walk after the Lord, &c.*] That is, after the Messiah, who is Jehovah our righteousness; that Jehovah the Jews pierced, and now shall mourn at the sight of, being converted to him; for these are the chosen of God among that people, who in the latter day shall partake of the grace and favour before expressed, in consequence of which they shall be set a seeking the Lord their God, and David their King; and, finding him, shall follow after him, as sheep go after their shepherd, being led by him into green pastures; as subjects follow their prince, obeying his commands and orders; as soldiers march after their leader and commander, so these after Christ, the great Captain of their salvation, part of whose armies they will make: they will walk under the influence of his grace, having life, strength, guidance, and direction, from him, which walking implies; they will walk not after the flesh, as they now do, but after the spirit of Christ,

[f] לא אשוב לשחת non perdam amplius, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; non iterum destruam, Cocceius.

[g] בקרבך קדוש est sanctus, i. e. sancti, in medio tui, Rivetus.

taking him for their guide, by whom they will be led into all truth, as it is in Jesus; they will walk in his ways, in all the paths of faith and holiness, truth and righteousness; in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, according to his word. The Targum is, "they shall go after the worship of the Lord." *He shall roar like a lion*: the Lord Christ they walk after; who is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Israelites shall now follow after; receiving, embracing, and confessing him the true Messiah. So the Targum, "and his Word shall be as a lion that roars;" Christ, the essential Word of God: and so Jarchi, according to Lyra, interprets it of the Messiah to come; who is compared to a lion for his strength and courage, and for the fierceness of his wrath against his enemies; and his voice, in his word, is like the roaring of a lion, exceeding loud, and reaching far, even the uttermost parts of the earth; as it did in the first times of the Gospel, and will in the last; and which the Jews particularly, in the several parts of the world, will hear, and Gentiles also, and be affected with it; for it will be also very strong, powerful, and efficacious; which is another reason of its being compared to a lion roaring; see Joel iii. 16. Rev. x. 2. *When he shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west*; the children of Israel, the children of God, his adopted ones, whom he has predestinated to the adoption of children; these, through the first impressions of Christ's voice or word upon them, shall startle, and be set a trembling, and be astonished, as Saul was, when called and converted; as it is reported of the lion, that, when it roars, other beasts are so terrified that they are quite stunned and amazed, and are not able to stir; but though the first sound of the voice of Christ may have some effect upon the Jews, yet this will not cause them to tremble at him so as to flee from him, but to cause them to flee to him: for the phrase is expressive of motion towards him, and to their own land, as appears from the following verse; when filled with a sense of his majesty and grace, they shall approach him with a holy awe of him, with fear and trembling: or *come with honour*[h]; agreeably to 1 Sam. xvi. 4. having high, honourable, and grand sentiments and apprehensions of him; so that this trembling, at least, issues in a godly and filial fear and reverence of him, suitable to their character as children. The phrase, *from the west*, or *from the sea*[i], meaning the Mediterranean sea, which lay west of Judea, and is often used for the west, may signify the western or European part of the world, where the Jews for the most part are, and from whence they will be gathered. The Targum is, "for he shall roar, and the "captives shall be gathered from the west."

Ver. 11. *They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt*, &c.] They shall come from thence with fear and trembling; which may allude to the trembling of birds at the roaring of a lion, or to the trembling motion of their wings in flying; and denotes the swiftness of the motion of the Israelites and Jews to Christ, and to his church and people, and to their own land, under divine influence and direction: or *shall come with honour*[k]; with all readiness and cheerfulness, in the obedience of faith: *and as a dove out of the land of Assyria*; which is expressive of the same things, the dove being both a timorous and swift creature. Birds in common are very timorous, and tremble at any noise, and fearful of every thing that disturbs them, and therefore make all the haste and speed they can to get out of the way, and to do which they are naturally provided; and more especially the dove is always represented as very fearful and trembling, especially when pursued by the hawk, as the poet[l] observes. Though, it may be, these figures may only signify, as the weak and impotent state of the Jews, considered in themselves at this time, so the quick speed and haste they shall make to their own land. And perhaps there may be something alluded to in the text, that may refer to the dove as peculiar to Assyria, as it should seem to be. Now it is said of Semiramis, an ancient queen of Assyria, that being exposed when an infant, was nourished by doves, and at her death was turned into one; and from hence it is not only said she had her name, which signifies a dove, in the Syriac tongue, but doves by the Syrians were worshipped as deities[m]. And Derceto, a Syrian goddess, supposed to be her mother, having a temple at Ascalon, perhaps the above story may be the reason why the inhabitants of that place reckoned doves so sacred that they did not kill them; for Philo[n], who lived there some time, having observed great numbers of them in the highways, and in every house, asked the reason of it; and he was answered, that the citizens were of old forbid the use of them: and it may be further observed, that, in honour of Semiramis, the kings of Assyria bore a dove in their coat of arms[o]; but whether there is any thing peculiar or no in this reference is not certain: and, besides what has been observed of the fearfulness of this creature, and its swiftness and haste it makes in flying, it may also denote the characters of meekness, humility, and harmlessness, which the Jews, now converted, will have by the grace of God, as well as their mournful disposition. Egypt and Assyria are particularly mentioned, as they generally are where the return of Israel and Judah into their own land is prophesied of, Isa. xi. 11. Zech. x. 10. and may signify the Turks, in whose possession these countries are, and among whom many Jews live: and the one lying to the *south*, and the other to the north of Judea, and the *west* being observed before, this shews that these people should be gathered from all parts of the world, where they are dispersed; the *east* is not mentioned, because their land they will be returned unto lies there. *And I will place them in their houses, saith the Lord*; it is not said in towns and cities, and fortified places, but in houses, signifying that they should dwell in their own land, in a civil sense, securely, and in their habitations, under their vines and fig-trees, being in no

[h] ויחרדו & cum honore accedent, Schmidt.
[i] מים a mari, Montanus, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt.
[k] ויחרדו cum honore advenient, Schmidt.
[l] Sic ego, currebam, sic me ferus ille premebat,
Ut fugere accipitrem penna trepidante columba,
Ut solet accipiter trepidas urgere columbas.
Ovid. Metamorph. l. 1. Fab. 12.
[m] Diodor. Sicul. Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 92, 93, 107.
[n] Apud Euseb. Evangel. Præpar. l. 8. p. 398.
[o] Vid. Gregor. Posthuma, p. 235.

fear and danger of enemies, and live in the utmost safety, under the government and protection of the King Messiah; or, in a spiritual sense, they will be placed in the congregations of the saints in the churches of Christ, which will be as dove-houses to them, and whither they shall fly as doves to their windows, Isa. lx. 8. and it is observed of doves, that they fly the swiftest when they make to their own houses: and at last, as all the people of God will, they will be placed in the mansions of glory, in Christ's Father's house, those everlasting habitations. These words, *saith the Lord*, are added, for the certain and sure accomplishment of all this. The Targum of the whole is, "as a "bird which comes openly, so shall they come who "are carried captive into the land of Egypt; and as a "dove that returns to its dove-house, so shall they return who are carried into the land of Assyria; and I "will return them in peace to their houses, and my "word shall be their protection, saith the Lord."

Ver. 12. *Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit, &c.*] Here properly we should begin a new chapter, as many interpreters and commentators do; for the prophet, or the Lord by him, in the preceding verse, having finished his predictions concerning the call and conversion of the Israelites, and their return to their land, here begins a new discourse, by comparing the characters of Ephraim and Judah, and thence descends to the sins and punishment of both. The former, namely, Ephraim or Israel, that is, the ten tribes, surrounded either the prophet, to hear him prophesy, and professed a great regard to what he said; though it was all deceit and flattery: or rather the Lord himself, whom they pretended to serve and worship when they worshipped the calves at Dan and Beth-el; and would have it thought they did not worship them, but the Lord in them, and by them, as the Papists now say of their images and image-worship; but let them not deceive themselves, God will not be mocked: or when they did at any time seem to approach unto him in any branch of religious worship, either to pray unto him, or to praise him, it was not done with sincerity; it was only with their mouths, not with their hearts; these agreed not together, but, like their ancestors of old, *they did flatter him with their mouth, and lied unto him with their tongues*, Psal. lxxviii. 36. and so all such professors of religion, who are not sincere in their service and worship of God; or meet together to speak and hear false doctrines, which are lies in hypocrisy; or attend to superstition and will-worship, and set up ordinances and institutions of their own, neglecting those which are of God, do as Ephraim did, encompass the Lord with lies and deceit. *But Judah yet ruleth with God*: a theocracy was as yet acknowledged and supported among them; God ruled in the midst of them, and they ruled with him; their kings ruled in the fear of God, and according to his laws, statutes, and appointment, and not their own; particularly in the days of Hezekiah, which may be here respected, the people retained and practised the true worship and service of God: which, as it is the truest liberty, so is the highest honour and dignity: such are rulers with God, as all the Lord's people, all that believe in Christ, are; they are made by his grace kings and princes; and they appear to be so by their new birth; they are clothed, fed, and guarded as princes, as the sons of a king, as kings themselves; they have the riches and power of kings; they are possessed of a kingdom of grace now, which is within them, and where grace reigns, through righteousness, over their lusts and corruptions; and great power, like princes, have they in prayer with God, and are heirs of the kingdom of glory, as well as shall reign with Christ on earth. Gussetius renders it, *Judah yet weeps with God*; as his father Jacob did, imitating him, as in ch. xii. 4. *and is faithful with the saints*; which Kimchi's father interprets of God himself; and so Lyra, and according to him Jarchi: and then the sense is, *and he*, that is, God, *is faithful with the saints*: in fulfilling all his counsels, purposes, and designs of grace concerning them; in making good his covenant with them, and his promises unto them; and by bringing them to the enjoyment of all that grace and glory he calls them to: but this is rather an epithet of Judah, who kept to the word and worship of the true God, as the saints of old, their ancestors, had done; walked in the good old way, in the way of good men, and kept the paths of the righteous; abode by the true priests of the Lord, who were set apart and sanctified for that office; and hearkened to the prophets, the holy men of God, who spake to them, being moved by the Holy Spirit: and adhered firmly *to the holy things*[p], as it may be rendered; to the holy temple, and the worship in it; to the holy sacrifices, altars, *&c.* when the ten tribes departed from them: and so this may be applied to the faithful in Christ Jesus, that believe in him truly, and continue in the faith of him in all ages; and who are *faithful with the holy Ones*[q]; the same with God in the former clause; so Kimchi interprets it, and so the word is used in Prov. ix. 10. and xxx. 3. see Josh. xxiv. 19. that is, with Father, Son, and Spirit; with the Father, when they worship him in spirit and truth; with the Son, when they cleave to him with full purpose of heart; with the Spirit, when they walk after him, and give to each the glory due unto them: or rather, *faithful with holy men*[r]; sanctified by the spirit and grace of God; as they are, when they hold fast the faith delivered to the saints without mixture or wavering, with courage and manliness; though the greater number is against them, and they are reproached and persecuted for so doing; when they abide by the ordinances of Christ, as they were delivered, and keep them in faith and love, without sinister views; when they continue steadfastly in the communion of the saints, attending with them on the word and ordinances, and do not forsake their assembling together; and when they constantly exhort and stir up one another to the duties of religion, and faithfully admonish and reprove each other as there is occasion for it.

[p] קדושים rebus sanctis, Rivetus.
[q] Cum diis sanctis, Munster, Vatablus. So Ben Melech.
[r] Cum sanctis, i. e. hominibus, Drusius.

CHAP. XII.

THIS chapter contains complaints and charges both against Israel and Judah, and threatens them with punishment in case they repent not, which they are exhorted to: and first Ephraim is charged with idolatry, vain confidence in, and alliances with, foreign nations, ver. 1. and then the Lord declares he has a controversy with Judah, and will punish the inhabitants of it for their sins, ver. 2. which are aggravated by their being the descendants of so great a man as Jacob, who got the advantage of his elder brother, had much power with God, and received favours from him, and they also, ver. 3, 4, 5. and therefore are exhorted to turn to God, wait on him, and do that which is right and good, ver. 6. Ephraim is again in his turn charged with fraudulent dealing in trade, and with oppression, and the love of it; and yet pretended he got riches by his own labour, without wronging any, ver. 7, 8. nevertheless, the Lord promises them public ordinances of worship, and joy in them, and the ministry of his prophets, ver. 9, 10. though for the present they were guilty of gross idolatry, ver. 11. which is aggravated by the raising of Jacob their progenitor from a low estate, and the wonderful preservation of him, and the bringing of them out of Egypt, ver. 12, 13. and the chapter is closed with observing Ephraim's bitter provocation of God, for which his reproach should return unto him, and his blood be left upon him, ver. 14.

Ver. 1. *Ephraim feedeth on wind, &c.*] Which will be no more profitable and beneficial to him than wind is to a man that opens his mouth, and fills himself with it: the phrase is expressive of labour in vain, and of a man's getting nothing by all the pains he takes; the same with sowing the wind, and reaping the whirlwind, ch. viii. 7. and so the Targum has it here, "the house of Israel are like to one that sows the wind, "and reaps the whirlwind all the day;" and this refers either to the worship of idols, and the calves in particular, and the vain hope of good things promised to themselves from thence; or to their vain confidence in the alliances and confederacies they entered into with neighbouring nations; from which they expected much, but found little: *and followed after the east wind;* a wind strong and vehement, burning and blasting, very noxious and hurtful; so that, instead of receiving any profit and advantage either by their idolatry or their covenants with other nations, they were only in these things pursuing what would be greatly to their detriment: or they would be no more able to attain by such methods what they sought for, than they would be able to overtake the east wind, which is a very swift and fleeting one: so that this clause exposes their folly, in expecting good things from their idols, or help from their neighbours. *He daily increaseth lies and desolation;* whilst they multiplied idols, which are lies fallacious and deceitful, and idolatrous rites and acts of worship, they do but increase their desolation and ruin, which such things are the cause of, and will certainly bring them unto; or, not content with the daily increase of their idolatries among themselves, they continually persecute, spoil, and plunder those who do not give into their false worship: so the Targum, "lies and spoil they multiply;" idolaters are generally persecutors: *and they do make a covenant with the Assyrians;* and gave tribute and presents to their kings, as Menahem did to Pul, and Hoshea to Salmaneser, not to hurt them, and to help and assist them against their enemies, and to strengthen their kingdom; see 2 Kings xv. 19, 20. and xvii. 3, 4: and *oil is carried into Egypt:* one while they sent presents to the Assyrians, to obtain their favour and friendship; and at another time to the Egyptians; nay, they sent to So king of Egypt, at the same time they were tributary to Assyria, and, conspiring against him, brought on their ruin; and *oil* was a principal part of the present sent; for this was carried not by way of traffic, but as a present: so the Targum, "and they "carried gifts to Egypt;" see Isa. lvii. 9. The land of Israel, being a land of oil-olive, was famous for the best oil, of which there was a scarcity in Egypt, and therefore a welcome present there, as balsam also was; see Gen. xxxvii. 25. and xliii. 11. Ezek. xxvii. 17.

Ver. 2. *The Lord hath also a controversy with Judah, &c.*] The two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, as well as the ten tribes; for though they had ruled with God, and had been faithful with the saints in the first times of the apostacy of Israel; yet afterwards they sadly degenerated, and fell into idolatry likewise, particularly in the time of Ahaz, in which Hosea prophesied; and therefore the Lord had somewhat against them; nor would he spare them, but reprove them by the prophets, and rebuke them in his providences; bring them to his bar, and lay before them their evils, and threaten them with punishment in case of impenitence, as follows: *and will punish Jacob according to his ways;* all the posterity of Jacob, whether Ephraim or Judah; those of the ten tribes, or of the two, who all descended from Jacob: or, *will visit according to his ways*[s]; if right, and agreeably to the mind and word of God, in a way of grace and mercy; but if wrong, crooked, and perverse, then in a way of punishment; for *visiting* is used both ways: *according to his doings will he recompence him;* as they were good or bad; if good, will reward them with a reward of grace; if bad, with vengeance. The Targum paraphrases it, "according to his right works."

Ver. 3. *He took his brother by the heel in the womb, &c.*] That is, Jacob took his brother Esau by the heel, as he came forth from his mother's womb; the history of it is in Gen. xxv. 25, 26. It is here observed, upon mentioning the name of Jacob in the former verse, meaning the posterity of the patriarch; but here he himself is intended, and occasionally taken notice of, to shew how very different his posterity were from

[s] לפקד־כדרכיו ad visitandum juxta vias ejus, Pagninus, Montanus; visitabit secundum vias ejus, Piscator.

him, and how sadly degenerated; as well as to upbraid them with ingratitude, whose ancestors, and they also, had received such and so many favours from the Lord; Jacob the patriarch was a hero from the womb, but they transgressors from it; this action of his observed was a presage and pledge of his having the superiority of his brother, and of his getting the birthright and blessing from him. So the Targum, "prophet, say unto them, was it not said of Jacob, "before he was born, that he would be greater than "his brother?" see Rom. ix. 11, 12. In this action there was something divine, miraculous, and preternatural; it was not the effort of nature merely, but contrary to it, or at least above it; and not done by chance, but ordered by the providence of God, as a prediction and testification of his future greatness, and even of his posterity's, in times yet to come, as Kimchi observes, who refers to Obad. ver. 18. *And by his strength he had power with God:* the Targum is, with the angel, as in the following verse; he is called a man in the history of this event in Gen. xxxii. 24. not that he was a mere man, since he is here expressly called God, and afterwards the Lord God of hosts; and there it is evident, from the context, he was a divine Person, and no other than the son of God; who, though not as yet incarnate, appeared in a human form, as a presage of his future incarnation; though this was not a mere apparition, spectre, or phantasm, as Josephus[r] calls it; for it was not in a dream, or in a visionary way, that this wrestling and striving was between this divine Person in this form and Jacob, but in reality; it was a real substance which the son of God formed, animated, actuated, and assumed, for that time and purpose, and then laid it aside; which touched Jacob, and he touched that, laid hold on it, and held it fast, and strove with it, and had power over it, and over God in it; even over him that is God over all, the true God and eternal life, the Lord Jesus Christ; not a created God, or God by office, but by nature; as the perfections that are in him, and the works and worship ascribed to him, declare: now Jacob had power over him *by his strength*: not by his natural strength; either of his body, which could not have been equal to the strength of this human body assumed for the time, as it was used and managed by a divine Person, unless he had been extraordinarily assisted and strengthened; or of his mind and soul, not by any spiritual strength he had of himself; but by what he had from this divine Person, with whom he wrestled; who put strength into him, and supported and increased the power and strength of faith in prayer; so that he prevailed over him, and got the blessing, for which reason his name was called Israel, Gen. xxxii. 28.

Ver. 4. *Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed,* &c.] This is repeated in different words, not only for the confirmation of it, it being a very extraordinary thing, and difficult of belief; but to direct to the history here referred to, where the person Jacob prevailed over is called a man, and here the angel; and so Josephus[s] calls him a divine Person; not a created angel, not Michael, as the Rabbins say, unless the Messiah is meant by him; nor Jacob's guardian angel, as Kimchi, every man being thought by some to have one; and much less Esau's evil angel, that was against Jacob, as Jarchi and Abarbinel; for of him he would never have sought nor expected a blessing; but an increated Angel, the Son of God, the same that went before the Israelites in the wilderness, and that redeemed Jacob from all evil, Gen. xlviii. 16. Exod. xxiii. 20—23. called an Angel, being so not by nature, for he is superior to angels in both his natures, divine and human; but by office, being sent to reveal the will of God, and to do the work of God in the redemption and salvation of men; the same that is called the Angel of the great council in the Greek version of Isa. ix. 6. and the Angel of God's presence, Isa. lxiii. 9. and the Angel or messenger of the covenant, Mal. iii. 1. the phrases used denote, as before, the power and prevalence Jacob had with this divine Person in prayer; whereby he obtained the blessing of him, even deliverance from his brother Esau, as well as others respecting him and his posterity. *He wept, and made supplication unto him;* not the angel, entreating Jacob to let him go, as Jarchi and Kimchi, and so some Christian interpreters; who think that an angel in human form may be said to weep, as well as to eat and drink; and the rather, since this angel was not the conqueror, but the conquered; and since Christ, in the days of his flesh, both prayed and wept, and shed tears: but the case here is different; and though he was prevailed over, it was through his own condescension and goodness: but rather Jacob is meant, as Abarbinel and others; who *wept* not on account of the angel's touching his thigh, and the pain that might put him to; for he was of a more heroic spirit than to weep for that, who had endured so much hardship in Laban's service, in heat and cold; and besides, notwithstanding this, he kept wrestling with him, and afterwards walked, though haltingly: but he wept either because he could not get out the name of the person he wrestled with; or rather the tears he shed were for the blessing he sought of him; for it is joined with his making supplication, and is expressive of the humble, yet ardent, affectionate, fervent, and importunate request he made to obtain it; and here we have another proof of the deity of Christ, in that supplication was made to him, and he is here represented as the object of that part of religious worship, prayer, as he often is in the New Testament. This circumstance is not expressed in Gen. xxxii. though it may be gathered from what is there said; however, the prophet had it by divine inspiration; and the truth of it is not to be doubted of, being not at all inconsistent with, but quite agreeable to, that history. *He found him at Beth-el:* either the angel found Jacob in Beth-el, as he did more than once, both before and after this time, Gen. xxviii. 12—19. and xxxv. 6, 7, 9. it is good to be in Beth-el, in the house of God; happy are those that dwell there, and are found there living and dying, doing the will and work of God there: or rather Jacob found God or the angel in Beth-el; God is to be found in his own house, there he comes and blesses with his gracious presence; here Christ the Angel of his presence is;

[r] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 20. sect. 2.

[s] Ut supra.

here he meets with his people, and manifests himself unto them. There is in the words a tacit reflection on Israel, or the ten tribes, that bore the name of Jacob; the patriarch found God in Beth-el, Christ the Angel of the Lord; but now, instead of him, there was a calf set up in this place, Israel worshipped; and therefore it was called Beth-aven, the house of an idol, or iniquity, instead of Beth-el, the house of God. *And there he spake with us*; not with Esau and his angel, concerning Isaac's blessing of Jacob, as Jarchi; nor with Jacob and his angel, as the father of Kimchi; nor with the prophet, and with Amos, to reprove Israel there for the worship of the calves, as Kimchi himself; but with all the Israelites, of whom the prophet was one; who were then in the loins of Jacob, when he conversed with God, and God with him, at Beth-el: or, as Saadiah interprets it, *for us* for our sakes, on our account; or *concerning us*; concerning the multiplication of Jacob's posterity, and the giving the land of Canaan to them, as the Lord did at both times he appeared to Jacob in Beth-el; see Gen. xxviii. 14, 15. and xxxv. 11, 12. and it is in the house of God, where Christ is as a son, that he speaks with and to his people, even in his word and ordinances there.

Ver. 5. *Even the Lord God of hosts*, &c.] The God Jacob had power over, the Angel he prevailed with, to whom he made supplication with weeping, and who spake with him and his in Beth-el, is he whose name is Jehovah; who is the true and living God, the Lord of hosts and armies both in heaven and in earth; of all the angels in heaven, and the legions of them; and of the church militant, and all the saints, who are the good soldiers of Christ, his spiritual militia; and he is the Captain of the Lord's host, and of their salvation, and to whom all the numerous hosts of creatures, be they what they will, are subject: this is observed, to set off the greatness of the person Jacob wrestled with, and his wondrous grace, in condescending to be overpowered by him: *the Lord is his memorial*; or his name, Jehovah, which belongs to this angel, the Son of God, as to his divine Father; and which is expressive of his divine existence, of his eternity and immutability; this is his memorial, or the remembrancer of him; which puts his people in all ages in remembrance of him, what he is, what an infinite, almighty, and all-sufficient Being he is; and he is always to be believed in, and trusted to, and to be served, adored, and worshipped. The Targum adds, to every generation and generation.

Ver. 6. *Therefore turn thou to thy God*, &c.] Judah, with whom the Lord had a controversy, is here addressed and exhorted to return to the Lord, from whom they had backslidden; and this is urged, from the consideration of their being the descendants of so great a man as Jacob; whose example they should follow, and make supplication to the Lord as he did; and from this instance of their progenitor might encourage themselves, that God, who was his God, and their God, would be gracious and merciful to them, and that they should prevail with him likewise, and obtain the blessing, and especially since he is the everlasting and unchangeable Jehovah. Turning to the Lord, as it supposes a going astray from him, so it signifies a turning from idols, and all vain confidences; and is done by renewed acts of faith and trust in the Lord, and repentance towards him; and cannot be performed aright without grace and strength from him, of which Ephraim was sensible, Jer. xxxi. 18. as well as the encouragement to it is from a view of God as a covenant-God, and as gracious and merciful. So Aben Ezra interprets it of divine help, of turning by thy God, that is, by the help and assistance of thy God; and, indeed, conversion to God, whether at first, or after, is through his powerful and efficacious grace. Kimchi explains it, *thou shalt rest in thy God*[w]; when what follows is performed, comparing it with Isa. xxx. 15. The Targum is, "and thou shalt be strong in the worship of thy God." *Keep mercy and judgment*; or, *observe*[x] them, to do them; to shew *mercy* to persons in misery, to the poor and indigent, which is what the Lord desires and delights in, more than in ceremonial sacrifices; and is a principal part of the moral law, as *judgment* is another; the exercise of justice, both public and private; passing a righteous sentence in courts of judicature, and doing that which is right between man and man; owing no man any thing, but giving to all their due; doing no injury to any man's person, property, or character; which are fruits meet for true repentance; and when they spring from faith and love, and are done with a view to the glory of God, and good of men, are acceptable to the Lord; these are the weightier matters of the law, Matt. xxiii. 23. *And wait on thy God continually*; both in private prayer, and for an answer to it, and in public worship and ordinances, in hope of meeting with him, and enjoying his presence; for this takes in the whole of religious worship, private and public, and all religious exercises, as invocation of God, trust in him, and expectation of good things from him; and may have a respect to the Messiah, and salvation by him, and a waiting for him and that; as Jacob did, and his posterity should, and many of them were in this posture, before and at his coming; see Gen. xlix. 18. Isa. xxv. 9. Luke ii. 25, 38. Agreeable to this the Targum is, "and wait for "the redemption or salvation of thy God continually."

Ver. 7. He is *a merchant*, &c.] Here is a change of person from *thou* to *he*, from Judah to Ephraim, who is said to be a *merchant*; and if that was all, there is nothing worthy of dispraise in it; but he was a cheating merchant, a fraudulent dealer, as appears by what follows: or he is Canaan, or a Canaanite[y]; more like a descendant of Canaan, by his manners, than a descendant of Jacob. But the Canaanites dealing much in merchandise, their name became a common name for a merchant, as a Chaldean for an astrologer; and as the children of Israel possessed their land, so they followed the same business and employment of life; which, had they performed honestly, would not have been to their discredit; but they were too much like the Canaanites, of whom Philostratus[z] says, they were co-

[w] באלהיך תשוב in Deo tuo conquiesce, Drusius.
[x] שמר observa, Junius & Tremellius Piscator.

[y] כנען Χαναν, Sept.; Chanaan, V. L. Tigurine version; Chananæorum refers, Munster.
[z] Apud Grotium in loc.

vetous and fraudulent; and this was Ephraim's character. The Targum is, "be you not as merchants." *The balances of deceit are in his hand:* he used false weights and measures: made the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsified the balances by deceit; had wicked balances, and deceitful weights, and the scant measure, which is abominable, Amos viii. 5. Mic. vi. 10, 11. they pretended to weigh every thing exactly they bought or sold; but cheated either by sleight of hand, holding the balances as they should not; or had one pair of scales and weights to buy with, and another to sell by, contrary to the law of God, Lev. xix. 35, 36. *He loveth to oppress:* instead of keeping and doing mercy and justice, they oppressed the poor, ground their faces, defrauded them of their due, and by secret and private methods cheated them in their dealings with them, and brought them to poverty and distress; and this they took delight and pleasure in, which showed a want of a principle of honesty in them, and that they were habituated to such a course of life, and were hardened in it, and had no remorse of conscience for it, but rather gloried in it.

Ver. 8. *And Ephraim said, yet I am become rich,* &c.] Notwithstanding they took such unjust methods, as to use deceitful balances, they prospered in the world, got abundance of riches; and therefore concluded from thence that their manner of dealing was not criminal, at least not so bad as the prophets represented to them; and so promised themselves impunity, and that what they were threatened with would not come upon them; and, as long as they got riches, they cared not in what manner; and inasmuch as they prospered and succeeded in their course of trading, they were encouraged to go on, and not fear any evil coming upon them for it. According to Aben Ezra and Kimchi, the sense is, that they became rich of themselves, by their own industry and labour, and did not acknowledge that their riches, and power to get them, were of God. They gloried in them as their own attainments; and which they had little reason to do, since they were treasures of wickedness, and mammon of unrighteousness, which in a day of wrath would be of no service to them. *I have found me out substance:* they found ways and means of acquiring great riches, and large estates, by their own wisdom and cunning, and all for themselves, for their own use, to be enjoyed by them for years to come; and they were reckoned by them solid and substantial things, when a mere shadow, emptiness, and vanity; and were not to be employed for their own use and advantage only, but should have been for the good of others; nor were they to be attributed to their own sagacity, prudence, and management, but to the providence of God, admitting they had been got in ever so honourable and just a manner. *In all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me that* were *sin:* here again Ephraim, or the people of Israel, vainly ascribe all their wealth and riches to their own labour, diligence, and industry, and take no notice of God and his providence, or of his blessing upon them; and pretend to be very upright and honest in their dealings, and that what they got were very honestly got, and would bear the strictest scrutiny; and that if their course of trade was ever so narrowly looked into, there would be nothing found that was very bad or criminal, that they could be justly reproached for; only some little trifling things, that would not bear the name of *sin*, or deserve any correction or punishment; so pure were they in their own eyes, so blinded and hardened in sin, and fearless of the divine displeasure; like the adulterous woman, wiped their mouths when they had eaten the sweet morsels of sin, and said they had done no wickedness, Prov. xxx. 20. or which was involuntary, and not done knowingly, as Kimchi and Abendana: or rather, as Ben Melech renders it, *no iniquity and sin;* and so others: or, best of all, *no iniquity or sin,* as Noldius *; no iniquity, or any kind of sin at all. Thus, as Ephraim was charged before with idolatry and lies in religion, so here with fraudulent dealings, and getting riches in an illicit way in civil things; and of whose repentance and reformation there was no hope.

Ver. 9. *And I that am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt,* &c.] Ephraim being so very corrupt in things, both religious and civil, and so very impenitent and impudent, is let alone to suffer the just punishment of his sins; but Judah being called to repentance, and brought unto it, gracious promises are here made unto him, to be fulfilled in the times of the Messiah, either at the first or latter part of them; especially the last is to be understood, when indeed all Israel shall return to the Lord, and be saved; and then it will appear, that the Lord, who was their God, as was evident from his bringing them out of Egyptian bondage, and continued to be so from that time to the Babylonish captivity, and even to the times of the Messiah, will now be their God most clearly and manifestly, having redeemed them from worse than Egyptian bondage; from the bondage of sin, Satan, the law, the world, and death; even the Lord Jesus Christ, the true Messiah, they will now seek and embrace, who is God over all, and equal to such a work of redemption and salvation; Immanuel, God with us, God in our nature, our Lord and our God, the God of the Jews now converted, as will be acknowledged, as well as of the Gentiles: and he *will yet make thee to dwell in tabernacles, as in the days of the solemn feast;* alluding to the feast of tabernacles, kept in commemoration of the Israelites dwelling in tents in the wilderness, Lev. xxiii. 42, 43. typical of Christ's incarnation, expressed by his tabernacling among men in human nature, John i. 14. and which feast, though abolished by Christ with the rest, yet it is said will be kept by converted Jews and Gentiles in the latter day; which can be understood no otherwise than of their embracing and professing the incarnate Saviour, partaking of the blessings of grace that come by him, and attending on those ordinances of public worship instituted by him; see Zech. xiv. 16—19. and which booths, tents, or tabernacles, the Israelites dwelt in at that feast, were also typical of the churches of Christ under the Gospel dispensation, and which are here meant; and in which it is here promised the converted Jews shall dwell, as they had been used to do in their booths at the solemn feast of tabernacles. These Christian churches resembling them in the matter of them; believers in

* Concord. Ebr. Part. p. 104. No. 522.

Christ, the materials of such churches, being often compared to goodly trees, to willows of the brook, to palm-trees, olive-trees, and myrtle-trees, with others, the branches of which were used at the above feast, to make their tabernacles with; see Lev. xxiii. 40. Neh. viii. 15. and in the use of them, which was to dwell in during the time of the said feast; as the churches of Christ are the tabernacles of the most High, the dwelling-places of Father, Son, and Spirit; and the habitation of the saints, where they dwell and enjoy great plenty and prosperity, tranquillity and security; and here it particularly denotes that joy, peace, and safety, the converted Jews shall partake of in the churches of Christ in the latter day; of which the feast of tabernacles was but a shadow, and which was attended with much rejoicing, plenty of provisions, and great safety.

Ver. 10. *I have also spoken to the prophets,* &c.] Or, *I will speak*[b]; for this respects not the Lord's speaking by the prophets of the Old Testament, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; though all they said were for the use of, and profitable unto, Christian churches; but his speaking by the apostles, prophets, and teachers, under the Gospel dispensation; by whom the doctrines of grace have been more clearly dispensed, and which are no other than the voice of Christ speaking in them; and which it is both a privilege to hear, and a duty to attend unto; see Ephes. iv. 11: *and I have multiplied visions*; or, *will multiply visions*[c]; more than under the former dispensation, as was foretold by Joel, ii. 28. see Acts ii. 16, 17. witness the visions of the Apostles Peter, Paul, John, and others: or this may respect the more clear sight and knowledge of Gospel truths in the times of the Messiah, then under the Mosaic economy; see 2 Cor. iii. 12—18: *and used similitudes by the ministry of the prophets*; or, *will use similitudes*[d]; for this is to be understood, not of the types and figures used by the Lord under the legal dispensation, to represent spiritual things, as the brasen serpent, passover-lamb, manna, and the sacrifices of the law; nor of the similitudes used by the Prophet Hosea, taking a wife and children of whoredoms, to set forth the case and condition of Israel, and of the comparisons he makes of God, to a lion, leopard, bear, &c.: or by any other of the former prophets; but of parables and similitudes used in Gospel times; not only such as Christ used himself, who seldom spoke without a parable; see Matt. xiii. 11. but which he used by the ministry of his apostles and prophets, and which are to be met with in their discourses and writings; see 1 Cor. iii. 6—19. and especially such seem to be meant that respect the conversion of the Jews, and the glory of the church in the latter day, Rom. xi. 16—26. Rev. xxi. 12—23.

Ver. 11. Is there *iniquity* in *Gilead?* &c.] Idolatry there? strange that there should be, seeing it was a city of the priests, a city of refuge; or there is none there, say the priests, who pretended they did not worship idols, but the true Jehovah in them: or, *is there not iniquity* or idolatry *in Gilead*[e]? verily there is, let them pretend to what they will: or, *is there only iniquity in it*[f]? that the men of it should be carried captive, as they were by Tiglath-pileser, before the rest of the tribes; see 2 Kings xv. 29. no, there is iniquity and idolatry committed in other places, as well as there, who must expect to share the same fate in time: or, *is Gilead Aven*[g]? that is, Beth-aven, the same with Beth-el; it is as that, as guilty of idolatry as Beth-el, where one of the calves was set up: *surely they are vanity*: the inhabitants of Gilead, as well as of Beth-el, worshipping idols, which are most vain things, vanity itself, and deceive those that serve them, and trust in them: *they sacrifice bullocks in Gilgal*; to idols, as the Targum adds; and so Jarchi and Kimchi; according to Aben Ezra, they sacrificed them to Baal; this shews that Gilead was not the only place for idolatry, which was on the other side Jordan, but Gilgal, which was on this side Jordan, was also polluted with it. The Vulgate Latin version is, "in Gilgal they were "sacrificing to bullocks;" to the calves there, the same as were at Dan and Beth-el; so, in the Septuagint version of 1 Kings xii. 29, it was formerly read; and so Cyril[h] quotes it, he (Jeroboam) *set the one* (calf) *in Gilgal, and the other* in *Dan*; hence the fable that Epiphanius[i] makes mention of, that, when Elisha was born, the golden ox or heifer at Gilgal bellowed very loudly, and so loud as to be heard at Jerusalem. The Targum makes mention of an idol-temple here; and as it was near to Beth-el, as appears from 1 Sam. x. 3, 8. and from Josephus[k]; and so Jerom says[l], hard by Beth-el; some suspect another Gilgal; hence it might be put for it; however, it was a place of like idolatrous worship; it is mentioned as such along with Beth-aven or Beth-el, in ch. iv. 15. see also ch. ix. 15: *yea, their altars are as heaps in the furrows of the fields*; not only in the city of Gilgal, and in the temple there, as the Targum; but even without the city, in the fields they set up altars, which looked like heaps of stones; or they had a multitude of altars that stood as thick as they. So the Targum, "they have multi-"plied their altars, like heaps upon the borders of "the fields;" and the Jewish commentators in general understand this as expressive of the number of their altars, and of the increase of idolatrous worship; but some interpret it of the destruction of their altars, which should become heaps of stones and rubbish, like such as are in fields. These words respect Ephraim or the ten tribes, in which these places were, whose idolatry is again taken notice of, after gracious promises were made to Judah. Some begin here a new sermon or discourse delivered to Israel.

Ver. 12. *And Jacob fled into the country of Syria,* &c.] Or, *field of Syria*[m]; the same with Padan-aram; for *Padan*, in the Arabic language, as Bochart has shewn,

[b] ודברתי & loquar, Piscator, Livelens, Drusius, Cocceius, Schmidt.
[c] חזון הרביתי visionem multiplicabo, Vatablus, Livelens, Drusius, Schmidt.
[d] אדמה assimilabo, Montanus, Schmidt; similitudinibus utar, Castalio, Livelens.
[e] אם גלעד און an non in Galaad iniquitas? Vatablus.
[f] En in Gileade *tantum* iniquitas? Piscator.
[g] Num Gilead Aven? Schmidt.

[h] Apud Reland. Palestina Illustrata, tom. 2. l. 3. p. 783.
[i] De Vita & Interitu Prophet. c. 6. & Paschal. Chronic. p. 161. apud Reland. ib.
[k] Antiqu. l. 6. c. 4. sect. 2.
[l] De locis Hebr. fol. 91. M.
[m] שדה ארם agrum Aram, Montanus; in agrum Syriæ, Vatablus, Drusius, Rivet, Schmidt.

signifies a field; and *Aram* is Syria, and is the word here used. This is to be understood of Jacob's fleeing thither for fear of his brother Esau, the history of which is had in Gen. xxviii. and xxix. though some interpret this of his fleeing from Laban out of the field of Syria unto Gilead, Gen. xxxi. 21, 23. and so make it to be introduced as an aggravation of the sin of the inhabitants of Gilead, that that place, which had been a refuge and sanctuary to their ancestor in his distress, should be defiled with idolatry; but the words will not bear such a construction, and the following seem to militate against it: *and Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he kept* sheep; and so the last clause is supplied by the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi: this was after his flight into Syria, and before he fled from Laban, whom he served seven years for Rachel; and then served him by keeping his sheep seven years more for the same: though it may be understood of his two wives, thus; he served seven years for a wife, for Rachel intentionally, but eventually it was for Leah; and then he kept sheep seven years more for his other wife Rachel; the history of this is in Gen. xxix. This is mentioned to shew the meanness of Jacob the ancestor of the Israelites, from whom they had their original and name; he was a fugitive in the land of Syria; there he was a Syrian ready to perish, a very poor man, obliged to serve and keep sheep for a wife, having no dowry to give; and this is observed here to bring down the pride of Israel, who boasted of their descent, which is weak and foolish for any to do; and to shew the goodness of God to Jacob, and to them, in raising him and them from so low an estate and condition to such eminency and greatness as they were; and to upbraid their ingratitude to the God of their fathers, and of their mercies, whom they had revolted from, and turned to idols.

Ver. 13. *And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt*, &c.] Or, *by the prophet:* the famous and most excellent prophet Moses, who, by way of eminency, is so called; him the Lord sent, and employed, and made use of him as an instrument to bring his people out of their bondage in Egypt: in which he was a type of Christ the great Prophet of the church, raised up like unto him, and the Redeemer of his people from sin, Satan, and the world, law, hell, and death, and all enemies: *and by a prophet he was preserved:* by the same prophet Moses was Israel preserved at the Red sea, and in the wilderness; where they were kept as a flock of sheep from their powerful enemies, and brought to the borders of Canaan's land. Some understand this last clause of Joshua, by whom the Israelites were safely conducted through Jordan into the land of Canaan, and settled there; and particularly were brought by him to Gilgal, where the covenant of circumcision was renewed, and the first passover in the land kept, but now a place of idolatry, as before mentioned; and which sin was aggravated by this circumstance: but the design of this observation seems to be to put the Israelites in remembrance of their low estate in Egypt, and of the goodness of God to them in delivering them from thence, which they had sadly requited by their degeneracy and apostacy from him; and to hint unto them how much they ought to have valued the prophets of the Lord, though they had despised them, since they had received such benefits and blessings by the means of a prophet.

Ver. 14. *Ephraim provoked* him *to anger most bitterly*, &c.] The Vulgate Latin version supplies it, *me;* that is, God, as Kimchi; or his Lord, as it may be supplied from the last clause of the verse; the sense is the same either way: it was God that Ephraim or the ten tribes provoked to stir up his wrath and vengeance against them; notwithstanding all the favours that they and their ancestors had received from him, they provoked him in a most bitter manner, to bitter anger, vehement wrath and fury: or *with bitternesses*[*]; with their sins, which are in their own nature bitter, displeasing to God; and in their effects bring bitterness and death on those that commit them; meaning particularly their idolatry, and all belonging to it; their idols, high places, altars, &c. The word here used is rendered *high heaps*[*], Jer. xxxi. 21. and is here by Kimchi interpreted of altars, with which, and their sacrifices on them, they provoked the Lord to anger: *therefore shall he leave his blood upon him:* the blood of innocent persons, prophets, and other good men shed by him; the sin of it shall be charged upon him, and he shall bear the punishment of it. So the Targum, "the fault of innocent blood which he shed "shall return upon him:" or *his own blood shall be poured out upon him*[*]; in just retaliation for the blood of others shed by him, and for all the blood shed by him in idolatrous sacrifices, and other bloody sins; or his own blood being shed by the enemy shall remain upon him unrevenged; God will not punish those that shed it: *and his reproach shall his Lord return unto him;* that is, as he has reproached the prophets of the Lord for reproving him for his idolatry, and reproached the Lord himself, by revolting from him, and neglecting his worship, and preferring the worship of idols to him; so, as a just recompense, he shall be delivered up into the hands of the enemy, and become a reproach, a taunt, and a proverb, in all places into which he shall be brought. God is called *his Lord*, though he had rebelled against him, and shook off his yoke, and would not obey him; yet, whether he will or no, he is his Lord, and will shew himself to be so by his sovereignty and authority over him, and by the judgments exercised on him. Some understand this of the Assyrian king, become his lord, by taking and carrying him captive, the instrument in God's hand of bringing him to reproach; but the former sense seems best.

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[*] תמרורים amaritudinibus, Pagninus, Vatablus, Piscator, Schmidt.
[*] And is so understood by R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 64. 1.

[*] ודמיו עליו יטוש καὶ τὸ αἷμα αὐτοῦ ἐπ᾽ αὐτὸν ἐκχυθήσεται, Sept.; so Syr. & Ar. ideo sanguis ejus super eum diffundetur, sive effundetur, Zanchius.

CHAP. XIII.

THIS chapter begins with observing the different state and condition of Ephraim before and after his idolatry, ver. 1. his increase in it, ver. 2. and therefore his prosperity was very shortlived, which is signified by various metaphors, ver 3. and his sins are aggravated by the former goodness of God unto him; his great ingratitude unto God, and forgetfulness of him, ver. 4, 5, 6. hence he is threatened with his wrath and vengeance in a very severe manner, ver. 7, 8. for which he had none to blame but himself; yea, such was the grace and goodness of God to him, that though he had destroyed himself, yet there were help and salvation for him in him, ver. 9. though not in his king he had desired, and was given, and was took away in wrath, ver. 10, 11. but his sin being bound up and hid, and he foolish and unwise, sharp corrections would be given him, ver. 12, 13. and yet a gracious promise is made of redemption from death and the grave by the Messiah, ver. 14. but, notwithstanding this, and all his present prosperity, he would be blasted in his wealth and riches; and Samaria the metropolis of his country would be desolate; and the inhabitants of it be used in the most cruel manner, because of their rebellion against God, ver. 15, 16.

Ver. 1. *When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel*, &c.] Or, with trembling, as Jarchi; so Jeroboam, who was of the tribe of Ephraim, spake before Solomon, a great king, as he observes. R. Moses the priest interprets it of Jeroboam; but it may be understood of the tribe in general, and especially of the heads of it, at any time before it fell into idolatry; when they spake with submission and humility, they were attended to by the other tribes in all consultations and debates, and great deference was paid unto them; and they were had in great esteem, and highly honoured, agreeably to that common saying of our Lord, *he that humbleth himself shall be exalted*, Luke xiv. 12. or, *when* he *spake* there was *trembling*[*]; either among the neighbouring nations, when he threatened them with war; or among the other tribes of Israel, when he spake in counsel, and with authority, they rose up and heard him with great reverence and respect; see Job xxix. 8, 9, 10. So the Targum, "when any one "of the house of Ephraim spake, trembling laid hold "on the people; they became princes in Israel." Some refer this to the times of Joshua, who was of that tribe, and whom the Israelites feared as they had feared Moses, Josh. iv. 14. others to the times of Gideon and Jephtha, with whom the tribe of Ephraim expostulated, Judg. viii. 1. and xii. 1. but others interpret it of Jeroboam's idolatry, of his setting up the worship of the calves, which he did upon his exalting himself, and setting himself up as king of the ten tribes; and, in some agreement with this, Schmidt understands, by *trembling*, a terrible and horrible thing, idolatry, which he commanded and appointed; and which he *bore* or *carried*, as the word[†] is interpreted by him, and may be; that is, his sin, and the punishment of it, which Jeroboam and his posterity did bear; and so it agrees with what follows: *but*, or *and, when he offended in Baal, he died*; or when he sinned, and became guilty of more idolatry still, by worshipping Baal, as well as the calves, which was done in the times of Ahab, 1 Kings xvi. 31. when Ephraim or the kingdom of Israel fell into distresses and calamities, sunk in their grandeur and authority, declined in their wealth and riches, and were insulted by their enemies, particularly by Ben-hadad king of Syria, who sent to Ahab, and challenged his silver and gold, his wives and children, as his own, 1 Kings xx. 3, 4. and so they gradually decreased in credit and reputation, in power and authority, in wealth and substance, and at last were delivered to the sword of the enemy, and to captivity, which was their civil death.

Ver. 2. *And now they sin more and more*, &c.] Since the times of Jeroboam, and also of Ahab, adding other deities to the calves, and to Baal, as follows; increasing the number of their idols, and their idolatrous sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies: this they did in the times of the prophet, who prophesied after the times of Ahab; as it is common with evil men and seducers to wax worse and worse, and to proceed to more ungodliness, and from evil to evil; such is the way of idolaters, they stop not, but run into greater absurdities and grosser idolatries: *and have made them molten images of their silver*; which is to be understood, not of the calves, or of Baal, made of gold, which they purchased with their silver; but of other images they had in their houses, or carried about with them, made of their silver, of their plate, which they melted and cast images of it, of whatsoever shape or form they pleased: *and idols according to their own understanding*; which were entirely of man's device, and had nothing divine in them, either as to matter or form, but wholly the invention of the human brain; or, *according to their own likeness*, as the Targum, and so other Jewish interpreters; after the form of a man, and yet were so weak and stupid as to account them gods: *all of it the work of the craftsmen*; of silversmiths and founders, and such-like artificers; the same, or of the same sort, with the craftsmen that made shrines for Diana, Acts xix. 24, 38. and therefore such a work, wrought by such hands, could never be a deity, or have any thing divine in it; they must be as stupid and senseless as the work itself to imagine there should: and yet *they say of them*: the false prophets, or the idolatrous priests, say of such idols: *let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves*: let those that bring their sacrifices, or those that offer them, pay religious worship and adoration to the calves; which they signified by kissing the idols they sacrificed to, either their mouths, or their hands; or, if out of their reach, they kissed

[*] כדבר־רתת quum loqueretur—tremor erat, Pagninus, Vatablus; terror erat, Zanchius, Drusius.

[†] נשא הוא portavit ipse, sub. iniquitatem suam, Schmidt.

their own hands in token of honour to them; which rites were commonly used among the Heathens. So Cicero[q] says at Agrigentum, where was a temple of Hercules, where the people not only used to shew a veneration to his image by prayers and thanksgivings, but they used to kiss it. So Apuleius[r] speaks of a beautiful virgin, the report of whose beauty brought together a vast number of citizens and strangers; who, amazed at the sight of her, put their right hand to their mouths, the first finger resting upon the thumb erect, and gave her reverence with religious adoration, as if she had been the goddess Venus herself; and Minutius Felix[s] says of Cæcilius, that, observing the image of Serapis (probably much like one of these calves), putting his hand to his mouth, according to the superstitious custom of the vulgar, with his lips smacked a kiss; and so Pliny[t] observes, in worshipping, the right hand is used for a kiss, turning about the whole body, which to do to the left was reckoned the more religious; hence it is observed[u] of Æmilius, a derider of and scoffer at things divine, that he would never make supplication to any god, nor frequent any temple; and if he passed by any place of worship, he reckoned it a crime to put his hand to his lips by way of adoration, or on account of that; and it seems to have obtained as early as the times of Job among idolatrous people, that, upon the sight of the sun or moon, they immediately with their mouth kissed their hands; see Job xxxi. 26, 27. hence Lucian[w], speaking of the Indians, says, rising early in the morning, they worship the sun, not as we, who think the prayers are finished when the hand is kissed; and Tertullian[x], addressing the Heathens in his time, thus bespeaks them, most of you, out of an affectation of worshipping the celestial bodies at the rising of the sun, move and quaver your lips; hence kissing is used for the worship of the son of God, Psal. ii. 12. Some read the words, *let those that sacrifice a man*[y] *kiss the calves*: as if it respected the abominable practice of sacrificing men to Moloch; or intimated that men were sacrificed to the calves at Beth-el.

Ver. 3. *Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud, &c.*] Which, however promising it is, soon disappears when the sun is risen; signifying that the idolatrous Israelites, king, priests, and people, should be no more; their kingdom would cease, all their riches and wealth would depart from them, and they and their children be carried captive into a strange land: *and as the early dew it passeth away*; as soon as the heat of the sun is felt, when the earth is left dry; so these people, though they seemed to be in great prosperity, and to be very fruitful in children, and in substance, and promised themselves much more; yet in a little time their land would become desolate, and they stripped of all that was dear and valuable to them. These metaphors are used in ch. vi. 4: *as the chaff that is driven with a whirlwind out of the floor*: signifying that these idolatrous people were like chaff, light and empty, useless and unprofitable, fit for nothing but burning; and that they would be driven out of their own land through the Assyrian, that should come like a whirlwind with great force and power, as easily and as quickly as chaff is drove out of a threshing-floor of corn with a strong blast of wind; see Psal. i. 5. Jer. iv. 11, 12, 13. Dan. ii. 35: *and as the smoke out of the chimney*: which rises up in a pillar, and is soon dissipated by the wind, or dissolved into air; and is no sooner seen but it disappears; see Psal. lxviii. 2. All these similes shew how easily, suddenly, and quickly, the destruction of this idolatrous nation would be brought about.

Ver. 4. *Yet I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, &c.*] Which brought thee out from thence, as the Targum; and ever since, from that time to this, had shewn a regard unto them, as the Lord their God, both in the wilderness, as after mentioned, and in the land of Canaan, where they had been continued, and followed with instances of goodness to that day, and yet had sinned in so gross a manner; which argued great ingratitude in them, and forgetfulness of the Lord, and his mercies: *and thou shalt know no God but me*; they ought to have known, acknowledged, and worshipped no other god, as was enjoined them in the law: or, *thou knowest not*[z]; they did not know any other, which they in their own consciences were obliged to confess, if appealed to; however, they should know no other; by sad experience they would find that there was no other that could be of any service to them; their images and idols being unable to help them: *for there is no saviour besides me*; that could save them out of their troubles, and deliver them out of their distresses; no other that is, or can be, the author, either of temporal or of spiritual and eternal salvation.

Ver. 5. *I did know thee in the wilderness, &c.*] Where there were no food nor drink, where were scorpions, serpents, and beasts of prey; there the Lord knew them, owned them, and shewed a fatherly affection for them, and care of them; and fed them with manna and quails, and guided and directed them in the way, and protected and preserved them from their enemies, and from all hurt and danger. So the Targum explains it, "I sufficiently supplied their necessities in "the wilderness:" *in the land of great drought*: or, *of droughts*[a]; the word is only used in this place; and is by Aben Ezra interpreted a dry and thirsty land; and so he says it signifies in the Arabic language; and the same is observed by the father of Kimchi, and by R. Jonah[b]; but is by some rendered *torrid*[c], or *inflamed*, as if it had the signification of a Hebrew word which signifies a flame; and the Targum takes it to be akin to another, which signifies to *desire*, rendering it, "in a "land in which thou desirest every thing;" *i. e.* wants every thing. The first seems best, and is a fit descrip-

[q] In Verrem, l. 4. Orat. 9. c. 43.
[r] Metamorphos. sive de Asino Aureo, l. 4. p. 60.
[s] Octavius, p. 2.
[t] Nat. Hist. l. 28. c. 2.
[u] Apulei Apolog. p. 226.
[w] Περὶ ὀρχήσεως.
[x] Apolog. c. 16.
[y] זבחי אדם immolatores hominum, vel immolantes homines, Vatablus; sacrificantes hominem, Montanus, Calvin, Schmidt; so some in Abendana. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin render it as an imperative, *sacrifice men*; and the Syriac version, *O ye that sacrifice men*.
[z] לא תדע non novisti, vel cognovisti, Livelens, Drusius, Hart.
[a] בארץ תלאובות in terra siccitatum, Vatablus, Drusius, Schmidt.
[b] Apud R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 28. 1.
[c] In terra torridarum locorum, Montanus; torridissima, Junius & Tremellius, Heb.; inflammationum, Piscator.

tion of the wilderness, which was a place of drought, wherein was no water, Deut. viii. 15.

Ver. 6. *According to their pasture, so were they filled, &c.*] When they came into the land of Canaan, which was a land flowing with milk and honey, they were like a flock of sheep brought from short commons to a good pasture; and there they filled themselves to the full, and indulged to luxury and excess, pampered themselves, and made provision for the flesh to fulfil its lusts, and became carnal and sensual: *they were filled, and their hearts were exalted*: they were elated with their plenty, and grew proud and haughty, and attributed their fulness not to the goodness of God, but to their own excellency and merit; and put their trust and confidence in their affluence, and not in the Lord; and thought themselves safe and secure, and out of all danger, and concluded it would never be otherwise with them: *therefore have they forgotten me*, the Author of their beings, the Father of their mercies, and God of all their comforts; they forgot to give him praise and glory for their abundance; to place their trust and have their dependence on him, and to serve and worship him; this was the consequence of their luxury and pride. The Targum is, "therefore "they left my worship;" they waxed fat, and kicked, and lightly esteemed and forsook the God and Rock of their salvation, Deut. xxxii. 15.

Ver. 7. *Therefore I will be unto them as a lion, &c.*] Because of their idolatry, ingratitude, luxury, and especially their forgetfulness of God, which is last mentioned, and with which the words are connected. By this and the following metaphors are set forth the severity of God's judgments upon them for their sins, and their utter destruction by them. Some observe the word [r] here used signifies an old lion, which, though slower in the pursuit of its prey, is more cruel when it has got it; see ch. v. 14. *As a leopard by the way will I observe them*: which is a quick-sighted, vigilant, crafty, and insidious creature, which lurks in trees, and watches for men and beasts that pass by the way, and seizes on them. The lion makes his onset more openly, this more secretly; and both express the various ways God would take in his providence to chastise these people for their sins, and that he would watch over them to do them hurt, as he had to do them good, and take the proper opportunity of doing it, and execute his purpose with great wrath and fury, to their utter ruin; see Jer. v. 6, and xliv. 27. The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it, *as a leopard by the way of Assyria*[s], or *the Assyrians*; and so some interpreters take the sense to be, that God would watch them in their way to Assyria for help, and blast their designs, disappoint them of their expected assistance, and surprise them with his judgments; see ch. v. 13. and vii. 11. and viii. 9. and Jer. ii. 18, 19. and there was a mountain in Syria, called the mountain of the leopards, where they used to haunt, and from whence they came out to take their prey, to which there is a reference in Cant. iv. 8. which was two miles from Tripoli (a city of Syria) northward, three from the city Arces southward, and one from Mount Lebanon[t]; and such is the vigilance and agility of leopards, that they will sometimes, as Pliny[u] says, mount thick trees, and hide themselves in the branches, and leap at once, and unawares, upon those that pass by, whether men or beasts, as before observed; wherefore, with great propriety, is this simile used. The Targum is, *my word shall be, &c.*

Ver. 8. *I will meet them as a bear bereaved of her whelps, &c.*] Which is a fierce cruel creature at any time, but especially when this is its case, being very fond of its whelps; and having taken a great deal of pains to lick them into form, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe, it is the more enraged at the loss of them, and therefore falls upon man or beast it meets with the utmost fury: the phrase is expressive of the fiercest rage; see Prov. xvii. 12: *and will rend the caul of their hearts*: the pericardium, which is a membrane or skin that encloses the heart, and which when pierced is immediate death: perhaps some respect is had to the closing of their hearts to God, the hardness of them against him and his ways, and their inattention to his word; and now he'll open them, not in a way of grace and mercy, but of wrath and fury; as a bear, when it seizes a man, sticks his claws in his breast, tears it open, and makes his way at once to the heart, fetches it out, and sucks his blood: *and there will I devour them like a lion*: either in their cities and houses, when taken by the enemy; or in the way, in which they would be observed; or in their captivity: or *there* may be put for *then*, and so denotes the time when he would be all this to them before mentioned, and then he would utterly destroy them: *the wild beast shall tear them*: which literally is one of God's sore judgments, but here figuratively designs the Assyrian, and who is meant as the instrument of God's vengeance in all the other expressions; and is sometimes compared to a lion, and that as concerned with Israel; see Jer. l. 17. which is much better than by these four sorts of creatures to understand the four monarchies which Israel suffered by. The Targum is, "my word shall meet them as a bear bereaved, "and I will break the wickedness of their hearts, &c."

Ver. 9. *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, &c.*] Though the Lord was a lion, a leopard, and a bear to them, yet their destruction was not owing to him, but to themselves; he was not chargeable with it, but they only; the fault and blame was theirs; their own sins brought it on them, and provoked him to such righteous wrath and vengeance before expressed: this is said to clear the Lord from any imputation of this kind, and to lay it where it should be. It may be rendered, *it hath destroyed thee*[x]; either the calf, as Kimchi, and the worshipping of that, their idolatry; or their king, as others, taking it from the following verse by way of anticipation; or rather it may refer to all their sins before observed, their idolatry, luxury, and ingratitude. Gussetius[y] thinks the word כי has the signification of *burning*, as in Isa. iii. 24. and

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[r] שחל *leo*, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[s] כנמר על דרך אשור κατὰ τὴν ὁδὸν Ἀσσυρίων, Sept.; in via Assyriorum, V. L.; super via Assyriæ, Schmidt; in via Assyriæ, Liveleus, Cocceius.

[t] Adrichomii Theatrum Terræ Sanct. p. 166.

[u] Nat. Hist. l. 10. c. 73.

[x] שחתך *perdidit te*, Vatablus, Calvin, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Zanchius, De Dieu, Rivet; *corrupit te*, Cocceius.

[y] Comment. Ebr. p. 267.

renders it, *burning in me hath destroyed thee*, even *in him who is thy help*; that is, by their sins they had made God their enemy, who is a consuming fire, and whose burning wrath destroyed them, in whom otherwise they would have had help. Now though this may primarily regard the destruction of the civil state and kingdom of Israel for their sins, yet it may be applied to the spiritual and eternal state of men. Man is a lost, ruined, and undone creature; he is depraved and corrupted in his whole nature, soul and body; the image of God in him is marred and spoiled; there is no holiness in him, nor any righteousness upon him; no will nor power to that which is good; though he has not lost the natural liberty of his will, he has lost the moral liberty of it, and is a slave to his lusts, and a vassal to Satan; he has no true knowledge of that which is good, no inclination to it, nor strength to perform it. He is dead in sin, and dead in law; he is under the curse of it, and in the open way to everlasting ruin and destruction; and is in himself both helpless and lifeless; and he is a self-destroyed creature. His destruction is not owing to Satan only, though he was an instrument of the ruin of mankind; nor to the first parents of human nature only, in whom all men naturally and federally were, in whom they sinned, and with whom they fell; but to their own actual sins and transgressions. However, their destruction is not to be charged upon God, or ascribed to any decree of his, which is no cause of man's damnation, but sin only; nor to any sentence of condemnation passed by him, or the execution of it, which both belong to him as a righteous Judge; but to themselves and their sins, as is owned both by good men, who under true and saving convictions acknowledge their damnation would be just, if God should execute it on them; and by bad men, even the damned in hell; this will be the never-dying worm, the remorse of a guilty conscience, that they have brought all this ruin on themselves. *But in me is thine help* not in themselves, not in any creature, but in the Lord alone; the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; the essential Word, the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, on whom his divine Father has laid the help of his people; and who has helped them, and saved them from their sins, the cause of their destruction, and from wrath, which they deserved by reason of them; and has brought them out of a wretched state, a pit wherein is no water, into a comfortable, glorious, and happy one, and delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies; and helps them to what they want, to holiness, righteousness, and strength; to all supplies of grace here, and glory hereafter. Some render the particle as causal, *for in me*, &c.[m], and so make it to be a reason either proving that God could not be the cause of their destruction, because in him was their help, and in him only; or that their destruction was owing to themselves; *for in* or *against me, against thine help*; thou hast transgressed and rebelled; so Jarchi.

Ver. 10. *I will be thy King*, &c.] Governor, Protector, and Defender; and so confirming what is before said, that their help was in him: or, as the Targum, Abarbinel, and others[n], *where is thy king now, that he may serve thee in all thy cities?* whom they had asked, rejecting the Lord, and in whom they had put their trust and confidence for help; and now either having no king, he being taken away from them by death, or by the enemy; or if they had, he being unable to help them in their distress; they are ironically asked where he was, that he might exert himself and save them, if he could, in all the cities of the land, where the enemy were come, and had besieged and took them: *and thy judges, of whom thou saidst, give me a king and princes?* that is, where are thy king and his nobles, his courtiers and his counsellors, and all judges, magistrates, and governors subordinate to him? let them arise for thy help, if they can, by their policy or power, by their counsel, or by their arms; for judges and princes design such as were of the king's court and council, or acted in government under his direction and influence; for though these are not expressly mentioned, when they asked for a king, yet are implied; since there is no king without a court and nobles to attend him, to advise with, and to act under him. This refers to the story in 1 Sam. viii. 6, &c. and seems to be the leading step to Israel's ruin and destruction as a state.

Ver. 11. *I gave thee a king in mine anger*, &c.] Not the king of Assyria, sent to waste and destroy them, and carry them captive, as some, for of him the next clause cannot be said; nor Jeroboam, the first king of the ten tribes, as others, who was not given in anger to Israel, but to Solomon; rather Saul, as Kimchi and Aben Ezra, the first king of all Israel; and who was given at the request of the people, though in anger and resentment, they rejecting God their King; or it may design the kingly office and power in general, in a succession of kings from him the first of them: *and took* him *away in my wrath*; not Jeroboam, who does not appear to be taken away by death in wrath; rather Saul, who died in battle with the Philistines, and fell on the mountains of Gilboa: but it may be rendered better, *I will take* him *away*[o]; and refers not to Zedekiah the last king of Judah, as some in Kimchi; but to Hoshea, the last king of the ten tribes; for it is of them more especially the words, both in the text and context, are spoken; and so it respects the entire removal of kingly power from them, which ceased in Hoshea; see ch. iii. 4. and x. 15.

Ver. 12. *The iniquity of Ephraim* is *bound up; his sin* is *hid*, &c.] Which Kimchi restrains to the sin of the calves, and worshipping them; and others to the request of a king, the context speaks of: but it seems best to understand it in a more general sense of these, with all other sins, which were bound up, and not loosed, or were not remitted and forgiven, they being impenitent, and persisting in their sins; and which were bound up as in a bag or purse, in order to be opened and brought forth in proper time in open court, and be took cognizance of in a judiciary way: with which agrees an expression in Job xiv. 17. or which

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[m] כי בי quia in me, Montanus, Calvin, Schmidt.

[n] אהי מלכך ubi Rex tuus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Zanchius, Liveleus, Drusius, Cocceius, Schmidt, Targum. So Noldius, Concord. Ebr. Part. p. 101. No. 496.

[o] ואקח et auferam, Zanchius, Piscator, Cocceius, V. L.; recipiam, Drusius; accipiam, Schmidt.

were laid up among the treasures of divine omniscience, in the mind of God, and not forgotten by him, as they might be thought to be, and would in due time be brought to light, and vengeance took on them. So the Targum, "the sins of the house of Ephraim are treasured up; *they are reserved* to punish all their offences:" see Deut. xxxii. 34.

Ver. 13. *The sorrows of a travailing woman shall come upon him*, &c.] Upon Ephraim, or the ten tribes; that is, afflictions, distresses, and calamities, which are often in Scripture compared to the pains and sorrows of a woman in child-birth; and may denote the suddenness and inevitableness of them: see Isa. xiii. 8. Jer. xxx. 6, 7. So the Targum, "distress and trouble shall come upon them, as pains on a woman with-child;" which may respect the invasion of their land, the siege of Samaria, and their captivity. *He is an unwise son;* taking no warning by his ancestors, by their sins, and what befell them on account of them, but persisting in his sins, and in impenitence and hardness of heart: so the Targum, "he is not wise to know my fear:" *for he should not stay long in* the place of *the breaking forth of children;* that is, in the womb, as Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it; though the Targum and Jarchi understand it of the stool or seat of women in travail. The sense is, either that he is foolish and unwise, that he does not endeavour to extricate himself from these troubles; or rather to prevent them by repentance, by leaving his idols, and returning to the Lord; or that, should he do so, he would soon be delivered from all his sorrows, and not stay a moment longer in them. Though the words may be better rendered, *for he stays not*, or *would not stay, the time for the breaking forth of children*[p]; now this time is the time of the Gospel dispensation, the time of the Messiah's birth, the fulness of time appointed for his coming, and the time of the church's bringing forth many children in a spiritual sense; see Isa. liv. 1. Gal. iv. 26, 27. for which Ephraim or the ten tribes should have waited, but did not, which was their folly and their ruin; they did not *stand*, or continue, in the belief and expectation of the Messiah, and in the true worship of God, but left that, and served idols; and so continued not to the times of the Messiah, when the blessings mentioned in the following verse would be obtained and enjoyed; so Schmidt.

Ver. 14. *I will ransom them from the power of the grave*, &c.] That is, *when* or *at which time* before spoken of, and here understood, as the above interpreter rightly connects the words, *I will* do this and what follows: *I will redeem them from death;* these are the words, not of Jehovah the Father, as in ch. i. 7. but of the Son, who redeemed Israel out of Egypt, which was a typical redemption, ver. 4. in whom is the help of his people laid and found, ver. 9. the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; who is the true God, the mighty God, and so equal to this work of redemption: and who is also the near kinsman of the redeemed, as one of the words here used implies, and so to him belonged the right of redemption: the persons redeemed are not Israel after the flesh, but spiritual Israel, whether Jews or Gentiles; a special and peculiar people, chosen of God, and precious, out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation[q] and who, in their nature-state, are under sin, in bondage to it, and liable to the curse of the law, the wrath of God, hell and damnation; which are meant by the *grave* and *death*, and so needed a Redeemer to ransom them: for the word for *grave* should be rendered *hell*[s], as it often is; and *death* intends not a corporeal one only, but eternal death, or the second death: and both signify the wrath of God due to sin, and which God's elect are deserving of, and Christ has bore, and delivered them from; and the curse of the law, which he has redeemed them from, being made a curse for them; and eternal death, the equivalent to which he has suffered, and so has saved them from it, and all this by redeeming them from their sins, the cause of it; and which he has done by giving a redemption or ransom-price, which is his blood, his life, yea, himself, and which the first of the words here used imports. It is indeed true, that, in consequence of all this, there will be a redemption by him from a corporeal death, and from the grave: not as yet, for the ransomed of the Lord die as others, and are laid in the grave, the house appointed for all living: but in the resurrection-morn there will be a redemption, a deliverance of the bodies of the saints from the grave, from mortality and corruption; yea, of them from the moral corruption of sin, and all the defilements of it, as well as from all afflictions and diseases, and from death itself, which shall have no more dominion over them; to which purpose the words are applied by the apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 55. see the note there; and so by some ancient Jews[r] to the Messiah, and his times. *O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction;* that is, the utter destruction of them, for the plague or pestilence is a wasting destruction, Psal. xci. 6. 'tis the same which in New-Testament language is the abolishing of death, 2 Tim. i. 10. which is true of eternal death with respect to the redeemed, which Christ's death is the death of, he having by his death reconciled them to God, and opened the way to eternal life for them, which he has in his hands to give unto them; and of corporeal death and the grave, which Christ has utterly destroyed with respect to himself, having loosed the bands of death, and set himself free, and on whom that shall have no more dominion; and, with respect to his people, he has destroyed him that had the power of it, which is the devil; he has put away and abolished sin, the cause of it; he has took away that which is its sting; so that it may be truly said, as the apostle quotes these words, *O death, where is thy sting?* he has removed the curse from it, and made it a blessing; he has abolished it as a penal evil, so that it is not inflicted as a punishment on his people; and in the last day will entirely deliver them from the power of that, and of the grave; and then that which has slain its millions and millions, a number not to be numbered, will

[p] כי עת לא יעמד במשבר בנים nam tempus non subsistet in partitudine filiorum, Cocceius; quia tempus non stat in utero puerorum, Schmidt; quia tempore non stetissent in ruptura alvi filiorum, Montanus.

[s] שאול inferni, Schmidt.

[r] Gloss. Heb. in Lyra in loc. Vid. Galatin. Arcan. Cathol. Ver. l. 8. c. 21.

never slay one more: and that grave, which devoured as many, will never be opened more, or one more put into it; and then it may be said, *grave, where is thy victory?* thou shalt conquer no more, but be at an end. *Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes:* that is, the Lord will never repent of his decree of redemption from hell, death, and the grave; nor of the work of it by Christ; nor of the entire destruction of these things; which being once done, will never be repented of nor recalled, but remain so for ever.

Ver. 15. *Though he be fruitful among* his *brethren,* &c.] This is not spoken of Christ, as some think, who take the words to be a continuation of the prophecy concerning the Redeemer, who should increase his brethren, and bring many to him; and be as noxious to hell and death as the east wind is to persons and things, and dry up the fountains and springs of hell and death; the sins of men he should abolish, and be victorious over all his enemies, and divide their spoils: but they are rather the words of Christ himself concerning Ephraim, in connexion with ver. 13. expressing his character and state, and explaining the sorrows and calamities that should come upon him for his folly, in not staying the time of the breaking forth of children; and to be understood either of his spiritual fruitfulness in the last days; when Israel shall return to the Lord by repentance, and believe in the true Messiah, and bring forth the fruit of good works, as an evidence of it, along with their brethren, those of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and so all Israel should be saved; which yet should not hinder the distresses and destruction that should come upon the ten tribes by the Assyrians, afterwards declared: or rather of his political fruitfulness, in allusion to his name; increasing in numbers, abounding in power and authority, in wealth and riches; either before the sin of the calves, as Kimchi, before he fell into idolatry; or afterwards, particularly in the times of Jeroboam the second, who enlarged the border of Israel; and in after-times, when the kings of Israel entered into alliance with the Assyrians, and enjoyed peace and prosperity, and thought themselves secure of the continuance of it. Some render it, *because he is fierce* [r]; or *like a wild ass's colt;* not only foolish and unwise, but fierce and unruly among his brethren, and would not stay the time of the breaking forth of children: therefore *an east wind shall come:* which is very vehement, cold, blasting, and exceeding noxious and pernicious to fruit; meaning Salmaneser king of Assyria, who came from the east; his kingdom, the land of Assyria, lying, as Kimchi observes, eastward to the land of Israel. So the Targum, "now will I bring against "him a king strong as a burning wind;" so the king of Babylon and his army are compared to a strong and violent wind, Jer. iv. 11, 12, 13. *The wind of the Lord shall come up from the wilderness;* the same is called the *wind of the Lord,* partly to denote the strength and vehemency of it, as mountains of the Lord, and cedars of the Lord, signify great and mighty ones; and partly to shew that this enemy would come at the call of the Lord, by his direction and appointment. So the Targum, "by the word of the Lord, through the way of "the wilderness shall he come up;" this circumstance, *from the wilderness,* is mentioned, not only because winds from thence usually blow more strongly and violently, but because the way from Assyria to the land of Israel lay through a wilderness. *And his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up;* his land wasted and destroyed; his fields, vineyards, and oliveyards, trodden down and ruined, which yielded a large increase; trade and commerce stopped, and so all the springs and fountains of wealth and riches dried up; as well as their wives and children destroyed, as often mentioned, which were the source and spring of their continuance as a people in ages to come. *He shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant vessels;* not Christ, nor Ephraim, but the Assyrian; who, entering into their cities, would plunder them of all their *vessels of desire* [s], or desirable ones; their vessels of gold and silver; all their rich household goods and furniture of value; all their wealth and riches treasured up by them, their gold, silver, precious stones, rich garments, &c. So the Targum, "he shall destroy "the house of his treasures, and shall lay waste the "city of his kingdom; he shall spoil the treasuries, all "vessels of desire."

Ver. 16. *Samaria shall become desolate,* &c.] With this verse the 14th chapter begins in the Hebrew copies, and in the Targum, and in many versions; but seems better to conclude the present chapter; since it is in close connexion with the preceding verse, and explains the figurative expressions there used. Samaria was the head of Ephraim, Isa. vii. 9. or the metropolis of the ten tribes of Israel; whose desolation is here prophesied of, and was accomplished by Salmaneser king of Assyria, signified by the east wind; by whom it was not only besieged and taken, but very probably its houses were demolished, its walls broken down, and razed to the very foundation; see 2 Kings xvii. 5, 6. and, as this was the head city, it may be put for all the rest, and even for the whole land, which was at the same time laid waste. The Targum is, "Samaria "shall be guilty;" that is, shall be found guilty of many sins; her transgression shall be revealed, as Jarchi, become manifest by the just punishment inflicted on her. *For she hath rebelled against her God:* and bitterly provoked him to wrath and anger, as the word [t] signifies; by relinquishing him and his worship, and by serving idols, the calves at Dan and Beth-el, Baal and other idols; when the Lord was their God, not only by creation, as of all men, but by the choice he made of them, and the covenant he made with them; by a national adoption of them, attended with various blessings and privileges, and by their profession of him; all which were an aggravation of their rebellion against him. *They shall fall by the sword:* the inhabitants of Samaria, and of the land, particularly the men thereof; and especially their armed men, their men of war, that fought for them, and defended them; these should fall by the sword of the Assyrian. *Their*

[r] יפריא ille fero modo aget, Cocceius; ferox est, notat ferum, vel ferocem esse sicut onagrum, Schmidt, Burkius. So R. Jonah in Ben Melech.

[s] כל כלי חמדה omnium vasorum desiderii, Montanus; omnis vasis desiderii, Schmidt.

[t] מרתה ad amaritudinem concitavit, V. L.; significat amaricare, vel amaritudine replere, Rivet.

children shall be dashed to pieces: against stones, walls, and pavements; who should have perpetuated their name to future ages, and inherited their possessions: *and their women with-child shall be ripped up:* things which are often done by cruel enemies, when cities are sacked and plundered; and which Salmaneser might be provoked unto by the perfidy of the king of Israel, and by the city of Samaria holding out a three-years' siege. This, though we have no account of as done at that time, yet no doubt was; even as the same things are predicted of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and which were to be done to them, in retaliation for them, though there is no narrative of them; see Psal. cxxxvii. 8, 9. Isa. xiii. 16, 18.

CHAP. XIV.

THIS chapter concludes the book, with gracious promises to repenting sinners, to returning backsliders. It begins with an exhortation to Israel to return to the Lord, seeing he was their God, and they had fallen by sin from prosperity into adversity, temporal and spiritual, ver. 1. and they are directed what to say to the Lord, upon their return to him, both by way of petition, and of promise and of resolution how to behave for the future, encouraged by his grace and mercy, ver. 2, 3. and they are told what the Lord, by way of answer, would say to them, ver. 4. and what he would be to them; and what blessings of grace he would bestow on them; and in what flourishing and fruitful circumstances they should be, ver. 5, 6, 7, 8. and the chapter ends with a character of such that attend to and understand those things; and with a recommendation of the ways of the Lord, which are differently regarded by men, ver. 9.

Ver. 1. *O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God,* &c.] From whom they had revolted and backslidden; whose worship and service they had forsaken, and whose word and ordinances they had slighted and neglected, and had served idols, and had given into idolatry, superstition, and will-worship; and are here exhorted to turn again to the Lord by repentance and reformation, to abandon their idols, and every false way, and cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart; and the rather, since he was their God; not only their Creator, Preserver, and kind Benefactor, but their God, by his special choice of them above all people; by his covenant with them; by his redemption of them; and by their profession of him; and who was still their God, and ready to receive them, upon their return to him: and a thorough return is here meant, a returning *even unto*[w], or quite up to the Lord thy God; it is not a going to him half-way, but a going quite up to his seat; falling down before him, acknowledging sin and backslidings, and laying hold upon him by faith as their God, Redeemer, and Saviour: hence, from the way of speaking here used, the Jews[x] have a saying, as Kimchi observes, "great is repentance, for it brings a man to "the throne of glory;" the imperative may be here used for the future, as some take it; and then it is a prediction of the conversion of Israel, *thou shalt return, O Israel*[y]; and which was in part fulfilled in the first times of the Gospel, which met with many of the Israelites dispersed among the Gentiles, and was the means of their conversion; and will have a greater accomplishment when all Israel shall be converted and saved: *for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity:* or *though thou art fallen*[z]; into sin, and by it into ruin, temporal and spiritual; from a state of great prosperity and happiness, both in things civil and religious, into great adversity, and calamities of every sort; yet return, repent, consider from whence thou art fallen, and by what; or thou shalt return, be recovered and restored, notwithstanding thy fall, and the low estate in which thou art. The Targum is, "return to the fear of the "Lord."

Ver. 2. *Take with you words, and turn to the Lord,* &c.] Not mere words without the heart, but such as come from it, and express the true sense of it; words of confession, as the Targum; by which sin is acknowledged, and repentance declared, and forgiveness asked. Kimchi's note is a very good one; "he (*i. e.* God) "does not require of you, upon return, neither gold "nor silver, nor burnt-offerings, but good works; "therewith confessing your sins with your whole "hearts, and not with your lips only;" and which best agrees with evangelical repentance and Gospel times, in which ceremonial sacrifices are no more; and not any words neither; not tautologies and multiplicity of words, or words of man's prescribing, but of the Lord's directing to and dictating; the taught words of the Holy Ghost, which he suggests and helps men to, who otherwise know not how to pray, or what to pray for; and these expressed under a sense of sin, and sorrow for it, and in the strength of faith, and are as follow: *say unto him, take away all iniquity;* which is to be understood, not of the taking away of the being of sin; which, though very desirable, is not to be expected in this life: nor of the expiation of sin by the sacrifice of Christ, which is done already; he has taken the sins of his people from them to himself, and has bore them, and carried them away, and removed them out of the sight of divine justice, which is satisfied for them: nor of the taking away of the power and dominion of sin; which is done by the Spirit of God, and the efficacy of his grace on the hearts of converted persons: nor of an extinguishing all sense of sin in men; for none have a quicker sense of it than pardoned sinners, or are more humble on the account of it, or more loath it; but of the taking of it away from the conscience of a sensible truly penitent sinner or backslider, by a fresh application of pardoning grace and mercy: sin is a burden, a heavy one, when the guilt

[w] עד יהוה usque ad Dominum, Montanus, Tigurine version, Œcolampadius, Schmidt, Burkius.
[x] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 86. 1.
[y] שובה revertere, h. e. reverteris, Schmidt.
[z] כי כשלת etsi corruisti, Luther apud Tarnovium.

of it is charged and lies upon the conscience; pardon of sin applied is a lifting up, as the word here used signifies, a taking off of this burden from it, a causing it to pass away; which is done by the fresh sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, which purges the conscience from sin, and clears it from the guilt of it, and speaks peace and comfort; and which is the blessing here prayed for, and every backslider, sensible of his case, sees he stands in need of, and even to have *all* taken away; for, if but one sin remains, and the guilt of it continues, he can have no peace, nor stand up under it; but, when God forgives sin, he forgives *all* sin. *And receive us graciously;* receive into grace and favour, that is, openly and manifestly; the free love and favour of God is always the same, but the manifestations of it are different; sometimes more or less, and sometimes scarce any, if any at all, and is the case here; and therefore a petition is made for the remembrance of it, for a renewed discovery and application of it: or accept us in a gracious manner; acceptance with God is not on account of the merits of men, but his own grace and mercy; not through any works of righteousness done by them, which are impure and imperfect; but through Christ the Beloved, in whom God is well-pleased with the persons, and services, and sacrifices of his people, and receives all for his sake, and which is here asked for; as well as that he would take them into his protection, and open affection. It is, in the original text, only, *receive good* [a]; meaning either their good hearts, made so by the grace of God; their broken hearts and contrite spirits, which are sacrifices not despised by him, but acceptable to him through Christ: or their good words they were bid to take, and did take, and use; their good prayers offered up through Christ, in his name, and in the exercise of faith, which are the Lord's delight: or their good works, done from a principle of love, in faith, to the glory of God, and with which sacrifices he is well-pleased: or rather, as the same word signifies, to give as well as receive; see Psal. lxviii. 18. Ephes. iv. 8. It may be rendered, *give good* [b]; take good, and give it to us, even all good things, temporal and spiritual, especially all spiritual blessings in Christ; all which good things come from God, and are his gifts; particularly the good spirit of God, and his grace, which the Lord gives to them that ask; and all supplies of grace from Christ; and more especially, as some interpreters of note explain it, the righteousness of Christ imputed and applied; which goes along with pardoning grace, or the taking away of sin, Zech. iii. 4. and is the good, the better, the best robe; a gift, the gift of grace; a blessing received from the Lord, and to be asked for of him: *so will we render the calves of our lips;* not calves, bullocks, and oxen, for sacrifice, as under the law; but the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving for pardoning grace, for a justifying righteousness, and for all good things: these are the fruit of the lips, as the apostle interprets it, Heb. xiii. 15. and which are sacrifices more acceptable to God than calves of a year old, or an ox or bullock that has horns and hoofs, Psal. lxix. 30, 31. This shews that the text and context refer to Gospel times, to the times of the Messiah; in which the Jews themselves say all sacrifices will cease but the sacrifice of praise. The Targum is, "turn to the worship of the Lord, and say, "let it be with thee to forgive sins, and may we be "received as good, and the words of our lips be accepted with thee as bullocks for good pleasure upon "the altar."

Ver. 3. *Ashur shall not save us,* &c.] This is still a continuation of the words repenting and returning Israel are directed to make use of before the Lord, declaring they would not do any more as they had done; go to Assyria, or the kings of Assyria, as the Targum, for help, and desire assistance, and expect deliverance and salvation from thence; see ch. v. 13. and vii. 11. and viii. 9: *we will not ride upon horses;* to seek for help elsewhere; or go to Egypt for them, as they had done; or put their trust in them for safety, in a time of war; or think to make their escape by them when in danger; see Psal. xx. 8. Isa. xxxi. 1, 3: *neither will we say any more to the work of our hands,* ye are *our gods;* that is, say so to, or concerning, their idols, which were made by their hands, or by their orders, as they had formerly done to the golden calf in the wilderness, and to the calves at Dan and Beth-el; see Exod. xxxii. 4. 1 Kings xii. 28. now, by all these expressions is meant, that they would determine not to put any confidence in any creature, or in any creature-performance; that they would not trust in their own merits, but in the mercy of God through Christ for the pardon of their sins; nor in any works of righteousness for their justification before God, and acceptance with him; nor expect salvation in any other way than by the free grace of God, and his abundant mercy in Christ: *for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy;* and in thee only; hereby declaring that the Lord was the only Saviour; that there was salvation in Christ, and in no other; and that they would have no other saviour but him; that they would look to the mercy of God proclaimed in him, and communicated from and through him, the mercy-seat, and to his mercy alone for eternal life; in whom the most destitute persons, as the fatherless, who are destitute of friends, of help and assistance, of counsel and advice, find favour, kindness, and mercy, even such as are most hopeless and helpless; which is a great encouragement to look to the Lord, to trust in him, and hope in his mercy.

Ver. 4. *I will heal their backslidings,* &c.] This and what follows is the Lord's answer to the above prayer; and this clause particularly is an answer to that petition, *take away all iniquity:* sins are diseases, natural and hereditary, nauseous and loathsome, mortal, and incurable but by the grace of God, and blood of Christ; backslidings are relapses, which are dangerous things; Christ is the only Physician, who heals all the diseases of sin, and these relapses also; he will do it, he has promised it, and never turns away any that apply to him for it; and which he does by a fresh application of his blood, whereby he takes away sin, heals the conscience wounded with it, and restores peace and comfort; which is a great encouragement to

[a] קח טוב accipe bonum, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, CoccEius, Schmidt, Burkius.

[b] Acceptum confer bonum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius.

take words, and return unto him; see ch. vi. 1. Jer. iii. 22. Isa. lvii. 17, 18: *I will love them freely*: this is in answer to that petition, *receive us graciously*: or *receive good*, or rather *give* it; not that the love of God or Christ begins when sinners repent and turn to him, or he applies his pardoning grace, since his love is from everlasting; but that in so doing he manifests his love, and will continue in it, nor shall any thing separate from it: and this love, as it is freely set upon the objects of it, without any merits of theirs, or any motives in them, but flows from the free sovereign will and pleasure of God in Christ; so it is as freely manifested, and continues upon the same bottom, and is displayed in a most liberal and profuse donation of blessings of grace to them: this love is free in its original, and is liberal and bountiful in the effects of it; and makes the objects of it a free, willing, and bountiful people too: *for mine anger is turned away from him*: from Israel, which, under former dispensations of Providence, seemed to be towards him, at least when under his frowns, resentment, and displeasure, as is the case of that people at this day; but when they shall return to the Lord, and he shall manifest and apply his pardoning grace to them, his anger will appear no more, and they shall be in a very happy and comfortable condition, as Israel or the church declares, Isa. xii. 1. which refers to the same times as these words do; see Rom. xi. 26, 27. and compare Psal. lxxxv. 2, 3. where a manifestation of pardoning grace is called the Lord's turning himself from the fierceness of his anger; and especially this suits with Gospel times, satisfaction being made for sin by the sacrifice of Christ.

Ver. 5. *I will be as the dew unto Israel*, &c.] To spiritual Israel, to those that return to the Lord, take with them words, and pray unto him, whose backslidings are healed, and they are freely loved; otherwise it is said of apostate Israel or Ephraim, that they were *smitten*, and *their root dried* up, and bore *no fruit*, ch. ix. 16. These words, and the whole context, respect future times, as Kimchi observes; even the conversion of Israel in the latter day, when they shall partake of all the blessings of grace, signified by the metaphors used in this and the following verses. These words are a continuation of the answer to the petitions put into the mouths of converted ones, promising them many favours, expressed in figurative terms; and first by *the dew*, which comes from heaven, is a great blessing of God, and is quickening, very refreshing and fruitful to the earth: and the Lord is that unto his people as the dew is to herbs, plants, and trees of the earth; he is like unto it in his free love and favour, and the discoveries of it to them: which, like the dew, is of and from himself alone; is an invaluable blessing; better than life itself; and is not only the cause of quickening dead sinners, but of reviving, cheering, and refreshing the drooping spirits of his people; and is indeficient, never fails, but always continues, Prov. xix. 12. and so he is in the blessings of his grace, and the application of them; which are in heavenly places, in Christ, and come down from thence, and in great abundance, like the drops of dew: and fall silently, insensibly, and unawares, particularly regenerating grace; and are very cheering and exhilarating, as forgiveness of sin, a justifying righteousness, adoption, &c. Deut. xxxiii. 13. and also in the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, which distil as dew; these are of God, and come down from heaven; seem little in themselves, but of great importance to the conversion of sinners, and comfort of saints; bring many blessings in them, and cause great joy and fruitfulness wherever they come with power, Deut. xxxii. 2. The Targum is, "my Word shall be as dew to Israel;" the essential Word of God, the Messiah; of whose incarnation of a virgin some interpret this; having, like the dew, no father but God, either in his divine or human nature; but rather it is to be understood of the blessings of grace he is to his people as Mediator; being to them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, and every other, even their all in all: *he shall grow as the lily*; to which the church and people of God are sometimes compared, especially for their beauty and comeliness in Christ, Solomon in all his glory not being arrayed like one of these; particularly for their unspotted purity, being clothed with fine linen, clean and white, the white raiment of Christ's righteousness, and having their garments washed and made white in his blood; see Cant. ii. 1, 2, 16. and here for its growth. The root of the lily lies buried in the earth a long time, when it seems as if it was dead; but on a sudden it springs out of the earth, and runs up to a great height, and becomes very flourishing; which is not owing to itself, it *toils not*; but to the dew of heaven: so God's elect in a state of nature are dead, but, being quickened by the grace of God, spring up on a sudden, and grow very fast; which is not owing to themselves, but to the dews of divine grace, the bright shining of the sun of righteousness upon them, and to the influences of the blessed Spirit; and so they grow up on high, into their Head Christ Jesus, and rise up in their affections, desires, faith and hope to heavenly things, to the high calling of God in Christ, and become fruitful in grace, and in good works. The Targum is, "they shall shine as the "lily;" see Matt. vi. 29: *and cast forth his roots as Lebanon*; as the tree, or trees, of Lebanon, as the Targum; and so Kimchi, who adds, which are large, and their roots many; or as the roots of the trees of Lebanon, so Jarchi; like the cedars there, which, as the word here used signifies, *struck*[f] their roots firm in that mountain, and stood strong and stable, let what winds and tempests soever blow: thus, as in the following, what one metaphor is deficient in, another makes up. The lily has but a weak root, and is easily plucked up; but the cedars in Lebanon had roots firm and strong, to which the saints are sometimes compared, as here; see Psal. xcii. 12. and this denotes their permanency and final perseverance; who are rooted in the love of God, which is like a root under ground from all eternity, and sprouts forth in regeneration, and is the source of all grace; is itself immovable, and in it the people of God are secured, and can never be rooted out; and they may be said to *strike* their roots in it, as the phrase here, when they exer-

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[f] ויך percutiet, Montanus, Tarnovius, Rivet, Cocceius; figet, Calvin, Pareus; defiget, Zanchius; & infiget, Schmidt; incutiet, Drusius.

cise a strong faith in it, and are firmly persuaded of their interest in it; see Ephes. iii. 17, 18. Rom. viii. 38, 39. they are also rooted in Christ, who is the root of Jesse, of David, and of all the saints; from whom they have their life, their nourishment and fruitfulness, and where they remain unmoved, and strike their roots in him, by renewed acts of faith on him, claiming their interest in him; and are herein so strongly rooted and grounded, that all the winds and storms of sin, Satan, and the world, cannot eradicate them; nay, as trees are more firmly rooted by being shaken, so are they; see Col. ii. 7. Isa. xxxvii. 31. The Targum is, "they shall dwell in the strength of their land, as a "tree of Lebanon, which sends forth its branch."

Ver. 6. *His branches shall spread,* &c.] As the well-rooted cedars in Lebanon; see Numb. xxiv. 6. This respects the propagation of the church of God, and the interest of Christ in the world, as in the first times of the Gospel, and will be in the latter day; when the Gospel shall be spread everywhere; churches set up in all places; the Jews converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in; and these like spreading branches, and fruitful boughs, abounding in grace and good works. The Targum is, "they "shall multiply or increase with sons and daughters:" *and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree;* which lies in its being laden with excellent fruit, and being always green; for which reasons particular believers, and the whole church of God, are sometimes compared to it; having that fatness in them, with which God and men are honoured; and that true grace, which is signified by oil in the vessels of the heart, and is called the unction and anointing of the holy One; and they persevering in this grace to the end, which is ever green and durable, immortal, and dies not; see Psal. lii. 8. Jer. xi. 16. Here again it may be observed, that the trees of Lebanon, though they had strong roots, and spreading branches, yet were not fruitful; and the deficiency of that metaphor is supplied by this of the olive: *and his smell as Lebanon;* as the trees of Lebanon, the cedars, trees of frankincense, and other odoriferous trees and plants, which grew upon it; here what is wanting in the olive-tree, whose smell is not so grateful, is made up by this simile of the trees of Lebanon, and the smell of them; which may denote the sweet and grateful smell the Lord smells in his people, or his gracious acceptance of them in Christ; whose garments of righteousness and salvation on them are as the smell of Lebanon; and whose graces in them exceed the smell of all spices; and whose prayers are odours, and their praises a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour to God; see Cant. iv. 10, 11. Rev. v. 8. and viii. 3, 4. 1 Pet. ii. 5. Some render it, *as incense* [d], called *lebonah* in Hebrew, from whence the mountain is thought to have its name, frankincense growing upon it. So the Targum, "and their smell as the smell of the incense of spices." Jarchi says, as the sanctuary, which was made of the cedars of Lebanon.

Ver. 7. *They that dwell under his shadow shall return,* &c.] Either under the shadow of Lebanon, as Japhet and Jarchi; the shadow of that mountain, or of the trees that grew upon it; or under the shadow of Israel, the church, to which young converts have recourse, and under which they sit with pleasure; or rather under the shadow of the Lord Israel was called to return unto, and now return, ver. 1. 2. as the Israelites will in the latter day. So the Targum, "and they "shall be gathered out of the midst of their captivity, "they shall dwell under the shadow of their Messiah;" thus truly gracious persons sit under the shadow of Christ, who come to themselves, and return unto the Lord; even under the shadow of his word and ordinances, where they desire to sit, and do sit with delight and pleasure, as well as in the greatest safety; and find it a very refreshing and comfortable shadow to them; even a shadow from the heat of avenging justice, a fiery law, the fiery darts of Satan, and the fury of the world; and, like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, exceeding pleasing and cheering to weary travellers; see Cant. ii. 3. Isa. xxv. 4, 5. and xxxii. 2: *they shall revive as the corn;* which first dies, and then is quickened; or which, after a cold nipping winter, at spring revives again: thus do believers under the dews of divine grace, under the shadow of Christ, and the influences of his spirit: or, *shall revive* with *corn* [e]; by means of it; by which may be signified the corn of heaven, angels' food, the hidden manna, the Gospel of Christ, and Christ himself, the bread of life; by which the spirits of his people are revived, their souls upheld in life, and their graces quickened; which they find and eat, and it is the joy and rejoicing of their hearts: *and grow as the vine;* which, though weak, and needs support, and its wood unprofitable; yet grows and spreads very much, and brings forth rich fruit in clusters: so the saints, though they are weak in themselves, and need divine supports, and when they have done all they can are unprofitable servants; yet through the power of divine grace, which is like the dew, they grow in every grace, and are filled with the blessings of it, and bring forth much fruit to the glory of God: *and the scent thereof* shall be *as the wine of Lebanon;* like the wine of those vines which grow on Mount Lebanon, and judged to be the best. On Mount Lebanon, about the mid-way between the top and the bottom of it, there is now a convent called Canobine, situated in a very pleasant place; and Le Bruyn in his travels relates, that it is preferable to all other places on account of its wines, which are the richest and finest in the world; they are very sweet, of a red colour, and so oily that they stick to the glass. At Lebanon was a city called by the Greeks Ampeloessa, from the excellency of its wine, as Grotius from Pliny [f] observes. Gabriel Sionita [g] assures us, that even to this day the wines of Libanus are in good reputation. Kimchi relates from Asaph, a physician, that the wines of Lebanon, Hermon, and Carmel, and of the mountains of Israel and Jerusalem, and of the mountains of Samaria, and of the mountains of Caphtor Mizraim, were the best of wines, and exceeded all others for scent, taste, and medicine. Japhet interprets it, the smell of their vine afar off was

[d] Ut thuris, Grotius.

[e] יחיו דגן ζήσονται σίτῳ, Sept.; vivent tritico, Vulg. Lat.; vivificabunt frumento, Munster, Castalio; so Syr. & Ar.

[f] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 19.

[g] Apud Calmet, Dictionary, on the word *Wine.*

as the wine of Lebanon; and so Kimchi, the smell of the wine of the vine, to which Israel is compared, is like the smell of the wine of Lebanon. This may denote the savouriness of truly converted gracious souls, of their graces, doctrines, life, and conversation. Some choose to render it, *their memory* [h] shall be *as the wine of Lebanon*: so the Targum interprets it of "the memory of their goodness;" the saints obtain a good report through faith, and have a good name, better than precious ointment; their memory is blessed; they are had in everlasting remembrance; the memory of them is not only dear to the people of God in after-ages; but the memory of their persons, and of their works, is exceeding grateful to God and Christ.

Ver. 8. *Ephraim* shall say, *what have I to do any more with idols?* &c.] This is to be understood, not of apostate Ephraim, as in the times of the prophet, who was so wedded and glued to the idols, that there was no hope of getting him from them; and therefore is bid to let him alone, ch. iv. 17. but of Ephraim or Israel returning to God at his call, under the influence of his grace, in the latter day, ver. 1, 2. Idols are the same with the works of their hands, ver. 3. and to be interpreted, not of graven or molten images, to the worship of which the Jews have not been addicted since their captivity to this day; see ch. iii. 4. but of the idols of their hearts, their impiety, their unbelief, their rejection of the Messiah, which, at the time of their conversion, they will loath, abhor, and mourn over; likewise the traditions of their elders, they are now zealous and tenacious of, and prefer even to the written word; but will now relinquish them, and embrace the Gospel of Christ; as well as the idol of their own righteousness they have always endeavoured to establish; but shall now renounce, and receive Christ as the Lord their righteousness. The like to this is to be found in common in all truly penitent and converted sinners; who, being made sensible of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, detest and abhor it, and declare they will have nothing to do with it; not but that it continues in them, and has to do with them, and they with that; yet not so as to live and walk in it: to yield their members as instruments of it; to serve and obey it as their master; to make provision for it, and to have the course of their lives under the direction and power of it; and so likewise, being convinced of the imperfection and insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them, they will have nothing to do with that in the business of justification before God, and acceptance with him: now these are the words of the Lord, affirming what Ephraim should say, as Kimchi rightly observes; he promises for him, as he well might, since it is he that gives repentance to Israel, and works in his people principles of grace, and enables them both to will and to do, to make such holy resolutions, and perform them. Some render the words, *O Ephraim, what have I to do* [i]*?* &c. and take them to be words of God concerning himself, declaring he would have nothing to do with idols, nor suffer them in his service, nor should they; for *what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?* 2 Cor. vi. 15, 16. but the former sense is much best; rather what Schmidt suggests is more agreeable, who, rendering the words in the same way, makes them to be the words of a believing Gentile returning and dwelling under the shadow of Israel; so he interprets the preceding verse, and takes this to be the language of such an one throughout. The Targum is, "they of the house of Israel shall say, what *is it* to us "to serve idols any more?" *I have heard* him; says the Lord; Ephraim bemoaning himself, repenting of his sins, and confessing them; his prayers for pardon and acceptance, and the resolutions made by him in the strength of divine grace, ver. 2, 3, 8. see Jer. xxxi. 18, 19, 20. and this is what his idols he once served could not do, who had ears, but heard not; but the Lord not only heard, but answered, and granted his request. So the Targum, "I by my Word will receive the prayer of "Israel, and will have mercy on him:" *and observed him*: looked at him, and on him; with an eye of pity and compassion; with a favourable and propitious look, as the Lord does towards those that are poor, and of a contrite spirit; observed the ways and steps he took in returning to him; marked his tears and humiliations, groans and moans, and took notice of his wants in order to supply them. I am *like a green fir-tree*: these are the words of the Lord continued; though some take them to be the words of Ephraim; or, as Schmidt, of the Gentile believer, like those of David, Psal. lii. 8. but they best agree with Christ, who may be compared to such a tree, as he is to many others in Scripture; because a choice one, as he is to his father, and to all believers, chosen and precious, lovely and beloved; a tall tree, so Christ is highly exalted as Mediator, higher than the kings of the earth, above the angels in heaven, yea, higher than the heavens. The boughs of this tree, as Jarchi and Kimchi observe, bend downward so low as to be laid hold on; Christ, though the high and lofty One, dwells with humble souls, and suffers himself to be laid hold upon by the faith of every one that comes to him. Pliny says [k], that this tree is of a cheerful aspect, smooth, and scarce any knots upon it; and its leaves so thick that a shower of rain will not pass through it: Christ is most amiable, and altogether lovely to look at in his person and fulness; and he looks in a loving smiling manner upon his people; he is without any knot of sin or corruption in him, as to principle or practice; and is a delightful shade from the wrath of God, or rage of man, from the heat of a fiery law, and the darts of Satan: and as this tree, as here, is ever green, so he is always the same; he ever lives, and his people in him, and by him; his fulness always continues to supply them. Once more, the fir-tree is the habitation of the stork, an unclean creature by the law of God; so Christ is the dwelling-place of sinners, he receives them, and converses with them, Psal. civ. 17. The Septuagint version renders it, *as a thick juniper-tree*; which naturalists say [l] has such a virtue in it, as by the smell to drive away serpents. So the old serpent the devil was

[h] זכרו memoria ejus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Tarnovius, Cocceius, Castalio, Schmidt, Burkius.

[i] אפרים מה לי עוד Ephraim, vel O, quid mihi amplius, &c. Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Tigurine version, Castalio, Cocceius, Schmidt, Burkius.

[k] Nat. Hist. l. 16. c. 10.

[l] Varions apud Rivet. in loc.

drove away by Christ in the wilderness, in the garden, and on the cross; and resisting by faith, holding out his blood and righteousness, causes him to flee from the saints. The Arabic version is, *as the fruitful cypress-tree*; which is of a good smell, and its wood very durable; and so may be expressive of the savour of Christ, his righteousness and sacrifice, the graces of his spirit, and of his duration. Some take this to be a promise that Ephraim should be as a green fir-tree, so Aben Ezra; with which agrees the Targum, "I by "my word will make him as the beautiful fir-tree;" and to which sometimes the saints are compared; see Isa. xli. 19. and lv. 13. and lx. 13. and this being a tree that bears no fruit, it follows, to make up that defect in the metaphor, *from me is thy fruit found*: from Christ are all the spiritual blessings of grace, peace, pardon, righteousness, adoption, a right and meetness for eternal life, and that itself; all the fruits and graces of the spirit, as faith, hope, love, *&c.*; and all good works, which spring from union with him, are done in his strength, and influenced by his grace and example; see Phil. i. 11.

Ver. 9. *Who is wise*, and *he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them?* &c.] Contained in this book, and particularly in this chapter; which expresses so much of the goodness of God and grace of Christ to Israel; though it may be applied to the whole Scripture, and to all the mysteries and doctrines of the Gospel, respecting Christ and his grace; and be a recommendation of these to the consideration of every wise and prudent man; where he will find enough to exercise his wisdom and understanding; though he need not be discouraged in his search and inquiry into them. It suggests as if there were but few such wise persons, and that they are the only wise men that do know and understand these things; and all others are but fools, let them be thought as wise as they will: *for the ways of the Lord are right*; straight, plain, even, according to the rules of justice and equity; there is no unrighteousness in them; none in the ways in which he himself walks; either in his ways and methods of grace, his decrees and purposes, his counsels and covenant; or in his providential dispensations; nor in those he directs others to walk in, the paths of faith and doctrine; or the ways of his commandments: *and the just shall walk in them*; such as are justified by the righteousness of Christ, and have his grace wrought in them, and live righteously; these walk, and continue to walk, in the ways of God; which shews that the doctrine of justification by Christ's imputed righteousness is no licentious doctrine: *but the transgressors shall fall therein*; the transgressors of the law of God, not being used to his ways, as Kimchi's father observes, stumble in them and fall; or rather, as Jarchi and the Targum, they fall into hell, into ruin and destruction, because they walk not in them; though the sense seems to be, that as Christ himself, so his ways and his word, his doctrines and his ordinances, are stumbling-blocks to wicked men, at which they stumble, and fall, and perish; see Luke ii. 34. Rom. ix. 33. 1 Pet. ii. 8.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

J O E L.

IN some Hebrew Bibles this prophecy is called *Sepher Joel*, the Book of Joel; in the Vulgate Latin version, the Prophecy of Joel; and in the Syriac version, the Prophecy of the Prophet Joel; and the Arabic version, the Prophet Joel; and so the Apostle Peter quotes him, Acts ii. 16. His name, according to Hillerus[a], signifies *the Lord is God*; but others derive it from יאל, which in *Hiphil* is הואיל, and signifies he willed, acquiesced, or is well-pleased, so Abarbinel; and hence Schmidt thinks it answers to Desiderius or Erasmus. According to Isidorus[b], he was born at Bethoron, in the tribe of Reuben, and died and was buried there; and so says Pseudo-Epiphanius[c]. In what age he lived is not easy to say. Aben Ezra expressly affirms there is no way to know it; and so R. David Ganz[d] says, his time we know not; and likewise Abarbinel. Some think he prophesied about the same time Hosea did, after whom he is next placed; and so Mr. Whiston[e] and Mr. Bedford[f] make him to prophesy much about the same time with Isaiah and Hosea, about 800 years before Christ; but, in the Septuagint version, this book is in the fourth order, and not Hosea, but Amos and Micah, are placed before him; and so the author of Juchasin[g] puts the prophets in this order, first Hosea, then Amos, next Isaiah, then Micah, and after him Joel. Some of the Jewish writers, as Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abendana relate, make Joel cotemporary with Elisha, and say he prophesied in the days of Jehoram the son of Ahab, when the seven-years' famine called for came upon the land, 2 Kings viii. 1. Both in Seder Olam Rabba and Zuta[h] he is placed in the reign of Manasseh; and so in Hilchot Gedolot, as Jarchi observes. And it seems indeed as if he prophesied after the ten tribes were carried captive, which was in the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign, since no mention is made of Israel but with

[a] Onomast. Sacr. p. 886.
[b] De Vita & Mort. Sanct. c. 42.
[c] De Vita Proph. c. 14.
[d] Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 14. 2.
[e] Chronological Tables, cent. 7 and 8.
[f] Scripture Chronology, B. 6. ch. 2. p. 648.
[g] Fol. 12. 1, 2.
[h] P. 55, 105. Ed. Meyer.

respect to future times, only of Judah and Jerusalem. But, be it when it will that he prophesied, there is no doubt to be made of the authenticity of this book, which is confirmed by the quotations of two apostles out of it, Peter and Paul, Acts ii. 16. Rom. x. 13.

CHAP. I.

THIS chapter describes a dreadful calamity upon the people of the Jews, by locusts and caterpillars, and a drought. After the title of the book, ver. 1. old men are called upon to observe this sore judgment to their children, that it might be transmitted to the latest posterity, as that the like to which had not been seen and heard of, ver. 2, 3, 4. and drunkards to awake and weep, because the vines were destroyed, and no wine could be made for them, ver. 5, 6, 7. and not only husbandmen and vine-dressers, but the priests of the Lord, are called to mourn, because such destruction was made in the fields and vineyards, that there were no meat nor drink offering brought into the house of the Lord, ver. 8—13. wherefore a general and solemn fast is required throughout the land, because of the distress of man and beast, ver. 14—18. and the chapter is concluded with the resolution of the prophet to cry unto the Lord, on account of this calamity, ver. 19, 20.

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord that came to Joel the son of Pethuel.*] Who this Pethuel was is not known: Jarchi takes him to be the same with Samuel the prophet, who had a son of this name, 1 Sam. viii. 2. and gives this reason for his being called Pethuel, because in his prayer he persuaded God; but the distance of time will by no means admit of this, nor the character of Samuel's son agree with Joel; and therefore is rightly denied by Aben Ezra, who observes, however, that this man was an honourable man, and therefore his name is mentioned; and gives this as a rule, that whenever any prophet mentions the name of his father, he was honourable. Perhaps it is here observed, to distinguish him from another of the same name; and there was one of this name, Joel, a high-priest in the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham, according to Seder Olam Zuta[1] and Abarbinel[2]; in whose time Joel is by some thought to prophesy.

Ver. 2. *Hear this, ye old men,* &c.] What the prophet was about to relate, concerning the consumption of the fruits of the earth, by various sorts of creatures, and by a drought; and these are called upon to declare if ever the like had been known or heard of by them; who by reason of age had the greatest opportunities of knowledge of this sort, and could remember what they had heard or seen, and would faithfully relate it: this may be understood of elders in office, as well as in age: *and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land*: or earth: not of the whole earth, but of the land of Judea; who were more particularly concerned in this affair, and therefore are required to listen attentively to it: *hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers?* that is, not the self-same thing, but any thing equal to it; a judgment of the same kind and nature, and of the same degree. By this question it seems the like had never been in the memory of any man living; nor in former times, in the days of their ancestors, as could be averred upon report; or attested on the credit of annals, chronicles, or other methods of conveying the history of ages past. As for the plague of locusts in Egypt, though they were such as never had been, nor would be there any more; yet such, or greater, and more in number than those, might be in Judea; besides, they continued but a few days at most, these four years successively, as Kimchi observes; and who thinks that in Egypt there was but one sort of locusts, here four; but the passage he quotes in Psal. lxxviii. 46, contradicts him; to which may be added Psal. cv. 34.

Ver. 3. *Tell ye your children of it,* &c.] Give them a particular account of it; describe the creatures, and their number, as near as you can; say when they begun, and how long they continued, and what devastations they made, and what was the cause and reason of such a judgment, your sins and transgressions: *and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation;* or *to the generation following*[1]; let it be handed down from one generation to another, that it may be a caution to future posterity how they behave, and lest they bring down the like awful judgments on them. What this referred to was as follows:

Ver. 4. *That which the palmer-worm hath left hath the locust eaten,* &c.] These, with the two following, are four kinds of locusts, as Jarchi observes; though it is difficult to fix the particular species designed; they seem to have their names from some peculiar properties belonging to them; as the first of these from their sheering or cropping off the fruits and leaves of trees; and the second from the vast increase of them, the multitude they bring forth, and the large numbers they appear in: *and that which the locust hath left hath the canker-worm eaten*: which, in the Hebrew language, is called from its licking up the fruits of the earth, by which it becomes barren: *and that which the canker-worm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten;* which has its name from wasting and consuming all that comes in its way: now these came not together, but followed one another; not one one year, and another the second, and so on throughout four years, as Kimchi thinks; for, though the calamity lasted some years, as is manifest from ch. ii. 25, yet it is not reasonable, that, for instance, what the palmer-worm left the first year should remain in the fields and vineyards, on the fig-trees and vines, till the next year, for the locust to consume, and so on: but rather these all appeared in succession, in one and the same year; and so what the palmer-worm left, having eaten up what was most agreeable to them, the locust came and devoured what they

[1] Fol. 104.
[2] In Meyer. Annotat, in ib. p. 676.

[1] לדור אחר posteritati sequenti, Vatablus; generationi posteræ, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius.

had left; and then what they left was destroyed by the canker-worm, which fed on that which was most grateful to them; and last of all came the caterpillar, and consumed all the others had left; and this might be continued for years successively: when this calamity was, we have no account in sacred history; whether it was in the seven-years' famine in the days of Elisha, or the same with what Amos speaks of, ch. iv. 6—9, is not easy to say: and though it seems to be literally understood, as the drought after mentioned, yet might be typical of the enemies of the Jews succeeding one another in the destruction of them. Not of the four monarchies, the Babylonians, Persians, Grecians, and Romans, as Lyra and Abarbinel; since the Persians particularly never entered into the land of Judea and wasted it; though this is the sense of the ancient Jews, as Jerom relates; for he says the Hebrews interpret the *palmer-worm* of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Chaldeans, who, coming from one climate of the world, destroyed both the ten and the two tribes, that is, all the people of Israel: the *locust* they interpret of the Medes and Persians, who, having overturned the Chaldean empire, carried the Jews captive: the *canker-worm* is the Macedonians, and all the successors of Alexander; especially King Antiochus, surnamed Epiphanes, who like a canker-worm sat in Judea, and devoured all the remains of the former kings, under whom were the wars of the Maccabees: the *caterpillar* they refer to the Roman empire, the fourth and last that oppressed the Jews, and drove them out of their borders. Nor of the several kings of Assyria and Babylon, who followed one another, and wasted first the ten tribes, and then the other two, as Tiglath-pileser, Salmaneser, Sennacherib, and Nebuchadnezzar, so Theodoret; since this prophecy only relates to the two tribes. Rather therefore this may point at the several invasions and incursions of the Chaldean army into Judea, under Nebuchadnezzar and his generals; first, when he came up against Jerusalem, and made Jehoiakim tributary to him; a second time, when he carried Jehoiachin and his family into Babylon, with a multitude of the Jews, and their wealth; a third time, when he besieged Jerusalem, and took it, and Zedekiah the king, and carried him captive; and a fourth time, when Nebuzaradan came and burnt the temple, and the houses of Jerusalem, and broke down the walls of it, and cleared the land of its inhabitants and riches; see 2 Kings xxiv. and xxv.

Ver. 5. *Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, &c.*] Who are used to neither, either to awake or to howl, being very prone to drowsiness upon their drinking-bouts, and to mirth and jollity in them; but now should be awake, and sober enough, not as being a virtue in them, but through want of wine; and for the same reason should howl, as follows: *because of the new wine, for it is cut off from your mouth*: the locusts having spoiled the vines and eaten the grapes, no new wine could be made, and so none could be brought in cups to their mouths; nor they drink it in bowls, as they had used to do; and which, being sweet and grateful to their taste, they were wont to drink in great abundance, till they were inebriated with it; but now there was a scarcity, their lips were dry, but not their eyes. The word, Kimchi says, signifies all liquor which is squeezed by bruising or treading.

Ver. 6. *For a nation is come up upon my land, &c.*] A nation of locusts, so called from their great numbers, and coming from foreign parts; just as the ants are called a *people*, and the conies a *folk*, Prov. xxx. 25, 26. and which were an emblem of the nation of the Chaldeans, which came up from Babylon, and invaded the land of Judea; called by the Lord *my land*, because he had chosen it for the habitation of his people; here he himself had long dwelt, and had been served and worshipped in it: though Kimchi thinks these are the words of the inhabitants of the land, or of the prophet; but if it can be thought they are any other than the words of God, they rather seem to be expressed by the drunkards in particular, howling for want of wine, and observing the reason of it: *strong, and without number*; this description seems better to agree with the Assyrians or Chaldeans, who were a mighty and powerful people, as well as numerous; though locusts, notwithstanding they are weak, singly taken, yet, coming in large bodies, carry all before them, and there's no stopping them: *whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek-teeth of a great lion*; or *the grinders*[m] of such an one; being hard, strong, and sharp, to bite off the tops, boughs, and branches of trees: Pliny[n] says, locusts will gnaw with their teeth the doors of houses; so the teeth of locusts are described in Rev. ix. 8. this may denote the strength, cruelty, and voraciousness of the Chaldean army.

Ver. 7. *He hath laid my vine waste, &c.*] That is, the locust, which spoiled the vines in Judea, the singular being put for the plural, by gnawing the branches, biting the tops of them, and devouring the leaves and the fruit; and so not only left them bare and barren, but destroyed them: this may emblematically represent the Assyrians or Babylonians wasting the land of Judea, the vine and vineyard of the Lord of hosts; see Isa. v. 1—5: *and barked my fig-tree*; gnawed off the bark of them; locusts are not only hurtful to vines, as is hinted by Theocritus[o], but to fig-trees also: Pliny[p] speaks of fig-trees in Bœotia gnawn by locusts, which budded again; and mentions it as something wonderful and miraculous that they should: and yet Sanctius observes, that these words cannot be understood properly of the locusts, since fig-trees cannot be hurt by the bite or touch of them; which, besides their roughness, have an insipid bitter juice, which preserves them from being gnawn by such creatures; and the like is observed of the cypress by Vitruvius[q]; but the passage out of Pliny shews the contrary. Some interpret it of a froth or scum they left upon the fig-tree when they gnawed it, such as Aben Ezra says is upon the face of the water; and something like this is left by caterpillars on the leaves of trees, which destroy them. *He hath made it clean bare*; stripped it of its leaves and fruit, and bark also: *and cast it away*; having got out

[m] מתלעות molares, Pagninus, Mercerus, Burkius.
[n] Nat. Hist. l. 21. c. 29.
[o] Idyll. 2.
[p] Nat. Hist. l. 17. c. 25.
[q] De Architectura, l. 2. c. 9. p. 70.

all the juice they could: *the branches thereof are made white;* the bark being gnawed off, and all the greenness and verdure of them dried up; so trees look, when this is their case: and thus the Jews were stripped by the Chaldeans of all their wealth and treasure, and were left bare and naked, and as the scum and offscouring of all things.

Ver. 8. *Lament like a virgin,* &c.] This is not the continuation of the prophet's speech to the drunkards; but, as Aben Ezra observes, he either speaks to himself, or to the land. The Targum supplies it, O congregation of Israel; the more religious and godly part of the people are here addressed; who were concerned for the pure worship of God, and were as a chaste virgin espoused to Christ, though not yet come, and for whom they were waiting; these are called upon to lament the calamities of the times in doleful strains, like a virgin: *girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth:* either as one that had been betrothed to a young man, but not married, he dying after the espousals, and before marriage; which must be greatly distressing to one that passionately loved him; and therefore, instead of her nuptial robes, prepared to meet him and be married in, girds herself with sackcloth; a coarse hairy sort of cloth, as was usual, in the eastern countries, to put on in token of mourning: or as one lately married to a young man she dearly loved, and was excessively fond of, and lived extremely happy with; but, being suddenly snatched away from her by death, puts on her widow's weed, and mourns not in shew only, but in reality; having lost in her youth her young husband, she had the strongest affection for: this is used to express the great lamentation the people are called unto in this time of their distress.

Ver. 9. *The meat-offering and the drink-offering is cut off from the house of the Lord,* &c.] The meat-offering was made of fine flour, oil, and frankincense; and the drink-offering was of wine; and, because of the want of corn and wine, these were not brought to the temple as usual; and which was matter of great grief to religious persons, and especially to the priests, as follows: *the priests, the Lord's ministers, mourn;* partly because they had no work to do, and could not answer to their character, the ministers of the Lord, in ministering about holy things, and bringing the sacrifices and offerings of the people to him; and partly because of their want of food, their livelihood greatly depending on the offerings brought, part of which belonged to them, and on which they and their families lived.

Ver. 10. *The field is wasted,* &c.] By the locusts, that eat up all green things, the grass and herbs, the fruit and leaves of trees; and also by the Chaldeans trampling on it with their horses, and the increase of which became fodder for them: *the land mourneth:* being destitute, nothing growing upon it, and so looked dismally, and of a horrid aspect; or the inhabitants of it, for want of provision: *for the corn is wasted;* by the locusts, and so by the Assyrian or Chaldean army, before it came to perfection: *the new wine is dried up:* in the grape, through the drought after mentioned: or, *is ashamed* [r]; not answering the expectations of men, who saw it in the cluster, promising much, but failed: *the oil languisheth;* or *sickens* [s]; the olive-trees withered; the olives fell off, as the Targum, and so the oil failed: the corn, wine, and oil, are particularly mentioned, not only as being the chief support of human life, as Kimchi observes, and so the loss of them must be matter of lamentation to the people in general; but because of these the meat and drink offerings were, and therefore the priests in particular had reason to mourn.

Ver. 11. *Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen,* &c.] Tillers of the land, who have took a great deal of pains in cultivating the earth, dunging, ploughing, and sowing it; confusion may cover you, because of your disappointment, the increase not answering to your expectations and labours: *howl, O ye vine-dressers;* that worked in the vineyards, set the vines, watered and pruned them, and, when they had done all they could to them, were dried up with the drought, or devoured by the locusts, as they were destroyed by the Assyrians or Chaldeans; and therefore had reason to howl and lament, all their labour being lost: *for the wheat and for the barley; because the harvest of the field is perished;* this belongs to the husbandmen, is a reason for their shame and blushing, because the wheat and barley were destroyed before they were ripe; and so they had neither wheat nor barley harvest. The words, by a transposition, would read better, and the sense be clearer, thus, *be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen, for the wheat and for the barley; because the harvest,* &c.; *howl, O ye vine-dressers;* for what follows:

Ver. 12. *The vine is dried up,* &c.] Withered away, stripped of its leaves and fruits, and its sap and moisture gone: or, *is ashamed* [t]; to see itself in this condition, and not answer the expectation of its proprietor and dresser: *and the fig-tree languisheth;* sickens and dies, through the bite of the locusts: *the pomegranate-tree;* whose fruit is delicious, and of which wine was made: *the palm-tree also;* which bears dates: *and the apple-tree;* that looks so beautiful, when either in bloom, or laden with fruit, and whose fruit is very grateful to the palate; so that both what were for common use and necessary food, and what were for delight and pleasure, were destroyed by these noisome creatures: even *all the trees of the field are withered;* for locusts not only devour the leaves and fruits of trees, but hurt the trees tremselves; burn them up by touching them, and cause them to wither away and die, both by the saliva and dung, which they leave upon them, as Bochart, from various authors, has proved: *because joy is withered away from the sons of men;* this is not given as a reason of the above trees dried up and withered, but of the lamentation of the vine-dressers and husbandmen: or else the particle כי is merely expletive, or may be rendered, *therefore,* or *truly,* or *surely* [u], *joy is withered;* or *ashamed;* it blushes to appear, as it used to do at the time of harvest; but now there was no harvest, and so no joy expressed, as usually was at such times; see Isa. ix. 3.

[r] הוביש erubuit, Tigurine version, Mercer, Liveleus; puduit, Drusius, Tarnovius; pudefit, Cocceius.

[s] אמלל infirmatum est, Montanus. So some in Vatablus.

[t] הובישה confusa est, V. L.; pudefacta est, Cocceius; pudet, Drusius.

[u] כי ideo, Grotius; imo, Piscator; sane, Mercer.

Ver. 13. *Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests,* &c.] Prepare and be ready to raise up lamentation and mourning; or gird yourselves with sackcloth, and mourn in that, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi supply the words; see Jer. iv. 8: *howl, ye ministers of the altar:* who served there, by laying on and burning the sacrifices, or offering incense: *come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God;* that is, come into the house of the Lord, as Kimchi; into the court of the priests, and there lie all night, in the sackcloth girded with: putting up prayers to God, with weeping and lamentations, that he would avert the judgments that were come or were coming upon them: *for the meat-offering and the drink-offering are withholden from the house of your God;* see the note on ver. 9.

Ver. 14. *Sanctify ye a fast,* &c.] This is spoken to the priests, whose business it was to *appoint* a fast, as the Targum renders it; or to set apart a time for such religious service, as the word signifies; and to keep it holy themselves, and see that it was so kept by others: Kimchi interprets it, prepare the people for a fast; give them notice of it, that they may be prepared for it: *call a solemn assembly;* of all the people of the land after mentioned: or, *proclaim a restraint*[w]; a time of ceasing, as a fast-day should be from all servile work, that attendance may be given to the duties of it, prayer and humiliation: *gather the elders;* meaning not those in age, but in office: and *all the inhabitants of the land;* not the magistrates only, though first and principally, as examples, who had been deeply concerned in guilt; but the common people also, even all of them: into *the house of the Lord your God;* the temple, the court of the Israelites, where they were to go and supplicate the Lord, when such a calamity as this of locusts and caterpillars were upon them; and where they might hope the Lord would hear them, and remove his judgments from them, 1 Kings viii. 37: *and cry unto the Lord;* in prayer, with vehemence and earnestness of soul.

Ver. 15. *Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand,* &c.] A time of severer and heavier judgments than these of the locusts, caterpillars, &c. which were a presage and emblem of greater ones, even of the total destruction of their city, temple, and nation, either by the Chaldeans, or by the Romans, or both: *and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come;* unawares, suddenly, and irresistibly: there is in the Hebrew text an elegant paronomasia, which may be rendered, as *wasting from the waster,* or *destruction from the destroyer, shall it come*[x]; even from the almighty God, who is able to save and destroy, and none can deliver out of his hands; see Isa. xiii. 6. the word signifies one powerful and victorious, as Aben Ezra observes; and so it does in the Arabic language.

Ver. 16. *Is not the meat cut off before our eyes?* &c.] Such an interrogation most strongly affirms; it was a matter out of all question, they could not but see it with their eyes; it was a plain case, and not to be denied, that every eatable thing, or that of which food was wont to be made, was cut off by the locusts, or the drought, or by the Assyrian or Chaldean army; yea, *joy and gladness from the house of our God;* the harvest being perished, there were no first-fruits brought to the temple, which used to be attended with great joy; and the corn and vines being wasted, no meat-offerings made of fine flour, nor drink-offerings of wine, were offered, which used to make glad God and man; nor any other sacrifices, on which the priests and their families lived, and were matter of joy to them; and these they ate of in the temple, or in courts adjoining to it. So Philo[y] the Jew says of the ancient Jews, that "having prayed and offered "sacrifices, and appeased the Deity, they washed "their bodies and souls; the one in lavers, the other "in the streams of the laws, and right instruction; "and being cheerful, turned themselves to their food, "not going home oftentimes, but remaining in the "holy places where they sacrificed; and as mindful of "the sacrifices, and reverencing the place, they kept "a feast truly holy, not sinning either in word or "deed."

Ver. 17. *The seed is rotten under their clods,* &c.] Or *grains*[z] of wheat or barley, which had been sown, and, for want of rain, putrefied and wasted away under the clods of earth, through the great drought; so that what with locusts, which cropped that that did bud forth, and with the drought, by reason of which much of the seed sown came to nothing, an extreme famine ensued: the Targum is, "casks of wine rotted under "their coverings:" *the garners are desolate;* the *treasuries*[a], or storehouses, having nothing in them, and there being nothing to put into them; Jarchi makes these to be peculiar for wine and oil, both which failed, ver. 10: *the barns are broken down;* in which the wheat and barley had used to be laid up; but this judgment of the locusts and drought continuing year after year, the walls fell down, and no care was taken to repair them, there being no use for them; these were the granaries, and, as Jarchi, for wheat particularly: *for the corn is withered;* that which sprung up withered and dried away, through the heat and drought: or was *ashamed*[b]; not answering the expectation of the sower.

Ver. 18. *How do the beasts groan?* &c.] For want of fodder, all green grass and herbs being eaten up by the locusts; or devoured, or trampled upon, and destroyed, by the Chaldeans; and also for want of water to quench their thirst: *the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture;* the larger cattle, as oxen; these were in the utmost perplexity, not knowing where to go for food or drink: *yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate;* which have shepherds to lead and direct them to pastures, and can feed on commons, where the grass is short, which other cattle cannot; yet even these were in great distress, and wasted away, and were consumed for want of nourishment.

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[w] קראו עצרת vocate retentionem, Montanus; proclamate diem interdicti, Junius & Tremellius, Heb.; interdictum, Piscator; edicite cœtum cum cessatione, Cocceius.

[x] כשד משדי uti vastitas a Deo vastatore, Drusius.

[y] De Plantatione Noe, p. 237.

[z] פרדות grana, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Tarnovius, Cocceius, Bochartus. So Ben Melech, who observes they are so called, because they are separated and scattered under the earth.

[a] אצרות thesauri, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Vatablus, Piscator.

[b] הוביש confusum est, V. L.; puduit, Drusius; pudore afficit, Cocceius.

Ver. 19. *O Lord, to thee will I cry,* &c.] Or *pray*, as the Targum; with great vehemency and earnestness, commiserating the case of man and beast: these are the words of the prophet, resolving to use his interest at the throne of grace in this time of distress, whatever others did: *for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness*; or, *of the plain*[e]: though in the wildernesses of Judea, there were pastures for cattle: Kimchi interprets them of the shepherds' tents or cotes, as the word[a] is sometimes used; which were wont to be pitched where there were pastures for their flocks: and so the Targum renders it, *the habitations of the wilderness*: these, whether pastures or habitations, or both, were destroyed by fire, the pastures by the locusts, as Kimchi; which, as Pliny[e] says, by touching burn the trees, herbs, and fruits of the earth; see ch. ii. 3. or by the Assyrians or Chaldeans, who by fire and sword consumed all in their way; or by a dry burning blasting wind, as Lyra; and so the Targum interprets it of a strong east wind like fire: it seems rather to design extreme heat and excessive drought, which burn up all the produce of the earth: *and the flame hath burnt all the trees of the field*: which may be understood of flashes of lightning, which are common in times of great heat and drought; see Psal. lxxxiii. 14.

Ver. 20. *The beasts of the field cry also unto thee,* &c.] As well as the prophet, in their way; which may be mentioned, both as a rebuke to such who had no sense of the judgments upon them, and called not on the Lord; and to express the greatness of the calamity, of which the brute creatures were sensible, and made piteous moans, as for food, so for drink; panting through excessive heat and vehement thirst, as the hart after the water-brooks, of which this word is only used, Psal. xlii. 1. but in vain: *for the rivers of waters are dried up*; not only springs, and rivulets and brooks of water, but rivers, places where were large deep waters, as Aben Ezra explains it; either by the Assyrian army, the like Sennacherib boasts of, Isa. xxxvii. 25. and is said to be done by the army of Xerxes, wherever it came; or rather by the excessive heat and scorching beams of the sun, by which such effects are produced: *and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness*: see the note on ver. 19. and whereas the word rendered *pastures* signifies both *them* and *habitations* also; and, being repeated, it may be taken in one of the senses in ver. 19. and in the other here: and so Kimchi, who interprets it before of *tents*, here explains it of grassy places in the wilderness, dried up, as if the sun had consumed them.

CHAP. II.

IN this chapter a further account is given of the judgment of the locusts and caterpillars, or of those who are designed by them, ver. 1—11. the people of the Jews are called to repentance, humiliation, and fasting, urged from the grace and goodness of God, his jealousy and pity for his people, and the answer of prayer that might be expected from him upon this, even to the removal of the calamity, ver. 12—20. a prophecy of good things, both temporal and spiritual, in the times of the Messiah, is delivered out as matter and occasion of great joy, ver. 21—27. and another concerning the effusion of the Spirit, which was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, ver. 28, 29. and the chapter is concluded with the judgments and desolations that should come upon the land of Judea after this, for their rejection of Christ, though the remnant according to the election of grace should be delivered and saved from the general destruction, ver. 30, 31, 32.

Ver. 1. *Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain,* &c.] This is spoken to the priests, whose business it was to blow the trumpets for calling solemn assemblies to meet in Zion, the temple built there, called from thence the holy mountain of God. Here the trumpet is ordered to be blown with a broken quivering voice, a tarantantara, to give notice of approaching danger by the locusts, or those enemies signified by them, and to prepare for it, and return to God by repentance. *Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble*: at the judgments of God coming upon them, and the alarm of them: *for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand*; the time fixed by him to punish a wicked people, and to pour out his wrath and vengeance on them; the day of his visitation, not in love, but in anger.

Ver. 2. *A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness,* &c.] Alluding to the gloomy and thick darkness caused by the locusts, which sometimes come in prodigious numbers, like thick clouds, and darken the air; so the land of Egypt was darkened by them, Exod. x. 15. historians and travellers relate, as Bochart[f] has shewn, that these creatures will fly like a cloud, and darken the heavens at noon-day, cover the sun, and hinder the rays of it from touching the earth; though all these phrases may be expressive of great afflictions and calamities, which are often in Scripture signified by darkness, as prosperity is by light; see Isa. viii. 22. and ix. 1: *as the morning spread upon the mountains*; as the morning light, when it first appears, diffuses itself in a moment throughout the earth, and is first seen on the tops of the mountains[g]; so these locusts, and this calamity threatened, should suddenly and at once come, and be spread over the whole land; and which could no more be resisted than the morning light. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, in connexion with the next clause, *as the morning spread upon the mountains, a people much and mighty*; but the accents will not admit of it; though it may seem a little improper that the same thing should be as a

[e] מדבר non tantum desertum significat sed & campum sativum, Œcolampadius. A place of pasture for cattle, Ben Melech.
[a] נאות caulas, Piscator. So Ben Melech.
[e] Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29.

[f] Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 4. c. 5. p. 479.
[g] Postera vix summos spargebat lumine montes
Orta dies —— Virgil. Æneid. 12.

dark day, and the morning light; wherefore Cocceius understands the whole of the day of Christ, which was light to many nations, and darkness to the wicked Jews: *a great people and a strong*; numerous and mighty, many in number, mighty in strength; so the locusts are represented as a nation and people for might and multitude, ch. i. 6. an emblem of the Chaldeans and Babylonians, who were a large and powerful people: *there hath not been ever the like, neither shall any more after it, even to the years of many generations*; that is, in the land of Judea; otherwise there might have been the like before in other places, as in Egypt, and since in other countries. Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Kimchi, account for it thus; that it was never known, before or since, that four kinds of locusts came together; as for the plague of Egypt, there was but one sort of them, they say; but it is best to understand it of the like not having been in the same country: and such a numerous and powerful army as that of the Chaldeans had not been in Judea, and made such havoc and desolation as that did; nor would any hereafter, for many generations, even until the Romans came and took away their place and nation.

Ver. 3. *A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth*, &c.] This is not to be understood of the heat of the sun, or of the great drought that went before and continued after the locusts; but of them themselves, which were like a consuming fire; wherever they came, they devoured all green grass, herbs, and leaves of trees, as fire does stubble; they sucked out the juice and moisture of every thing they came at, and what they left behind shrivelled up and withered away, as if it had been scorched with a flame of fire: and so the Assyrians and Chaldeans, they were an emblem of, destroyed all they met with, by fire and sword; cut up the corn and herbage for forage; and what they could not dispense with they set fire to, and left it burning. Sanctius thinks this refers to fire, which the Chaldeans worshipped as God, and carried before their armies as a sacred and military sign; but this seems not likely: *the land is as the garden of Eden before them*; abounding with fields and vineyards, set with fruitful trees, planted with all manner of pleasant plants, and all kind of corn growing upon it, and even resembling a paradise: *and behind them a desolate wilderness*; all green grass eaten up, the corn of the field devoured, the vines and olives destroyed, the leaves and fruit of them quite gone, and the trees themselves barked; so that there was just the same difference between this country before the calamities described came upon it, and what it was after, as between the garden of Eden, or a paradise, and the most desolate wilderness; such ravages were made by the locusts, and by those they resembled: *yea, and nothing shall escape them*; no herb, plant, or tree, could escape the locusts; nor any city, town, or village, nor scarce any particular person, could escape the Chaldean army; but was either killed with the sword, or carried captive, or brought into subjection. The Targum interprets it of no deliverance to the ungodly.

Ver. 4. *The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses*, &c.] In their running, as Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it; they came with as much swiftness and eagerness, with as much fierceness and courage, as horses rush into the battle. Bochart[h] has shewn, from various writers, that the head of a locust is in shape like that of a horse; and Theodoret on the text observes, that whoever thoroughly examines the head of a locust will easily perceive that it is very like the head of a horse; see Rev. ix. 7. The Chaldeans are often represented as strong and mighty, fierce and furious, and riding on horses exceeding swift, Jer. iv. 13, and v. 15. Hab. i. 6, 7, 8: *and as horsemen, so shall they run*; with great agility and swiftness. The particle *as* is observed by some, against those interpreters that apply this wholly to the enemies of the Jews, and not the locusts; and it seems indeed best to favour them: but Theodoret observes, that the *as* here may be taken, not as a note of similitude, but as used for the increase and vehemency of the expression.

Ver. 5. *Like the noise of chariots on the tops of the mountains shall they leap*, &c.] The motion of the locusts is leaping from place to place; for which the locusts have legs peculiarly made, their hindermost being the longest; wherefore Pliny[i] observes, that insects which have their hindermost legs long leap as locusts; to which agrees the Scripture description of them: *which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth; even those of them ye may eat; the locust after his kind*, Lev. xi. 21, 22. which words, as Dr. Shaw[k] observes, may bear this construction: *which have knees upon* or *above their* hinder *legs, to leap withal upon the earth*; and he observes, that the הארבה, *locust*, has the two hindermost of its legs or feet much stronger, larger, and longer, than any of the foremost; in them the knee, or the articulation of the leg and thigh, is distinguished by a remarkable bending or curvature, whereby it is able, whenever prepared to jump, to spring and raise itself with great force and activity; and this fitly resembles the jumping of chariots on mountains and hills, which are uneven, and usually have stones lie scattered about, which, with the chains and irons about chariots, cause a great rattling; and the noise of locusts is compared to the noise of these, which is represented as very great; some say it is to be heard six miles off, as Remigius on the place; and Pliny says[l], they make such a noise with their wings when they fly, that they are thought to be other winged fowls; see Rev. ix. 9. Chariots were made use of in war, and the Chaldeans are said to have chariots which should come like a whirlwind, Jer. iv. 13: *like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble*; as they are before compared to fire, and a flame of fire that devoured all things as easily as the fire devours stubble, so here to the crackling noise of it; see Eccles. vii. 6: *as a strong people set in battle array*: that is, as the noise of a mighty army prepared for battle, just going to make the onset, when they lift up their voices aloud, and give a terrible shout; for this clause, as the other two, refer to the noise made by the locusts in their march; an emblem of the terribleness of the Chaldeans in theirs, who were heard before they were seen.

[h] Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 4. c. 5. p. 474, 475.
[i] Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 48.

[k] Travels, p. 490. Ed. 2.
[l] Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29.

Ver. 6. *Before their face the people shall be much pained*, &c.] Or, *at their presence;* at the sight of them they shall be in pain, as a woman in travail; into such distress an army of locusts would throw them, since they might justly fear all the fruits of the earth would be devoured by them, and they should have nothing left to live upon; and a like consternation and pain the army of the Assyrians or Chaldeans upon sight filled them with, as they expected nothing but ruin and destruction from them: *all faces shall gather blackness;* like that of a pot, as the word [m] signifies; or such as appears in persons dying, or in fits and swoons; and this here, through fear and hunger; see Neh. ii. 10. Lam. iv. 8. and v. 10.

Ver. 7. *They shall run like mighty men*, &c.] Like men of war, in a hostile way, as soldiers run upon their enemy with undaunted courage and bravery. Bochart from Pisidas describes the locusts' manner of fighting, who says, they strike not standing, but running: *they shall climb the wall like men of war;* scale the walls of cities as besiegers do; walls and bulwarks can't keep them out; all places are accessible to them, walled cities, towns, yea, even houses, Exod. x. 6: *and they shall march every one on his ways;* in his proper path, following one another, and keeping just distance: *and they shall not break their ranks;* or *pervert their ways*, as the word signifies in the Arabic language, as Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, observe; that is, decline not from their paths, as the Septuagint version; proceed in an orderly way, keep rank and file; so they are said to go forth in bands, Prov. xxx. 27. and to encamp, Neh. iii. 17. Jerom on the text relates what he saw with his own eyes: "this we lately saw "(says he) in this province (Palestine); for when "swarms of locusts came, and filled the air between "heaven and earth, they flew in such order, by the "disposition and command of God, that they kept "their place like chequered squares in a pavement "fixed by the hands of artificers; so as not to decline a "point, nor even I may say a nail's breadth;" they keep as exact order as if military discipline was known and observed by them. Some render it, *they shall not ask their way* [n]; being unconcerned about it, moving on in a direct line securely.

Ver. 8. *Neither shall one thrust another*, &c.] Press upon another, thrust him out of his place, or push him forward, or any ways straiten and distress him, or in the least hinder him in his progress: *they shall walk every one in his path;* or *highway* [o]; every one should have his path, and keep in it, and it should be as roomy to him as if he had a highway to walk in by himself, and in which he could not err: *and when they shall fall upon the sword;* on which they would pitch without any fear or dread of it: *they shall not be wounded;* or *cut to pieces* [p] by it; it not being easy for the sword to pierce and cut them, through the smoothness and smallness of their bodies; see Rev. ix. 9. and besides, their numbers being so great, the loss of a few by the use of a sword, or a dart, or any such missive weapon, as the word [q] signifies, would be of little consequence, and avail very little to the utter rout, or cutting of them in pieces. Kimchi observes that the word signifies haters of gain; and to this sense Jarchi explains it; and so the Targum, "they go to the place whither they "are sent, they slay, and receive not mammon;" they are not, as other enemies, to be appeased by money, as Kimchi interprets it. The Targum is, they are not to be bribed, as soldiers sometimes may be, and so depart; see Isa. xiii. 17. and to this sense are other versions [r].

Ver. 9. *They shall run to and fro in the city*, &c.] Leap about from place to place, as locusts do; see Isa. xxxiii. 4. and as the Chaldeans did when they became masters of the city of Jerusalem; they ran about from place to place to seize upon their spoil and plunder: *they shall run upon the wall;* which before they climbed, now they shall run upon, and go from tower to tower, as the Chaldeans did, and broke down the walls and fortifications: *they shall climb up upon the houses, and enter in at the windows like a thief;* so the locusts entered into the houses of the Egyptians, Exod. x. 6. and Pliny says [s], they will eat through every thing, and even the doors of houses. Theodoret on the place observes, that not only this may be done by enemies, what is here said, "but even *we have often seen* it "done by locusts; for not only flying, but even "creeping up the walls, they enter into houses at the "windows."

Ver. 10. *The earth shall quake before them*, &c.] The inhabitants of it, because of the desolating judgments they bring with them, and those enemies that are signified by them: *the heavens shall tremble;* being obscured by them: *the sun and moon shall be dark;* the locusts sometimes come in such large numbers as to intercept the rays of the sun. Pliny [t] says they sometimes darken it; and though some thought they did not fly in the night, because of the cold; this he observes is owing to their ignorance, not considering that they pass over wide seas to distant countries; and this will account for it how the moon also may be darkened by them, and the stars, as follows: *and the stars shall withdraw their shining;* though all this may be understood in a figurative sense of the great consternation that all sorts of persons should be in at such calamities coming upon the land, either by locusts, or by enemies; as the king, queen, nobles, and the common people of the land, signified by sun, moon, and stars, heaven and earth.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army*, &c.] Either the army of the locusts, whom Pliny [u] calls *pestis deorum, the plague of the gods;* and the Arabians frequently style them the army of God. It is a tradition of theirs that locusts fell into the hands of Mahomet, with this inscription on their backs and wings, "we are the army of the most high God;" and

[m] פארור fuliginem, Montanus; luridum ollæ colorem, Tigurine version, Tarnovius; ollam pro nigrore ollæ, Drusius.

[n] לא יעבטון ארחותם non interrogabunt *isti ab illis* de semitis suis, so some in Vatablus, and others in Kimchi and Abendana.

[o] במסלתו per aggerem suum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; via elevata, Drusius; via strata sua, Cocceius.

[p] יבצעו verbum significat discidit, Amos ix. 1. Tarnovius, so Ben Melech.

[q] בעד שלח per missile, Cocceius; so Bochartus, Castalio, Drusius, Burkius; super missile, Montanus.

[r] Non avari erunt, Montanus; nec lucro inhiant, Tigurine version; non studebant avaritiæ, so some in Vatablus.

[s] Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29.

[t] Ibid.

[u] Ibid.

because they were, for that reason Mahomet made a law that none should kill them; see the note on Rev. ix. 3. These creatures are certainly at his beck and command; he can *command the locust to devour the land*, 2 Chron. vii. 13. which may be meant by his uttering his voice here; though Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it of the Lord's giving notice of this judgment by his prophets before it came: or this may design the army of the Assyrians or Chaldeans, of which the locusts were an emblem, and which were of the Lord's mustering together, and was at his command; and who is here represented as a General at the head of his army, making a speech to them to animate and encourage them to the battle, and to give them the word of command when to begin the onset: *for his camp is very great;* or numerous, as both the locusts and Chaldeans were: *for he is strong that executeth his word;* or *strong is it;* namely, the camp and army of the locusts: which, though feeble in themselves, separately considered; yet, being in such large bodies, and the Lord at the head of them, and strengthened by him, were able to fulfil his word; which he can make the least and meanest of his creatures do: or the Assyrian or Chaldean army, which was both numerous and mighty; which the Targum may refer unto, paraphrasing the words, "for strong are the executors of his word:" *for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible, and who can abide it?* the day appointed by the Lord to take vengeance on the Jews for sin; and this, being the day of his wrath, is very dreadful and intolerable; so any season may be called, in which God remarkably pours down his wrath on men for their sins; see Rev. vi. 17. Such was the time of Jerusalem's destruction, both by the Chaldeans and Romans.

Ver. 12. *Therefore also now, saith the Lord, &c.*] Before this terrible and intolerable day, which is near at hand, comes; before these judgments and calamities threatened take place, though just at hand; serious repentance is never too late, now is the accepted time; see Luke xix. 42: *turn ye even to me with all your heart;* against whom they had sinned, and who had prepared his army against them, and was at the head of it, just ready to give the orders, and play his artillery upon them; and yet suggests, that even now, that if they turned to the Lord by true repentance, not feignedly and hypocritically, but cordially and sincerely, with true hearts, and with their whole hearts, he was ready to receive and forgive them. The Targum is, "turn "ye to my worship with all your heart:" *and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:* external signs of inward grief and sorrow, testifying their hearty return to the Lord; which, though, without the heart, signify nothing, yet should be shewn where hearty repentance is, for the honour and glory of God.

Ver. 13. *And rend your heart, and not your garments, &c.*] Which latter used to be done in times of distress, either private or public, and as a token of grief and sorrow, Gen. xxxvii. 34. Esth. iv. 1. nor was it criminal or unlawful, the apostles themselves used it, Acts xiv. 14. nor is it absolutely forbidden here, only comparatively, that they should rend their hearts rather than their garments; or not their garments only, but their hearts also; in like sense as the words in Hos. vi. 6. are to be taken: as rending garments was only an external token of sorrow, and might be done hypocritically, where no true repentance was, the Lord calls for that, rather than the other; and that they would shew contrition of heart and brokenness of spirit, under a sense of sin, and in the view of pardoning grace and mercy; which is here held forth, to influence godly sorrow and evangelical repentance; the acts of which, flowing from faith in Christ, are much more acceptable to the Lord than any outward expressions of grief; see Psal. li. 17. Isa. lvii. 15. and lxvi. 2. The Targum is, "remove the wickedness of "your heart, but not with the rending of your garments;" the rending of the garment goes to the heart, some say to the navel*; *and turn unto the Lord your God;* consider him not as an absolute God, and as an angry one, wrathful and inexorable; but as your covenant God and Father, as your God in Christ, ready to receive backsliding sinners and prodigal sons; yea, all sinners sensible of sin, that flee to him for mercy through Christ: *for he is gracious and merciful;* he is the God of all grace, and has laid up a fulness of it in Christ; and he gives it freely to them that ask it of him, without upbraiding them with their sins; he is rich and plenteous in mercy, and ready to forgive; he delights in shewing mercy, and in them that hope in it; and this is no small encouragement to turn to the Lord, and seek mercy of him: and, besides, he is *slow to anger*, he is not hasty to stir it up, and shew it; he bears with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath; and his long-suffering to his own people issues in their salvation: he waits to be gracious to them; and, though he may seem to be angry, he does not stir up all his wrath their sins deserve, nor does he retain anger for ever: *and of great kindness*, both in a providential way, and in a way of special grace through Christ; whom he has provided as a Saviour, and sent him into the world as such, and saves sinners by his obedience, sufferings, and death: these characters of God are taken out of Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. and are admirably adapted to engage and encourage sensible souls to turn to the Lord by acts of faith in him, and repentance towards him; see Isa. lv. 7. and 'tis added, *and repenteth him of the evil;* which the sins of men deserve, and he has threatened on account of them; not that he ever changes the counsels of his will, but alters the course of his providence, and the manner of his conduct towards men, according to his unalterable will: repentance otherwise does not properly belong to God, Numb. xxiii. 19. but is ascribed to him after the manner of men; and is used to express his compassion to men; how ready he is to receive and forgive returning sinners, and not execute the threatened and deserved evil, and to bestow all needful good; see Jon. iii. 10. and iv. 2. The Targum is, "and he recalls his word "from bringing on the evil."

Ver. 14. *Who knoweth if he will return and repent, &c.*] Which some understand of man, and of his returning and repentance; either thus, whosoever he be that knows the ways of repentance, he will return, and God will repent of this evil; which sense is mentioned by

* T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 26. 2.

Kimchi and Ben Melech: or he that knoweth that iniquity is on him will return and repent; so Jarchi, with which agrees the Targum, "he that knows that "sins are in him will return from them, and he shall "obtain mercy; and whoever repents, his sins shall "be forgiven him;" but rather they are to be understood of God, as some in Kimchi, and paraphrase it, who knows? perhaps God may return; and this is the sense of Aben Ezra, and seems to be the rightest; and to be interpreted, either as carrying some doubt in it; not as if it was questionable whether God will give pardon to repenting sinners, but whether he will at once remove the present affliction and chastisement; which may be thus expressed to check the presumption and awaken the security of the people, and rouse them from their sluggishness and stupidity: or rather as expressive of hope that God would return and change the dispensation of his providence, and repent of the evil he had threatened, or brought upon them; which might be justly grounded upon the character before given of him, and that from the revelation of himself, and the proclamation of his own perfections; see Jon. iii. 9: *and leave a blessing behind him*: meaning not behind God himself, as if he was departed, or about to depart, for which there was no great concern, provided he left a temporal blessing with them; but behind the army of the locust, after that had made all the devastation it did: or rather *cause to leave*: stop the locust in its progress, and not suffer it to make a total desolation, but cause it to leave some of the fruits of the earth behind it. So Aben Ezra gives the sense of the words, "perhaps God will return, and cause "the locust to leave a blessing;" and to the same purpose Jarchi, of which they make a meat-offering and a drink-offering, as follows: even *a meat-offering and a drink-offering to the Lord your God*: at least leave so much of the wheat, that a meat-offering might be made of it; and so many of the vines, as that so much wine might be produced by them as would furnish out a drink-offering to be offered to the Lord, agreeably to the laws given about these; for which the greatest concern is expressed, this being cut off and withheld from the house of the Lord, by reason of the present scarcity, ch. i. 9, 13. which shews a truly pious and religious mind, having more at heart the worship of God than themselves and families.

Ver. 15. *Blow the trumpet in Zion, &c.*] For the calling of the people together to religious duties, which was one use of the silver trumpets made for and blown by the priests, Numb. x. 2, 3, 8, 10: *sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly*: see the note on ch. i. 14.

Ver. 16. *Gather the people, &c.*] The common people, all the inhabitants of the land, ch. i. 14. summon them to meet together in the temple, in order to humble themselves before God for their sins, and implore his mercy, and seek his face to remove his judgments, or avert them: *sanctify the congregation*: see that they are sanctified and prepared for a fast, as the law directs in such cases; that they may be clean and free from all ceremonial impurities; that their bodies and clothes be washed, and that they abstain from their wives, and from all lawful pleasures, as well as sinful ones: *assemble the elders*: both in age and authority; that they, by their presence and example, might influence others to attend such a service: *gather the children, and those that suck the breasts*: who were involved in the common calamity and distress, were obliged to fasting, and whose cries might affect their parents, and engage them the more to humiliation and repentance for their sins, which brought such miseries, not only upon themselves, but upon their tender infants; and they might think their cries would move the pity and compassion of God; all which is suggested in the note of Kimchi: *let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet*; where they are adorning themselves, and preparing for an interview with each other; or where they are enjoying each other's embraces, and the pleasures of the matrimonial state. The sense is, let them put off their nuptial robes, and deny themselves their lawful pleasures, and betake themselves to fasting, mourning, and prayer; see 1 Cor. vii. 5. This refers to a custom among the Jews at the time of espousals, when the bridegroom and bride were introduced into the nuptial chamber, where the marriage was completed; and, according to the Jewish writers, it was not finished before: the blessing of the bridegroom and bride did not complete the marriage, but the bringing of them into the chamber did; and then they were said to be married, though as yet they had not cohabited, and then, and not before, a man might enjoy his wife [x]: and the marriage-chamber was nothing else but a linen cloth or garment spread upon four poles over the head of the bridegroom and bride; this they called חופה [y]; the word is here rendered a *closet*, and the same with the *chamber*; and their leaving and coming out of this signifies their abstaining from the lawful enjoyment of each other, which now they had a right unto.

Ver. 17. *Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, &c.*] Not the altar of incense, which stood in the holy place; but the altar of burnt-offering, where the priests used to stand and do service; but now, having nothing to do of that kind, they are called upon to weep and pray between that and the porch of the temple; where they might be seen and heard by the people in the outward court, which the porch led into: this is thought by some to be the same situation with that between the temple and the altar, Matt. xxiii. 35: *and let them say, spare thy people, O Lord*; they are directed to plead, not in a way of justice, but mercy; that though it might be just with God to destroy these people, who were called by his name; yet it is entreated that he would not, but in mercy spare them, and not cut them off in his sore displeasure, which the present judgment threatened them with: there seems to be an argument for mercy suggested, in the relation these people stood in to God: they *are thy people*, whom thou hast chosen, and who are called by thy name; though this was also an aggravation of their sin; and the same may be observed in what follows: *and give not thine heritage to reproach*: the people whom he had chosen for his inheritance, and

[x] Maimon. Hilchot Ishot, c. 10. sect. 2, 4. Schulchan Aruch, par. 3. Eben Haezer, c. 55. sect. 2, 3.

[y] R. Elias Levita, Tishbi in חפה, p. 119.

the land of Canaan he had given to them for an inheritance; both which would be given to reproach if such a famine should ensue that they must be obliged to go into other countries for food: *that the Heathen should rule over them:* as they would, should they be forced to leave their own country, and settle in theirs for the sake of food: or *to be a proverb*, or *by-word, among the Heathen*, as Jarchi. This clause Jerom thinks opens the mystery, and explains who are meant by the mighty nation under the name of locusts, the enemies of the Jews; though this does not necessarily follow, take the words in either sense, as explained: it seems indeed very likely, that though the locusts may be understood literally, yet may be considered as an emblem of the Assyrian or Chaldean army, as we have all along observed; and, as the same ancient writer observes, when we read of the locusts, we should think of the Chaldeans, in which thought we may be confirmed by this clause: *wherefore should they say among the people, where is their God?* they boast of as their Creator and Benefactor, their Protector and Defender, that gave them a land flowing with milk and honey, and abounding with all blessings? what is become of that? and where is he now? which the Gentiles would say in a reproaching blaspheming way, should they be reduced to famine by the locusts, or fall into the hands of their enemies; than which kind of reproach and blasphemy there is nothing more cutting to religious minds: see Psal. xlii. 10. Mic. vii. 10. and this, as well as the former, is used as an argument with God for mercy. The Targum is, "where are "they that are redeemed by the Word of your God?"

Ver. 18. *Then will the Lord be jealous for his land*, &c.] Or *zealous* for it; for the honour of it, and the good of its inhabitants, and for the glory of his own name, it being the chief place in the world for his worship and service; and his indignation will be moved against those who have brought desolation on it: *and pity his people;* as a father his children, who had suffered much, and had been reduced to great distress by the locusts, or by their enemies: this the prophet foretels would be done upon their repentance, fasting, prayers, and tears: or, as some think, this is a narrative of what had been done, and the prophet was a witness of; that the people meeting together with their princes and priests, and humbling themselves before the Lord, and crying to him, he expressed a zeal and compassion for them, and delivered them out of their troubles: for though their humiliation is not expressed, it may be understood and supposed, as doubtless it was fact.

Ver. 19. *Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people*, &c.] By his prophets, as Kimchi: or, *the Lord answered and said*[a]; while they were praying and weeping, or as soon as they cried unto him; or, however, praying to him, they might assure themselves that he heard them, and would answer them both by words and deeds: *behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil:* that is, cause the earth to bring forth corn, as wheat and barley, and the vines and olive-trees to bring forth grapes and olives, from which wine and oil might be made: this is, according to some interpreters, to be understood of an abundance of spiritual blessings: *and ye shall be satisfied therewith;* or, *with it;* with each and every of the above things, corn, wine, and oil; they should not only have them, but have enough of them, even to satiety: *and I will no more make you a reproach among the Heathen;* for want of food, and as if forsaken of God. The Targum is, "and I will not give you any more the reproaches "of famine among the people;" see ver. 17.

Ver. 20. *But I will remove far off from you the northern army*, &c.] The army of the locusts, which came from the northern corner, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi; and is the first sense Jarchi makes mention of: though he says their Rabbins[b] interpret it of the evil imagination hid in the heart of men; and the two seas, after mentioned, of the two temples, first and second, destroyed by it; so, Kimchi says, they explain this verse of the days of the Messiah, and observes, the same sense they give; but Jarchi mentions another, according to which a people coming from the north are designed, even the kings of Assyria; and with this agrees the Targum, which paraphrases it, "and the people "which come from the north I will remove far off "from you:" and indeed locusts don't usually come from the north, but from the south, or from the east; it was an east wind that brought the locusts into Egypt, Exod. x. 13. though the word *northern* may be used of the locusts in the emblem, because the Assyrians or Chaldeans came from the north to Judea: *and will drive him into a land barren and desolate;* where there are no green grass, herbs, plants, and trees, to live upon, and so must starve and die: *with his face towards the east sea:* the front of this northern army was towards the east sea, into which it was drove and fell: that is, the sea of Cinnereth, or Genezareth, the same with the lake of Tiberias, often mentioned in the New Testament; or the Salt sea, the same with the lake Asphaltites, or Dead sea, which was where Sodom and Gomorrah formerly stood, as is usually said; and both these were to the east of the land of Israel, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe; and so either of them might be called the *eastern sea:* *and his hinder part towards the utmost sea;* the rear of this army was towards the utmost sea, or hinder sea, as it is called in Zech. xiv. 8. the western sea, as Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it, the same with the Mediterranean sea, which lay to the west of the land of Israel; so the Egyptian locusts were cast into the Red sea, Exod. x. 19. and Pliny[c] observes, that they are sometimes taken away with a wind, and fall into seas and lakes, and adds, perhaps this comes by chance; but what is here related came not by chance, but by the will and providence of God: *and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up:* that is, the stink and ill savour of the locusts shall come up out of the seas and lakes into which they fell, and where they died and putrefied; or, being cast up from thence upon the shores, gave a most noisome stench; so Jerom on the place says, "in our times we have seen swarms of locusts

[a] ויען et respondit, Piscator, Drusius, Burkius.
[b] Vid. T. Bab. Succah, fol. 52. 1.
[c] Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29.

"cover the land of Judea, which upon the wind rising "have been driven into the first and last seas; that is, "into the Dead and Mediterranean seas; and when "the shores of both seas have been filled with heaps "of dead locusts, which the waters have thrown up, "their rottenness and stench have been so very noxious "as to corrupt the air, and produce a pestilence "among men and beasts;" or this may be understood of the fall and ruin of the enemies of the Jews, signified by these locusts; and some apply it to Sennacherib's army smote by the angel, when there fell in one night a hundred and fourscore and five thousand of them in the land of Israel, and lay unburied, 2 Kings xix. 35. Theodoret interprets the seas of armies; the first sea of the army of the Babylonians, by which Nineveh the royal seat of the Assyrians was destroyed; and the other sea of the army of the Persians, who, under Cyrus, took Babylon, the metropolis of the Chaldean empire: *because he hath done great things;* evil things, as the Targum; either the locust, which had done much mischief to the fruits of the earth; or the enemy, signified by it, who had behaved proudly, and done much hurt to the inhabitants of Judea: or, *though he hath done great things* [s], as some render it, yet all this shall come to him. Some interpret it of God, *for he* (God) *hath done*, or *will do, great things* [t]; in the removing of the locusts, or in the destruction of those enemies they represented, as is expressly said of him in the following verse.

Ver. 21. *Fear not, O land*, &c.] O land of Israel, as the Targum, and the inhabitants of it; neither of the locusts, who had so terrified them, and had done so much mischief, and threatened more; nor of their enemies, the Assyrians or Chaldeans, and their powerful armies, or any other; but, on the contrary, *be glad, and rejoice;* at the removal of the locusts, and at the destruction of their enemies: *for the Lord will do great things;* good things, in opposition to the evil things done by the locusts, as Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech observe; or by the destroying army of the king of Assyria, by delivering the Jews out of the Babylonish captivity; and in the times of the Maccabees, and especially in the times of Christ, which are quickly prophesied of in this chapter; and which prophecies some interpreters begin here, it not being unusual for the prophets to pass directly from things temporal to things spiritual, and especially to the great deliverance and salvation by Christ, and also by temporal blessings to design spiritual ones.

Ver. 22. *Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field*, &c.] Which before groaned, and were perplexed for want of pasture, and cried because of the drought, ch. i. 18, 20. perhaps the Gentiles may be here designed, in the mystic and spiritual sense, in distinction from the Jews, the children of Zion, in the next verse: *for the pastures of the wilderness do spring;* grass in abundance springs up in them, and covers them, so that there was plenty of food for the beasts of the field: *for the tree beareth her fruit;* brings forth and bears fruit suitable to it, agreeable to its nature: *the fig-tree and the vine do yield their strength;* send forth their branches, put forth their buds, their leaves and fruit. This and the preceding clause cannot be understood as a reason why the beasts of the field should not be afraid, for they relate not to them, but to men; and may serve to confirm the mystic sense of the words, as they may refer to the great fruitfulness produced in the wilderness of the Gentile world, through the preaching of the Gospel in the times of the Messiah; which are more clearly pointed at in the following verse, and which were introduced with great outward peace and plenty; and the Jews [u] by the tree bearing her fruit, in the preceding clause, understand barren trees bearing fruit.

Ver. 23. *Be glad then, ye children of Zion*, &c.] The people of the Jews, and especially the spiritual and believing part of them; such as were born again, that were born of Zion, and born in Zion, and brought up by her, and in her; the children of that Zion or Jerusalem that is the mother of us all; and who were looking for the Messiah, and to whom it would be good news and glad tidings to hear of his coming, Zech. ix. 9. *and rejoice in the Lord your God;* not in any creature or creature-enjoyment, but in the Lord. The Targum is, "in the Word of the Lord your God;" in Christ the essential Word; see Phil. iii. 3. and iv. 4. though rather Jehovah the Father, the giver and sender of Christ, is here meant, because of what follows; and who is to be rejoiced in by his people, not as an absolute God, but as in Christ, and as their covenant God and Father in him; who has chosen them for himself, and is their portion and inheritance; which are reasons sufficient why they should rejoice in him, and others follow; *for he hath given you the former rain moderately;* or rather, *for he hath given you the teacher of righteousness* [w]; to which agrees the Targum, "for "he hath returned to you your teacher in righteousness;" and so Jarchi paraphrases the words, and interprets them of the prophets in general, "your prophets that "teach you to return unto me, that I may justify you;" and R. Japhet says that מורה signifies a prophet that should teach them in the way of righteousness; not Isaiah, as Grotius; but the King Messiah, as Abarbinel interprets it; who is the teacher sent from God, and given by him, as his presence with him, and the miracles done by him, sufficiently prove, John iii. 2. for which he was abundantly qualified, being the omniscient God, and the Son of God that lay in the bosom of his Father; is the Wisdom of God, as Mediator; had the Spirit of wisdom on him, and the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hid in him; and who is able to make his teachings effectual, and to qualify others for such work. This office he performed personally on earth, both in a doctrinal way, and by way of example; and now executes it by his Spirit, and by his ministers; and a *teacher of righteousness* he may be truly said to be; since he not only taught the Gospel, the word of righteousness in general; but in particular directed men to seek in the first place the righteousness of God, which is no other than his own; and pronounced those happy that hungered after it: he declared he came to

[s] כי הגדיל לעשות quamvis magna gesserit, Gataker.
[t] Quia magnifica Jehovah agit, Junius & Tremellius; aget, Piscator, Livelens, Castalio.

[u] T. Bab Cetubot, fol. 112. 2.
[w] המורה לצדקה doctorem justitiæ, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus, Montanus, Munster.

fulfil all righteousness, even the law for righteousness; and taught men to believe in him for it, and to live righteously and godly. Aben Ezra observes, that the phrase is the same with *the sun of righteousness;* Mal. iv. 2. which is said of Christ the author of righteousness, who is our righteousness, made so by imputation, the Lord our righteousness: or, as here, *a teacher unto,* or *for, righteousness*[h], all which is matter of joy and gladness; see Isa. lxi. 10: *and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first* month; alluding to the two seasons of the year in which rain was given to the Jews; the former rain fell in Marchesvan, which answers to our September and October, part of each, at their seed-time; and the latter in Nisan, the first month of their ecclesiastical year, and answers to part of March and April, and fell some time before their harvest; and these former and latter rains now fall about the same time. So Dr. Shaw[i] observes, that "the first rains "in these countries (Syria, Phœnicia, and the "Holy Land) usually fall about the beginning of "November; the latter sometimes in the middle, "sometimes toward the end, of April:" and elsewhere he says[k], "in Barbary the first rains fall some years "in September, in others a month later; the latter "rains usually fall in the middle of April:"—and the same traveller relates[l], that "upon the coast "(of Egypt) from Alexandria, all along to Damiata "and Tineh, they have their former and latter rains "as in Barbary and the Holy Land." This rain spiritually designs the doctrine of the Gospel, which is sometimes compared to rain, Deut. xxxii. 2. Isa. lv. 10, 11. because as rain it comes from God, descends from heaven, is a divine gift, both as to the ministry and experience of it; it tarries not for man, neither for his desires nor deserts; falls according to divine direction, sometimes here, and sometimes there; is a great blessing, and brings many with it, revives, refreshes, and makes fruitful. Jerom interprets these two rains of the first susception of doctrine, and of a more perfect knowledge of it; as also of the two Testaments, the Old and New: but it may be better interpreted of the preaching of the Gospel by John the Baptist, and by Christ; or by Christ, and then by his apostles; or of the first and second ministration of the apostles, first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles; or of the coming of Christ in the flesh, for the same word is used here as in the former clause, and of his spiritual coming in the latter day, both which are compared to rain, Hos. vi. 3. Psal. lxxii. 6.

Ver. 24. *And the floors shall be full of wheat,* &c.] The churches of Christ, which will now be in Judea, and in the Gentile world, which are his *floors,* Matt. iii. 12. and which will be set up everywhere through the preaching of the Gospel, the descent of the former and latter rain; these will be full of precious souls gathered in, compared to wheat, and of the choice and excellent doctrines of the Gospel, and of all spiritual provisions, Matt. xiii. 30. Jer. xxiii. 28: *and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil;* with the wine of Gospel doctrine, and the oil of true grace; there shall be a flow, an overflow, a redundancy of these, both in the ministers of the word and private Christians, in whom the grace of God shall abound and superabound; see Rom. v. 20. 1 Tim. i. 14.

Ver. 25. *And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten,* &c.] Or *I will recompence to you the years*[m]; give you fruitful ones, as a full compensation for those in which the locust ate up the fruits of the earth for some years running: *the canker-worm, and the catterpillar, and the palmer-worm;* of which see ch. i. 4: *my great army which I sent among you;* as in ver. 11. the Targum of the whole is, "and I "will recompence unto you good years, in the room "of the years in which the people, nations, and "tongues, the governors and kingdoms of vengeance, "spoiled you, my great army which I sent among you;" and Kimchi observes, that the sense of the Targumist is, that this verse is a prophecy of the days of the Messiah; as no doubt it is, in which the Lord has done for his people, as Moses prayed he would, *make* them *glad according to the days wherein* he *afflicted* them, *and the years wherein* they had *seen evil,* Psal. xc. 15. the times of the Messiah, in which so many good things come to the people of God, are a sufficient recompense for what they endured in times past. Of the Mahometan notion of locusts being the army of God, see the note on ver. 11. and on Rev. ix. 3.

Ver. 26. *And ye shall eat in plenty,* &c.] Or, *in eating eat*[n]; most surely eat, and in great abundance; which Hebraism not only denotes the certainty of a thing, but the increase and abundance of it; see Gen. xxii. 17. 1 Chron. iv. 10. there is plenty of spiritual provisions held forth under the Gospel dispensation: much in God, in his goodness, grace, and love, truth and faithfulness; in his covenant, the blessings and promises of it: much in Christ, who is compared to many things eatable; is called the Lamb of God, the fatted calf, the hidden manna, the tree of life, and the bread of God; every thing in him, and that belongs to him, is food for faith; his flesh is meat indeed, his blood is drink indeed; the fulness of grace in him; the righteousness wrought out by him; the salvation he is the author of; upon all which the believer lives by faith: much in the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, compared to honey for sweetness of taste; to milk for its nourishing nature, easiness of digestion, and the suitableness of it for babes; and to strong meat fit for men: and there is great plenty also in the ordinances of the Gospel, particularly in the Lord's supper, the feast of fat things, where saints are invited to eat and drink abundantly; which eating is not a bare attendance on outward ordinances, or a superficial taste of the things in them, but a feeding upon them by faith, receiving and digesting them. *And be satisfied;* eat to satiety; eat and be full, so as to be entirely contented, and desire no other sort of food; thus saints, as Naphtali, are satisfied with the favour and love of God,

[h] Doctorem ad justitiam, Tigurine version, Mercerus, Castalio, Drusius, Cocceius, Burkius.
[i] Travels, tom. 2. par. 2. ch. 1. p. 335. Ed. 2.
[k] Ib. tom. 1. part 2. sect. 2. p. 137.
[l] Ib. tom. 2. part 2. ch. 2. sect. 3. p. 377.

[m] ושלמתי לכם et rependam vobis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Vatablus, Tarnovius; compensabo, Grotius, Cocceius.
[n] אכלתם אכול comedatis comedendo, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Vatablus, Piscator, Tarnovius.

having a delightful sensation of it, and a full persuasion of interest in it; with Christ as the bread of life, so as not to hunger after other; with his righteousness, as not to seek any other; and with his salvation, being so suitable to them; and with the goodness and fatness of the Lord's house, his word and ordinances. *And praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wonderously with you*; acknowledge him to be the giver of all this spiritual food, and that they are unworthy of it; ascribe it entirely to the grace of God, who has done wonders for them; in wonderfully setting them apart for himself in eternal election; in making such a well-ordered covenant with them in Christ; in sending him to be their Saviour and Redeemer; in calling them out of darkness into marvellous light; in bestowing such love upon them, as to call them and make them his children, and also heirs of him and eternal glory; see Psal. xxii. 26. *And my people shall never be ashamed*; because they shall always have food to eat; shall never be disappointed, when they rightly apply for it in proper places and times; and not be like the troops of Tema, and companies of Sheba, Job vi. 19, 20. they shall not be ashamed of their faith and hope, and expectation of good things promised them; nor of the word and ordinances, and the profession they have made of Christ in this world; nor shall they be ashamed at his coming; but shall be placed at his right hand, and received into his kingdom, and shall be led by him to fountains of living water, and be satisfied with pleasures for evermore.

Ver. 27. *And ye shall know that I* am *in the midst of Israel*, &c.] The presence of God among his people shall be so manifest, the tokens of it so clear, that it shall be easily known, by the impressions of his love upon them; the teachings of his spirit in them; the usefulness of the word and ordinances to them; the spiritual and heavenly frame of soul they shall be favoured with, and the savouriness of their conversation; this is the blessing Christ has promised to Gospel ministers and churches, Matt. xxviii. 20: *and that* I am *the Lord your God, and none else*; that he is their covenant God and Father, and acknowledge none else: *and my people shall never be ashamed*: which is repeated for the certainty of it; see the preceding verse.

Ver. 28. *And it shall come to pass afterward*, &c.] After the teacher of righteousness has been sent, and a plentiful rain of the Gospel has been let down in the land of Judea, in the ministry of John the Baptist, Christ and his apostles, and such a comfortable enjoyment of the blessings of grace in it, and the knowledge of God by it; and after the wonderful work of redemption wrought by Christ. R. Jeshua in Aben Ezra and Jarchi both say this prophecy refers to time to come; and Kimchi observes, that the phrase is the same with *in the last days*: and so the Apostle Peter quotes it, Acts ii. 17. a phrase, as the above writer observes, which always signifies the days of the Messiah, to which he applies these words; and so do other Jewish writers, both ancient and modern [s]; and there is no doubt with us Christians that they belong to the times of Christ and his apostles, since they are by an inspired writer said to be fulfilled in those times, Acts ii. 16, 17. here some begin a new chapter. That *I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh*; not on such whose hearts are made tender as flesh, according to Ezek. xxxvi. 26, as Jarchi; for the spirit must be given first to make the heart such; nor only upon men in the land of Israel, a place fit to prophesy in, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi; but upon all men, as this phrase frequently signifies; see Isa. xl. 5. that is, all sorts of men, Jews and Gentiles, men of all nations; and such there were on the day of Pentecost, when the spirit was poured down upon the apostles, and the grace of the spirit was given to many of all nations; though that was only the beginning of the fulfilment of this prophecy, which quickly had a further accomplishment in the Gentile world; and denotes the abundance of the gifts of the spirit, both extraordinary and ordinary, and of his grace, and the blessings of it, bestowed on them. *And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy*; as Agabus, Barnabas, Simeon, *&c.* and the four daughters of Philip the evangelist, Acts xi. 28. and xiii. 1. and xxi. 9, 10: *your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions*; as Ananias, Peter, Paul, John, and others, some in their elder, some in their younger years, Acts ix. 10. and x. 17. and xvi. 9. and xxii. 17. and xxvi. 19. and xxvii. 23. though prophecy, dreams, and visions, being the usual ways of conveying knowledge, here signify that the knowledge of men in Gospel times should be equal to, yea, exceed, whatever was communicated to men in the highest degree in former times: John the Baptist was greater than any of the prophets, and yet the least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than he, Luke vii. 28.

Ver. 29. *And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour my spirit.*] Menservants and maid-servants should partake of the gifts and grace of the spirit in great abundance; and many of them were effectually called by grace, through the ministry of the word; and some servants became ministers of it; all which appears from 1 Cor. vii. 21, 22. 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2. Philem. ver. 10, 11, 16. for that is not true what the Jews [p] say, the Shechinah or divine Majesty does not rest but upon a wise man, and one mighty and rich; or prophecy, as Maimonides [q] has it.

Ver. 30. *And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth*, &c.] This, and what follow, refer to the prodigies seen in the air, and done in the earth, a little before the destruction of Jerusalem [r]; when in the air were seen comets and blazing stars, particularly one in the form of a sword hanging over Jerusalem, and appearances of armies engaged in battle; and, on the earth, a flame was seen in the temple, and a voice heard in it, saying, let us go hence; the doors of it opened of themselves; an ideot went about, crying woe to the people, woe to the city, *&c.*: *blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke*; *blood* may design the great

[s] Zohar in Numb. fol. 99. 2. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 15. fol. 219. 2. Debarim Rabba, sect. 6. fol. 242. 2 Abarbinel, Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 9. 3. R. Isaac, Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 51.

[p] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 92. 1.
[q] Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. c. 32.
[r] Vid. Joseph. De Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 5. sect. 3

slaughter of men by the Roman army in the land of Judea, and by murders committed among themselves in the city of Jerusalem, which were very horrible, and of great numbers: *fire*, the burning of towns and cities; though Kimchi interprets it of lightnings in the heavens: and *pillars of smoke*, rising up in straightness and height like palm-trees, as the word[x] signifies, vast quantities of it arising from cities and towns burnt. Gussetius[y] interprets this of the burning of the martyrs in the first ages of Christianity, and of their spiritual affections, which ascended upwards to God, and were grateful to him; see Cant. iii. 6.

Ver. 31. *The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood*, &c.] Not by eclipses, as Aben Ezra; but by the clouds of smoke arising from the burning of towns and cities, which would be so great as to obscure the sun, and through which the moon would look like blood: or all this may be understood in a figurative sense of the change that should be made in the ecclesiastic and civil state of the Jewish nation, signified by the *heavens* and *earth*; and particularly that their king or kingdom should be in a low, mean, and distressed condition, designed by the *sun*: and the change of their priesthood is signified by the *moon*: so Vitringa, on Isa. xxiv. 23, interprets the *sun* here of King Agrippa, the last king of the Jews in obscurity; and the *moon* of Ananias junior, the high-priest, slain by the zealots: *before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come*: not the fall of Gog and Magog, as Kimchi; not the day of the last judgment, but of the destruction of Jerusalem; not by the Chaldeans, but by the Romans; their last destruction, which was very great and terrible indeed, and in which there was a manifest appearance of the hand and power of God; see Mal. iv. 1. Maimonides[z] interprets it of the destruction of Sennacherib near Jerusalem; but if that sense is not acceptable, he proposes that of the destruction of Gog and Magog, in the times of the Messiah.

Ver. 32. *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered*, &c.] Or *saved*, as in Acts ii. 21, from those miseries and calamities before described, from the impending ruin and destruction of the city; and so it was, that those that believed in Christ, that were in the city, had an intimation of it beforehand, and removed from thence to a place called Pella[a], and so escaped being involved in the common calamity: though this also may be understood of a spiritual deliverance and salvation by Christ, from sin, Satan, and the world, and from the second death, and wrath to come, and out of the hands of every enemy; which such share in who call on the name of the Lord, pray to him for grace and mercy, life and salvation, through Christ; that have a spiritual knowledge of God in Christ, real and sincere desires after him, and trust and confidence in him, which this phrase supposes; and which also includes the whole worship of God, internal and external, performed in a spiritual and evangelical manner; see Rom. x. 13. *For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said*; either by this prophet, or some others before him; see Psal. xiv. 7. Isa. lix. 20. Obad. ver. 21. this cannot be understood literally of Mount Zion and Jerusalem, unless it be of deliverance out of it; not in it, for Jerusalem was the seat of blood, confusion, and distress; but mystically of the church of Christ, often called Zion and Jerusalem, Heb. xii. 22. hither the deliverer came, here he is, and to be seen; from hence the word of the Lord came, the Gospel of salvation, which proclaims deliverance to the captives; here it is to be heard, met with, and found, Isa. ii. 3. Luke iv. 18. Rom. xi. 26. *And in the remnant whom the Lord shall call*: not merely externally, by the outward ministry of the word; but internally, according to his purpose, and by his grace, powerfully and effectually, to the special blessings of grace here, and eternal glory hereafter: these are the remnant according to the election of grace; the little flock to whom God gives the kingdom; the few that enter in at the strait gate; the little city, and few men in it, delivered by the poor wise man; these share in the deliverance of Zion, and shall be certainly and completely saved, with an everlasting salvation. This may respect not only the remnant, or a small number of the Jews that believed in Christ, upon his first coming, and the preaching of the Gospel by his apostles, but the call and conversion of them in the latter day; which sense connects the words better with the following chapter.

C H A P. III.

THIS chapter, which some make the *fourth*, contains a prophecy of God's judgments on all the antichristian nations at the time of the Jews' conversion, and the reasons of them, ver. 1, 2, 3. a threatening of Tyre and Zidon, by way of retaliation, for carrying the riches of the Jews into their temples, and selling their persons to the Greeks, ver. 4—8. an alarm to prepare for the battle of Armageddon, or the destruction that shall be made in the valley of Jehoshaphat, ver. 9—15. and after that an account of the happy state of the church of Christ, their safety and security, plenty, prosperity, and purity, to the end of the world, ver. 16—21.

Ver. 1. *For, behold, in those days, and at that time*, &c.] Which Kimchi refers to the times of the Messiah; and is true of the latter times of the Messiah, of his spiritual reign yet to come: *when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem*; not from the Edomites, Tyrians, and Philistines, that had carried them captive in the times of Ahaz; nor from Babylon, where they had been carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar; for nothing of what is after foretold followed

[x] תמרות עשן palmas fumi, Piscator, Coccius.
[y] Ebr. Comment. p. 947.

[z] Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. c. 29. p. 271.
[a] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 3. c. 5. p. 75.

upon the return of these captivities: but this designs the present captivity of the Jews, and the restoration of them to their own land; of which see Isa. lii. 8. Jer. xxx. 3, 9, 18—21.

Ver. 2. *I will also gather all nations, &c.*] Or cause or suffer them to be gathered together against his people: not the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, in the times of Jehoshaphat, as Aben Ezra; but either the Turks, prophesied of under the name of Gog and Magog in Ezekiel, ch. xxxviii. and xxxix. and a multitude of other nations with them, who shall be gathered together against the Jews, to regain the land of Judea from them, they will upon their conversion inhabit: or else all the antichristian kings and nations, which shall be gathered to the battle of the great day of God Almighty, Rev. xvi. 14: *and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat*. Kimchi thinks this was some valley near to Jerusalem, in which Jehoshaphat built or wrought some works, and so was called by his name: Joseph Ben Gorion[x] speaks of a valley, called the valley of Jehoshaphat, which was near Jerusalem, to the further end of which one Zachariah, a good man, in the times of the Jewish wars, was rolled and died, being cast down from the top of a tower upon the wall east of Jerusalem; and which is confirmed by R. Abraham, as quoted by Lively: and the true Josephus says[y], that the valley into which this man was cast lay directly under Jerusalem; and Benjamin of Tudela[z] makes mention of a valley of this name, which he says lies between Jerusalem and the mount of Olives; where Jerom[a] places it by the name of Cælas; with whom Mr. Maundrell[b] agrees, who says that this valley lies between Mount Moriah and Mount Olivet, and has its name from the sepulchre of Jehoshaphat: and, according to Lyra on the place, who is followed by Adrichomius[c], it is the same with the valley of Cedron, which was so situated; but, why that should be called the valley of Jehoshaphat, no reason is given. Aben Ezra and others are of opinion that this is the same with the valley of Berachah, where Jehoshaphat obtained a very great victory over many nations, 2 Chron. xx. 1, 26. but it does not appear to have been called by his name, and, besides, seems to be at a great distance from Jerusalem; though there may be an allusion to it, that as many nations were there collected together and destroyed, so shall it be in the latter day; and I am of opinion that no proper name of a place is here meant, as going by it in common, but is so called from the judgment of God here executed upon his and his people's enemies. So Jarchi calls it *the valley of judgments*: Jehoshaphat signifying *the judgment* of the Lord: Kimchi says it may be so called because of judgment, the Lord there pleading with the nations, and judging them: and in the Targum it is rendered, "the valley of the division of judg-"ment;" and to me it designs no other than Armageddon, the seat of the battle of Almighty God, Rev. xvi. 16. and which may signify the destruction of their troops; see the note there. *And will plead with them there for my people, and for my heritage Israel*: the people of the Jews, who will now be converted, who will have the *lo-ammi* taken off of them, and will be called the people of the living God again, and be reckoned by him as his portion and inheritance; though not them only, but all the saints; all that have separated from antichrist, his doctrine and worship, and have suffered by him: *whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land*; Kimchi refers this to the scattering of the Jews by Titus and his army, and the partition of Judea among them, which is not amiss; in consequence of which they are still a scattered people, and their land has been parted between Turks and Papists; sometimes inhabited by the one, and sometimes by the other, and now by both, on whom God will take vengeance; he'll plead the cause of his people, by the severe judgments he'll inflict on his and their enemies. This may respect the persecuting of the Christians from place to place, and seizing on their lands and estates, and parting them, as well as the dispersion of the Jews, and the partition of the land of Canaan.

Ver. 3. *And they have cast lots for my people, &c.*] Not only parted their land, but cast lots for their persons, or played at dice for them, how many captives each soldier should have, and which should be their share and property: ninety-seven thousand Jews, Josephus[d] says, were carried captive by the Romans, who, very probably, cast lots for them, as was usual in such cases; see Nahum iii. 10: *and have given a boy for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink*: either they gave a boy to be prostituted to unnatural lusts, in lieu of a whore; and a girl to be debauched for a bottle of wine; or they gave a boy for the price of a whore, as the Targum and Kimchi interpret it; that is, they gave a boy, instead of money, to a whore, to lie with her, as the eunuch was given to Thais; and they gave a girl to the vintner for as much wine as they could drink at one sitting. These phrases both express their uncleanness and intemperance, and also the low price and value they set upon their captives; and is applicable enough to the Papists, notorious for the same abominable lusts.

Ver. 4. *Yea, and what have ye to do with me, O Tyre, and Zidon, and all the coasts of Palestine? &c.*] The Tyrians, Zidonians, and Philistines, were near neighbours of the Jews, and implacable enemies to them; and are here put for the enemies of the true church of Christ, the Papists and Turks, and in whose possession those places now are: these are addressed by the Lord, inquiring or demanding the reason of their ill usage of him and his people: *what have ye to do with me?* to be called by my name, or accounted my people? I know you not, nor will I have any fellowship with you: or what have ye to do with my people, to disturb and distress them? what wrong have I or they done you, that you thus use them? *will ye render me a recompense?* for turning you out of your land, and putting my people into it? do you think to retaliate this? *and if ye recompence me*: by doing an injury to my people: *swiftly* and *speedily will I return your recompense upon*

[x] Hist. Heb. l. 6. c. 27.
[y] De Bello Jud. l. 4. c. 5. sect. 4.
[z] Massaot, sive Itinera, p. 44.
[a] De locis Hebr. fol. 92. C.
[b] Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 102, 106. Ed. 7.
[c] Theatrum Terræ Sanctæ, p. 172.
[d] De Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 9. sect. 3.

your own head; bring swift and sudden destruction upon you.

Ver. 5. *Because ye have taken my silver and my gold,* &c.] Which is all the Lord's, Hagg. ii. 8. or which he had bestowed upon his people, and they had taken from them: *and have carried into your temples my goodly pleasant things;* either the rich furniture of the houses of his people, which they carried into their own houses, or *palaces*[e], as it may be rendered; having either taken them away themselves, or bought them of others that had taken them: or else the rich vessels of the temple; as these were carried away by the Chaldeans, and put into their idol-temples, Dan. i. 2, so afterward they were taken by the Romans, and put into the temples of their gods: whether any of these came into the hands of the Tyrians, &c. by any means, and were put into their idol-temples, as the temple of Hercules, is not certain; however, it is notorious that the Papists, the Tyrians are an emblem of, not only build stately temples, and dedicate them to angels and saints, but most profusely adorn them with gold and silver, and all goodly and desirable things; which is putting them to an idolatrous use they were not designed for.

Ver. 6. *The children also of Judah and the children of Jerusalem,* &c.] Not children in age literally, as Kimchi, kidnapped or bought by the Tyrians; but the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem: *have ye sold unto the Grecians;* or sons of Javan; it was one part of the merchandise of Tyre to trade in the persons of men; and Javan, or the Greeks, with others, were their merchants for them, Ezek. xxvii. 13. and the souls of men are a part of the trade of the merchants of Rome, typified by the Tyrians, Rev. xviii. 13: *that ye might remove them far from their border;* from their own land, or place of dwelling, that so they might not be easily redeemed, and return to it any more. Rome, the antichristian Tyre, trading with the souls of men, is to their eternal damnation, as much as in them lies. Cocceius interprets this of the children of the church being trained up in the doctrine of Aristotle, in the times of the schoolmen.

Ver. 7. *Behold, I will raise them out of the place whither ye have sold them,* &c.] That is, bring them back to their own land, from their places whither they have been carried captive, and where they have dwelt in obscurity, and as if they had been buried in graves, but now should be raised up and restored; and this their restoration will be as life from the dead. So the Targum, "behold, I will bring them publicly "from the place whither ye have sold them;" this is to be understood, not of the same persons, but of their posterity, they being the same natural body. Kimchi interprets it of them and their children; them at the resurrection of the dead, their children at the time of salvation. Some think this had its accomplishment in Alexander and his successors, by whom the Jews, who had been detained captives in other countries, were set free; particularly by Demetrius, as Josephus[f] relates: though it may be applied to the future restoration of the Jews, out of all countries, unto their own land; or rather to the gathering together the spiritual Israel, or people of God, who have been persecuted from place to place by their antichristian enemies. *And will return your recompense upon your own head;* do to them as they have done to others; pay them in their own coin; retaliate the wrongs done to his people; see Rev. xiii. 10. and xviii. 6.

Ver. 8. *And I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the children of Judah,* &c.] That is, deliver them into their hands, to dispose of them; this is thought to have been literally fulfilled in the Tyrians, when thirty thousand[g] of them were sold for slaves, upon the taking of their city by Alexander, who put some of them into the hands of the Jews, they being in friendship with him: it mystically designs the power that the Jewish church, converted, and in union with Gentile Christians, will have over the antichristian states: *and they shall sell them to the Sabeans, to a people far off;* the inhabitants of Sheba, a country by the Jews reckoned the uttermost parts of the earth; see Matt. xii. 42. These are not the same with the Sabeans, the inhabitants of Arabia Deserta, that took away Job's oxen and asses; but rather those who were the inhabitants of Arabia Felix, which lay at a greater distance. So Strabo[h] says, the Sabeans inhabited Arabia Felix; and Diodorus Siculus[i] reckons the Sabeans as very populous, and one of the Arabian nations, who inhabited that Arabia which is called Felix, the metropolis of which is Saba; and he, as well as Strabo, observes, that this country produces many odoriferous plants, as cassia, cinnamon, frankincense, and calamus, or the sweet cane; hence *incense* is said *to come from Sheba,* and *the sweet cane from a far country,* Jer. vi. 20. and since the Jews traded with these people for those spices, it is easy to conceive how they sold their captives to them: now these lived at a great distance, in the extreme parts of Arabia, both towards the Indian sea and the Arabian gulf. And Diodorus Siculus[k] observes, that διὰ τὸν ἐκτοπισμὸν, because of the distance of their situation, they never came into the power or under the dominion of any, or were never subdued. These seem to be the descendants of Cush, the son of Ham; and if they were the descendants of Joktan, the son of Shem, as some think, these are placed by Vitringa[l] in Carmania; and where Pliny[m] makes mention of a city called Sabe, and of the river Sabis; and it is worthy of notice that the ancient Greek fathers[n], with one consent, interpret the Sabeans of the Saracens: and whether they may not design the Turks, in whose possession this country now is, and into whose hands the antichristian powers may be delivered by means of the Christians, both Jews and Gentiles, may be considered. *For the Lord hath spoken it;* and therefore it shall be accomplished. The Targum is, "for by "the word of the Lord it is so decreed;" whose counsels and decrees can never be frustrated. This, in an ancient book of the Jews called Mechilta, is referred to the prophecy of Noah concerning Canaan,

[e] להיכליכם in palatia vestra, Montanus, Drusius, Burkius.
[f] Antiqu. l. 13. c. 5.
[g] Arrian. de Exped. Alexand. l. 2. c. 24.
[h] Geograph. l. 16. p. 536.
[i] Bibliothec. l. 3. p. 179, 180.
[k] Ibid. p. 181.
[l] Comment. in Jesaiam, c. 43. 3.
[m] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 23.
[n] In Catena Græc. Patr. apud Spanhem. Hist. Jobi, c. 3. p. 1[illegible]

whose sons inhabited Tyre, *a servant of servants shall he be to his brethren*, Gen. ix. 25. as Jarchi observes.

Ver. 9. *Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles*, &c.] This decree of God, concerning the deliverance of his church, and the destruction of their enemies; which is to be proclaimed among them, to the terror of them, and the comfort of God's people, encouraging them to the battle, since they might be sure of victory; for the prophet here returns to give an account of the armies to be gathered together, and to be destroyed in the valley of Jehoshaphat, as appears from ver. 12. and to this end heralds are here ordered to make proclamation of war throughout the nations, and to gather them to the battle of Almighty God; whether seriously, or ironically, may be considered; what follows seems to be spoken in the latter way, to the enemies of the church; though they may be interpreted as spoken seriously to the people of God themselves: *prepare war*; get all things ready for it, men and arms: *wake up the mighty men*; generals, captains, and other officers, men of strength and courage; let them arouse from the sleep and lethargy in which they are, and get themselves in a readiness for war, and put themselves at the head of their troops: *let all the men of war draw near, let them come up*: to the land of Judea, and to Jerusalem; that is, either the Christian powers with their armies, to defend Jerusalem against the Turks, and deliver it out of their hands; let them appear on the behalf of the Jews: or else let the enemies of Christ's church and people come up against them, even the most powerful of them; let them muster up all their forces, and do the most they can, they shall not prevail.

Ver. 10. *Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears*, &c.] Let not only soldiers, and such as have been trained up in military discipline, appear in the field on this occasion; but let husbandmen and vine-dressers leave their fields and vineyards, and turn their instruments of husbandry and vine-dressing into weapons of war; let them not plead want of armour, but convert these to such uses: on the contrary, when this battle will be over, swords shall be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks, Isa. ii. 4: *let the weak say, I am strong*: such as are weak, through sickness, or old age, let them not plead their weakness to excuse them from engaging in this war; but let them make the best of themselves, and say they are strong and healthy, and fit for it, and enter in it with all courage and bravery: this is said either ironically to the enemies of God's people, suggesting that all hands would be wanted, and should be employed, weak and strong, and all little enough; when they had made the utmost effort they could, it would be in vain: or else they are seriously spoken to the people of God, that none of them should excuse themselves, or be discouraged because of their weakness from engaging in this last and sore battle; but take heart, and be of good courage, and quit themselves like men, and be strong, since they might be sure of victory before-hand. The Apostle Paul refers to this text in 2 Cor. xii. 10. and applies it to spiritual weakness and strength; and indeed the weakest believer, that is so in faith and knowledge, may say he is strong, in comparison of what he once was, and others are; strong, not in himself, but in Christ, and the power of his might, and in the grace that is in him; nor should he excuse himself from fighting the Lord's battles, against sin, Satan, and the world, and false teachers; or from doing the Lord's work, any service he calls him to; or from bearing the cross he lays on him on account of his weakness; nor should he be discouraged by it from those things; but let him strengthen himself, as Aben Ezra interprets it, take heart, and be of good courage.

Ver. 11. *Assemble yourselves*, &c.] From divers parts into one place: *be ye gathered*: or *gather yourselves together*, as the Targum and Kimchi; get together in a body, muster up all the forces you can collect together. Jarchi, from Menachem, by the change of a letter, renders it, *make ye haste*; lose no time in preparing for this battle; get men, and arms for them, as fast as you can; be as expeditious as possible: *and come, all ye Heathen*: antichristian nations, Mahometan or Papal; which latter, especially, are sometimes called Heathen and Gentiles, because of the Heathenish rites introduced into their worship, Psal. x. 16. Rev. xi. 2: *and gather yourselves round about*; from all parts, to the valley of Jehoshaphat or Armageddon, Rev. xvi. 14, 16. this is spoken ironically to them, to use their utmost endeavours to get most powerful armies against the people of God, which would be of no avail, but issue in their own destruction; or it may signify what should be done by the providence of God, bringing such large numbers of them together to their own ruin: *thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord*; which is a prayer of the prophet, or of the church, to God, that he would send down his mighty ones, the angels that excel in strength, and destroy this great army thus gathered together, as an angel in one night destroyed the army of Sennacherib. So Kimchi and Aben Ezra interpret it of angels, and many other interpreters; but perhaps it may be better to understand it of Christian princes and their forces, those armies clothed in white, and riding on white horses, in token of victory; with Christ at the head of them, Rev. xix. 14. who may be said to be caused to *come down*; because, being assembled, shall go down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, where their enemies are gathered together, and discomfit them. The Targum is, "there the Lord shall break the "strength of their strong ones."

Ver. 12. *Let the Heathen be awakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat*, &c.] That is, let the enemies of Christ and his church be aroused from that state of security in which they are, and prepare for their own defence; for in such a state the antichristian powers will be before their destruction; see Rev. xviii. 7. let them bestir themselves, and exert all the vigour and strength they have; let them come in high spirits against the people of God; let them invade the holy land, and come even to the valley of Jehoshaphat; and, when come thither, let them descend into the place appointed for their ruin: the land of Judea being said to be higher than other countries, going to it is generally expressed by going up to it; otherwise it is more usual to say that men go down a valley than come up to it; and mention being made again of this valley, shews

that the same thing is referred to here as in ver. 2. these words are said in answer to the petition in the former verse; for they are spoken by the Lord, as appears by what follows: *for there will I sit to judge all the Heathen round about;* thither gathered together from all parts: the allusion is to a judge upon the bench, sitting to hear and try causes, and pass a definitive sentence; and here it signifies the execution of that sentence; such a pleading the cause of his people, as to take vengeance and inflict just punishment upon their enemies; see Psal. ix. 4, 5. Rev. xiv. 14.

Ver. 13. *Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe,* &c.] This is said to the mighty ones sent, the Christian princes, the executioners of God's vengeance on antichrist; the angels that will pour out the vials of his wrath on the antichristian states, compared to reapers, with a sharp sickle in their hands, to cut them down, as corn is cut when reaped; as the same states are compared to a harvest ripe, the measure of their sins being filled up, and the time of their destruction appointed for them come; see Rev. xiv. 15: *come, get ye down;* to the valley: or go *tread ye**; for another simile is made use of: the reference here is to the treading of clusters of grapes in the wine-press, as appears by what follows: and so the Targum renders it, "descend, tread their mighty men;" in like manner Jarchi interprets it; and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it: and Dr. Pocock observes, that the word درى in the Arabic language signifies to tread, as men tread grapes in a press: the reasons follow, *for the press is full;* of clusters of the vine; or the valley is full of wicked men, compared unto them, destined to destruction: *the fats overflow;* with the juice of grapes squeezed out, denoting the great effusion of blood that will be made; see Rev. xiv. 18, 19, 20. and xix. 15, 18, 20: *for their wickedness is great;* is come to its height, reaches even to heaven, and calls aloud for vengeance; an end is come to it, and to the authors of it, Rev. xviii. 5. The Targum of the whole is, "draw out "the sword against them, for the time of their end "is come; descend, tread their mighty men slain, as "any thing is trodden in a wine-press; pour out their "blood, for their wickedness is multiplied."

Ver. 14. *Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision,* &c.] The same with the valley of Jehoshaphat before mentioned; which shews that not any valley of that name is intended, but a certain place so called, from the judgments of God in it; and here named *the valley of decision*, because here their judgment will be determined, as Kimchi and Jarchi; and at this time the controversy between God, and his people's enemies, will be decided, and at an end: or *the valley of concision*, as the Vulgate Latin version; because in this place, and at this time, the nations gathered together in it will be cut to pieces: or, as others, *the valley of threshing*[p]; because, as, in Jehoshaphat's time, the Moabites and Ammonites were threshed by the Jews in the valley of Berachah, to which the allusion is; so at this time the antichristian kings and their armies will be threshed and beaten, and destroyed by the men of Judah, God's professing people; see Micah iv. 13. these seem to be the words of the prophet, breaking out into this pathetic exclamation, upon a sight of the vast multitudes gathered together in this valley, and slain in it; and the doubling of the word serves to express the prodigious number of them; and this shews that this prophecy refers either to the vast army of the Turks, under the name of Gog, and the great slaughter that will be made of them; and that this valley may be the same with the valley of Hamon-gog, that is, the valley of the multitude of Gog, where their multitude of slain shall be buried, Ezek. xxxix. 11. or to that vast carnage of the antichristian kings and their armies at Armageddon, Rev. xvi. 14, 16. and xix. 18, 19, 20, 21. the Targum is, "armies, armies, in "the valley of the division of judgment:" *for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision;* that is, the great and terrible day of the Lord, to take vengeance on all the antichristian powers, both eastern and western, is nigh at hand, which will be done in this valley.

Ver. 15. *The sun and moon shall be darkened,* &c.] Both the politic and ecclesiastic state of antichrist shall be ruined and destroyed; it shall *fare* with Rome Papal as it did with Rome Pagan, at the time of its dissolution; see Rev. vi. 12, 13. and xvi. 8: *and the stars shall withdraw their shining;* antichristian princes and nobles in the civil state, and the clergy of all ranks in the church-state, shall lose their glory.

Ver. 16. *The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem,* &c.] Christ, the Lamb, shall now appear as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and utter his voice in his providence and judgments on the behalf of his church and people, signified by Zion and Jerusalem; and therefore said to roar, and utter his voice from thence; he will be heard far and near, and strike terror in the hearts of his enemies; see Jer. xxv. 30, 31: *and the heavens and the earth shall shake;* great revolutions will be made in the world, both in church and state, among the antichristian powers; and such as will also make them shake and tremble, as well as alter the form and frame of things among them; see Rev. xvi. 18, 19. changes in government, civil and ecclesiastic, are sometimes signified by such phrases, Hagg. ii. 6, 7. Heb. xii. 26, 27. Rev. vi. 14. and xi. 13, 19: *but the Lord* will be *the hope of his people;* the object, author, ground, and foundation of their hope of salvation here and hereafter; in whom they may hope for and expect safety and security in the worst of times; since he will be their *refuge*, or their *harbour*[q], as it may be rendered; to whom they may have recourse, to shelter and screen them from the rage and wrath of their enemies, and where they will be safe, till the indignation of God be over and past; and while calamities and judgments are upon the unchristian and ungodly world, they will have nothing to fear amidst these storms, being in a good harbour: *and the strength of the children of Israel;* of the spiritual Israel; of all such who are Israelites indeed, the Lord's chosen, redeemed, and called people, both Jews and Gentiles; the author and giver of their spiritual

* רדו πατεῖτε, calcate, Sept.; so Syr. Ar.

p בעמק החרוץ in valle triturationis, Piscator.

q מחסה refugium, Tigurine version, Burkius; receptus, Tarnovius.

strength, the strength of their lives and of their hearts, of their graces and of their salvation; by whom they are furnished with strength to do the duties of religion; to exercise grace; to wrestle with God in prayer; to withstand spiritual enemies; to bear afflictions patiently, and to persevere to the end: or he is their *fortress*[r]; their strong hold and place of defence, where they are safe from every enemy, free from all distresses, enjoy solid peace and comfort, and have plenty of provisions, Isa. xxxiii. 16.

Ver. 17. *So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain, &c.*] The church of God, which is his dwelling-place; and will appear more manifestly to be so at this time, when Christ the Lamb will stand on Mount Zion, with an 144,000, having his Father's name in their foreheads, Rev. xiv. 1. and which presence of the Lord will be clearly discerned by his people; by the destruction of their enemies, and by his protection of them; by his being their hope and strength, their refuge and their fortress; they will experimentally know his divine inhabitation among them: *then shall Jerusalem be holy;* or *holiness*[s]; not Jerusalem, literally taken, as Kimchi; though, it being now rebuilt, will be inhabited by holy persons, the converted Jews, and so all manner of holiness practised in it; but rather the whole church of God everywhere, consisting of holy persons, made so through the holiness of Christ imputed to them, and the sanctifying grace of his Spirit wrought in them; not that they will be perfectly holy in themselves, as the saints will in the New-Jerusalem state, Rev. xxi. 2, 27. but they will be greatly so; holiness will be predominant and universal among men; there will be more real saints, and fewer hypocrites will be in the churches; see Isa. iv. 3. Zech. xiv. 20, 21: *and there shall no strangers pass through her any more:* to hurt and annoy the church of God; for there shall be none in these times to molest, disturb, and hurt, in all the holy mountain of the Lord, Isa. xi. 9. or to pollute her with false doctrine, superstitious worship, or immorality; or her communion shall not be interrupted and made uncomfortable, or she be pestered with hypocrites and ungodly persons, strangers to God and godliness, to Christ, his Spirit, and the power of religion; see Isa. lii. 1. Ezek. xliv. 9.

Ver. 18. *And it shall come to pass in that day, &c.*] When antichrist shall be destroyed; the Jews converted; the power of godliness revived, and the presence of God among his people enjoyed. Vitringa, in his Commentary on Isaiah, frequently applies this, and such-like prophecies, to the times of the Maccabees; though, he owns, they were but an emblem of better times under the Gospel dispensation; nor does he deny the mystical and spiritual sense of them. That *the mountains shall drop down new wine:* which, and the following expressions, are to be understood not in a strict literal sense, as Lactantius[t] seems to have understood them; who says, that, in the Millennium, God will cause a rain of blessing to descend morning and evening; the earth shall bring forth all kind of fruit without the labour of man; honey shall drop from the rocks, and the fountains of milk and wine shall overflow: but hyperbolically, just as the land of Canaan is said to flow with milk and honey; not that it really did, but the phrase is used to denote the fertility of it, and the abundance of temporal blessings in it. The literal sense is this, that the mountains shall be covered with vines, on which they are often planted; these vines shall be full of large clusters of grapes; and these grapes, being pressed, shall yield a large quantity of new wine; and so, by a metonymy, the mountains are said to drop it down[u], that is, abound with it, or produce an abundance of it: but the spiritual or mystical sense is, that the churches of Christ in those times, comparable to mountains, and so to hills in the next clause, for their exalted and visible glorious state in which they now will be; and for the rich gifts and graces of the spirit within them; and for the pasture upon them, and the trees of righteousness that grow thereon; and also for their firmness and stability, their immovableness and perpetual duration; these shall abound with fresh and large discoveries of the love of God and Christ, which is better than wine, Cant. i. 2, 4. like wine, cheering and refreshing; like new wine, though old as to its original, yet new in the manifestations of it; and which are usually made in the church, and the ordinances of it, to the making glad the hearts of the Lord's people; also they shall abound with the blessings of grace, the fruits of love, such as pardon, peace, justification, &c. which, like wine, fill with joy, revive and comfort; and though they are ancient blessings, provided long ago, they are exhibited under the Gospel dispensation in a new covenant-way; and the application of them is made in the churches, in Zion, where the Lord commands the blessing, even life for evermore. This may also take in the Gospel, which brings the good news of these blessings, and so is very reviving and cheering; and, though ordained and preached of old, is newly revealed under the present dispensation; and will be more clearly in after-times, when all the mountains or churches will abound with it, and even the whole earth be filled with the knowledge of it, Isa. xi. 9. likewise the ordinance of the Lord's supper, that feast of fat things, of wines on the lees well refined, made in the mountain of the Lord, for all his people may be included; and both in that, and in the ministry of the word, the Lord is sometimes pleased, as he may more abundantly hereafter, to give his saints some prelibations of that new wine, which Christ and they shall partake of in his father's kingdom; see Cant. vii. 9. Isa. xxv. 6. and lv. 1, 2, 3. Matt. xxvi. 29. *And the hills shall flow with milk:* that is, there shall be much pasturage upon them, and a great number of cattle feeding thereon, which shall yield large quantities of milk; and so, by the same figure as before, the hills may be said to flow with it[w]. The spiritual meaning is, that the churches of Christ, comparable to hills, for the reasons before given, shall abound

[r] מעוז præsidium, Tarnovius; arx, Cocceius.
[s] קדש sanctitas, Munster, Mercerus, Vatablus, Piscator, Tarnovius.
[t] Epitome Divin. Institut. c. 11. Vid. Institut. l. 7. c. 24.
[u] Incultisque rubens pendebit sentibus uva,
Et duræ quercus sudabunt roscida mella.
Virgil. Eclog. 4. l. 29, 30.
[w] Flumina jam lactis, jam flumina nectaris ibant,
Flavaque de viridi stillabant ilice mella.
Ovid. Metamorph. l. 1.

with the means of grace, with the sincere milk of the word; to which the Gospel is compared for its whiteness and purity, for every word of God is pure and purifying; for assuaging the wrath the law produces; it being easy of digestion, even to new-born babes; and its salutary nourishing virtue and efficacy; and of this there will be great abundance in the latter day: see Cant. iv. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 2, 3. *And all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters;* that is, the channels in which the rivers run; these, in a time of drought, are sometimes empty, and the bottoms of them to be seen, but now full of water, and flow with it: grace is often in Scripture compared to *water*, because of its refreshing, cleansing, and fructifying nature; and *rivers* denote an abundance of it; and the *channels*, through which it is conveyed to men, out of the fulness of Christ, are the ordinances; see Zech. iv. 12. and the prophecy suggests, that these should not be dry and empty, but that large measures of grace shall be communicated by means of them to the souls of men, to their great comfort and edification, and for the supply of their wants; see Ezek. xxxvi. 25. John iii. 5. and iv. 10, 14. and vii. 37, 38, 39. *And a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord;* not meaning baptism, as some; nor Christ, the fountain of grace, life, and salvation; but the Gospel, the word of the Lord, that fountain full of excellent truths and doctrines; of the blessings of grace; of exceeding great and precious promises; and of much spiritual peace, joy, and comfort: this is the law or doctrine of the Lord, that should come out of Zion, or the church, Isa. ii. 3. the living waters that shall come out of Jerusalem, Zech. xiv. 8. and the same with the waters in Ezekiel's vision, that came from under the threshold of the house, Ezek. xlvii. 1. it seems to denote the small beginnings of the Gospel, and the great increase and overflow of it in the world, as it does in all the above passages: this is referred by the ancient Jews [x] to the times of the Messiah. *And shall water the valley of Shittim;* a plain or valley near Jordan, upon the borders of Moab, at the further end of Canaan that way, Numb. xxxiii. 49. Josh. iii. 1. Benjamin of Tudela [y] says, that from the mount of Olives may be seen the plain and brook of Shittim, unto or near Mount Nebo, which was in the land of Moab. This valley or plain, as the Targum, was so called, either from the *shittah*-tree, Isa. xli. 19. of which was the wood *shittim*, so much used for various things in the tabernacle and temple, that grew there; and which Jerom on this place says was a kind of tree that grew in the wilderness, like a white thorn in colour and leaves, though not in bigness, for otherwise it was a very large tree, out of which the broadest planks might be cut, and its wood very strong, and of incredible smoothness and beauty; and which grew not in cultivated places, nor in the Roman soil, but in the desert of Arabia; and therefore one would think did not grow in this plain near Jordan, and so could not be denominated from hence: but Dr. Shaw [z] observes, that the Acacia is by much the largest and the most common tree of these deserts (*i. e.* of Arabia), as it might likewise have been of the plains of Shittim, over-against Jericho, from whence it took its name; and adds, we have some reason to conjecture that the shittim-wood, whereof the several utensils, *&c.* of the tabernacle, *&c.* Exod. xxv. 10, 13, 23, *&c.* were made, was the wood of the acacia. Or it may be this place had its name from the rushes which grew on the banks of Jordan, near to which it was; for so is the word interpreted by some [a]: and Saadiah Gaon says, this valley is Jordan; so called, because Jordan was near to a place called Shittim: however, be it as it will, this can never be understood in a literal sense, that any fountain should arise out of the temple, and flow as far as beyond Jordan, and water any tract of land there; but must be understood spiritually, of the same waters of the sanctuary as in Ezekiel's vision, ch. xlvii. 1, 8. at most, the literal sense could only be, that the whole land should be well watered from one end to the other, and become very fertile and fruitful, by the order and direction of the Lord, that dwells in his temple. The mystical sense is best. Jarchi makes mention of a Midrash, that interprets it of the expiation of the sins of the Israelites, in the affair of Baal-peor at Shittim, Numb. xxv. 1, 2, 3. but the true spiritual sense is, that the Gospel shall be carried to the further parts of the earth; that the whole world shall be filled and watered with it, and become fruitful, which before was like a desert; these living waters shall flow, both toward the former and the hinder seas, the eastern and western, as in Zech. xiv. 8. see Isa. xi. 9. Some render it, *shall water the valley of cedars* [b]; the shittim-wood being a kind of cedar, of which many things belonging to the tabernacle, a type of the church, was made, being firm, sound, incorruptible, and durable; see Exod. xxv. 10, 23. and xxvi. 26, 32. and xxvii. 1. saints are compared to cedars for their height in Christ, their strength in him, and in his grace; their large and spreading leaves, branches, and roots, or growth in grace; and for their duration and incorruption; see Numb. xxiv. 5, 6. Psal. xcii. 12. a valley may signify the low estate of God's people; or be an emblem of lowly, meek, and humble souls, to whom the Gospel is preached, and who are watered and revived by it, and to whom more grace is given; see Isa. xl. 4. and lxi. 1. and lvii. 15. It is by Symmachus rendered *the valley of thorns;* and so Quinquarboreus [c] says the word signifies and designs such who are barren in good works.

Ver. 19. *Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness,* &c.] These two nations having been the implacable enemies of Israel, are here put for the future adversaries of the church of Christ, Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan; who will all be destroyed as such, and be no more: Rome is called, spiritually or mystically, Egypt, Rev. xi. 8. and Edom is a name that well agrees with it, it signifying *red*, as it is with the blood of the saints: and it is common, with the Jewish writers, by Edom to understand Rome; which though it may not be true of all places they so interpret, yet is of many, and so here. Kimchi, by Egypt

[x] Midrash Kohelet, fol. 63. 2.
[y] Itinerarium, p. 44.
[z] Travels, ch. 2. p. 444, 459. Ed. 2.
[a] Vid. Reland. Palestina Illustrata, l. 1. c. 54. p. 351, 352.

[b] את נחל השטים vallem cedrorum lectissimorum, Junius & Tremellius, Tarnovius.
[c] Scholia in Targum in loc.

understands the Ishmaelites, or the Turks; and, by Edom, Rome. *For the violence of the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land*: either in the land of Judah; or rather in their own land, Egypt and Edom. This respects the violences and outrages committed by the antichristian states upon the true professors of the Christian religion, the Waldenses and Albigenses, and others, whose innocent blood, in great quantities, has been spilled by them. Antichrist is represented as drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, and in whom will be found the blood of all the prophets and saints; and for this reason ruin and destruction will come upon him and his followers, and blood will be given them to drink, for they are worthy, Rev. xvii. 6. and xviii. 24. and xvi. 6, 7.

Ver. 20. *But Judah shall dwell for ever*, &c.] The converted Jews shall dwell in their own land for ever, to the end of the world, and never more be carried captive, Ezek. xxxvii. 25. and the true professing people of God, as Judah signifies, shall continue in a church-state evermore, and never more be disturbed by any enemies; they shall dwell safely and peaceably to the end of time: *and Jerusalem from generation to generation*; shall dwell so in like manner, age after age; that is, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, or the members of the true church of Christ, who shall see and enjoy peace and prosperity, both temporal and spiritual, as Jerusalem signifies.

Ver. 21. *For I will cleanse their blood which I have not cleansed*, &c.] Which some understand, as the Targum, of the Lord's inflicting further punishments on the enemies of his people, for shedding their innocent blood; and that he will not expiate their sins, nor hold them guiltless, or suffer them to go unpunished; but rather this is to be interpreted in a way of grace and mercy, as a benefit bestowed on Judah and Jerusalem, who are the immediate antecedents to the relative here; and in the words a reason is given why they should dwell safely and peaceably for ever, because the Lord will justify them from their sins; forgive their iniquities; cleanse them from all their pollution, signified by blood; of which grace they will have had no application made to them till this time; but now all their guilt and filth will be removed; and particularly God will forgive, and declare to be forgiven, their sin of crucifying Christ; whose blood they had imprecated upon themselves and their children, and which has remained on them; but now will be removed, with all the sad effects of it. Though this may also refer to the conversion of the Gentiles, and the pardon of their sins, and the sanctification of their persons, in such places and parts of the world, where such blessings of grace have not been bestowed in times past for many ages, if ever. *For the Lord dwelleth in Zion*; and therefore will diffuse his grace, and spread the blessings of it all around: or *even the Lord that dwelleth in Zion*[a]; he will do what is before promised; being the Lord, he can do it; and dwelling in Zion his church, it may be believed he will do it; and this will be for ever, when his Shechinah shall return thither in the days of the Messiah, as Kimchi observes.

A M O S.

THIS book in the Hebrew Bibles is called *Sepher Amos*, the Book of Amos; and, in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, the Prophecy of Amos. This is not the same person with the father of Isaiah, as some have ignorantly confounded them; for their names are wrote with different letters; besides, the father of Isaiah is thought to have been of the royal family, and a courtier; whereas this man was a country farmer and herdsman. His name signifies *burdened*: the Jews[a] say he was so called, because burdened in his tongue, or had an impediment in his speech, and stammered: but rather because his prophecies were burdens to the people, such as they could not bear, being full of reproofs and threatenings; however, his prophecy in this respect agrees with his name. What time he lived may be learned from ch. i. 1. by which it appears that he was cotemporary with Isaiah and Hosea; but whether he lived and prophesied so long as they did is not certain. The author of Seder Olam Zuta[b] makes him to prophesy in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. R. Abraham Zacut[c], and R. David Ganz[d], place him later than Hosea, and prior to Isaiah; they say that Amos received the law from Hosea, and Isaiah from Amos. Mr. Whiston[e] makes him to begin to prophesy in the year of the Julian period 3941, and before Christ 773; and Mr. Bedford[f] earlier, in the year 802; and, from some passages in his prophecy, he appears to be of the land of Judah; see ch. i. 1. and vii. 12. though he prophesied in the land of Israel, and against the ten tribes chiefly; the occasion of which was, Jeroboam had been very successful and victorious, and the people under him enjoyed great plenty and prosperity, and upon this grew wanton, luxurious, and very sinful; wherefore this prophet was sent to reprove them for their sins, to exhort them to repentance, and threaten them with cap-

[a] יהוה *even I the Lord*, margin of our Bibles.

[a] Vajikra Rabba, sect. 10. fol. 152. 3. Abarbinel Præfat. in Ezek. fol. 153. 2.

[b] P. 104, 105. Ed. Meyer.

[c] Juchasin, fol. 12. 1.

[d] Tzemach David, fol. 13. 1. 2.

[e] Chronological Tables, cent. 8.

[f] Scripture Chronology, B. 6. ch. 2. p. 647.

tivity, in case of impenitence; and to comfort the truly godly with promises of the Messiah's coming and kingdom. The authenticity of this book is not to be questioned, since many passages out of it were taken by following prophets, as the words in ch. i. 2, by Joel, iii. 16, and by Jeremiah, ch. xxv. 30; ch. iv. 9. by Hagg. ii. 17; ch. ix. 13. by Joel. iii. 18; and others are quoted by the writers of the New Testament as divinely inspired, as ch. v. 25, 26, 27, and ix. 11, in Acts vii. 42, 43, and xv. 15, 16. nor is there any room to doubt of his being the writer of this book, as is manifest of his speaking of himself as the first person in it; though Hobbes[g] says it does not appear. Some have thought that his language is rustic, suitable to his former character and employment; but certain it is there are masterly strokes and great beauties of eloquence in it; and which shews that it is more than human. According to some writers, he was often beat and buffeted by Amaziah the priest of Beth-el; and at last the son of the priest drove a nail into his temples, upon which he was carried alive into his own country, and there died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his ancestors at Tekoa[h].

CHAP. I.

THIS chapter begins with the general title of the book, in which the author is described by name, and by his condition of life, and by his country, and the time of his prophecy fixed, ver. 1. He first foretels a drought in the land of Israel, in the most fruitful places, which would cause mourning among the shepherds, ver. 2. then the captivity of the Syrians, whose metropolis was Damascus, ver. 3, 4, 5. Next the destruction of the Philistines, whose principal cities were Gaza, Ashdod, Askelon, and Ekron, ver. 6, 7, 8. After that the ruin of Tyre, with the reason of it, ver. 9, 10. then the calamities that should come upon Edom, whose chief places were Teman and Bozrah, ver. 11, 12. and lastly the desolations of the Ammonites, whose metropolis, Rabbah, should be destroyed, and their king and princes go into captivity, ver. 13, 14, 15. and all this for the sins of these several nations.

Ver. 1. *The words of Amos*, &c.] Not which he spoke of or for himself, but from the Lord; all the prophecies, visions, and revelations made unto him, are intended: *who was among the herdsmen of Tekoa*; which was not in the tribe of Asher, as Kimchi; nor of Zebulun, as Pseudo-Epiphanius[i]; but in the tribe of Judah, 2 Chron. xi. 5, 6. Jer. vi. 1. It lay to the south, and was six miles from Beth-lehem. Mr. Maundrell[k] says it is nine miles distant, to the south of it; and, according to Jerom[l], it was twelve miles from Jerusalem; though he elsewhere[m] says, Thecua, or Tekoa, is a village at this day, nine miles from Ælia or Jerusalem, of which place was Amos the prophet, and where his sepulchre is seen: either there is a mistake of the number, or of Ælia for Beth-lehem; the former rather seems to be the case; according to Josephus[n], it was not far from the castle of Herodium. The Misnic doctors[o] speak of it as famous for oil, where the best was to be had; near to it was a wilderness, called the wilderness of Tekoa; and Jerom[p] says, that beyond it there was no village, nor so much as huts and cottages, but a large wilderness, which reached to the Red sea, and to the borders of the Persians, Ethiopians, and Indians, and was full of shepherds, among whom Amos was; whether he was a master-herdsman, or a servant of one, is not said. The word is used of the king of Moab, who is said to be a *sheep-master*, 2 Kings iii. 4. he traded in cattle, and got riches thereby; and so the Targum here renders it, "who was lord or master of "cattle;" and Kimchi interprets it, he was a great man among the herdsmen; and so it was a piece of self-denial to leave his business, and go to prophesying; but rather he was a servant, and kept cattle for others, which best agrees with ch. vii. 14. and so is expressive of the grace of God in calling so mean a person to such a high office. The word used signifies to mark; and shepherds were so called from marking their sheep to distinguish them, which seems to be the work of servants; and, in the Arabic language, a kind of sheep deformed, and of short feet, are so called: *which he saw concerning Israel*; or, against Israel[q], the ten tribes, to whom he was sent, and against whom he prophesied chiefly; for he says very little of Judah. Words are more properly said to be spoken or heard; but here they are said to be seen; which shews that not bare words are meant, but things, which the prophet had revealed to him in a visionary way, and he delivered; see Isa. ii. 1: *in the days of Uzziah king of Judah*; who was also called Azariah, 2 Kings xv. 1: *and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel*; so he is called to distinguish him from Jeroboam the son of Nebat; this king was the grandson of Jehu; he was, as Jerom says, before Sardanapalus reigned over the Assyrians, and Procas Sylvius over the Latines: *two years before the earthquake*, which was well known in those times, and fresh in memory. Zechariah speaks of it many years after, from whom we learn it was in the days of Uzziah, ch. xiv. 5. The Jewish writers generally say that it was when Uzziah was smote with leprosy for invading the priest's office; and was in the year in which he died, when Isaiah had a vision of the glory of the Lord, and the posts of the house moved, Isa. vi. 1, 4. and with whom Josephus[r] agrees; who also relates, that the temple being rent by the earthquake, the bright light of the sun

[g] Leviathan, c. 33.
[h] Pseudo-Epiphan. de Prophet. Vit. c. 12. Isidor. de Vit. Sanct. c. 43. Jerom. de locis Hebr. in voce Elthei, fol. 91. B.
[i] De Vita Prophet. c. 12
[k] Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 88.
[l] Proem. in Amos & Comment. in Jer. vi. 1.
[m] De locis Hebr. in voce Elthei, fol. 91. B.
[n] De Bello Jud. l. 4. c. 9. sect. 5.
[o] Misn. Menachot, c. 8. sect. 3.
[p] Proem. in Amos.
[q] על ישראל contra Israelem, so some in Drusius.
[r] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 10. sect. 4.

shone upon the king's face, and the leprosy immediately seized him; and, at a place before the city called Eroge, half part of a mountain towards the west was broken and rolled four furlongs towards the eastern part, and there stood and stopped up the ways, and the king's gardens; but this cannot be true, as Theodoret observes; since, according to this account, Amos must begin to prophesy in the 50th year of Uzziah; for he reigned 52 years, and he began his reign in the 27th year of Jeroboam, 2 Kings xv. 1. who reigned 41 years, 2 Kings xiv. 23. so that Uzziah and he were cotemporary fourteen years only, and Jeroboam must have been dead 36 years when it was the 50th of Uzziah; whereas they are here represented as cotemporary when Amos began to prophesy, which was but two years before the earthquake; so that this earthquake must be in the former and not the latter part of Uzziah's reign, and consequently not when he was stricken with the leprosy.

Ver. 2. *And he said*, &c.] That is, the Prophet Amos, before described; he, being under divine inspiration, said as follows: *the Lord will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem;* not from Samaria, nor from Dan and Beth-el, but from Zion and Jerusalem, where the temple of the Lord stood; and out of the holy of holies in it, where was the seat of the divine Majesty; and his voice being compared to the roaring of a lion, denotes his wrath and vengeance; and is expressive of some terrible threatening prophecy he would send from hence, by one or other of his prophets; perhaps Amos may mean himself; and who, having been a shepherd or herdsman in the wilderness, had often heard the terrible roaring of the lion, to which he compares his prophecy concerning the judgments of God on nations. Some think reference is had to the earthquake, as Aben Ezra; and which might be attended with thunder and lightning, the voice of God: *and the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn*: that is, the huts or cottages they dwell in, erected for the more convenient care of their flocks; these, by a figure, are said to mourn, because exposed to the violent heat of the sun in this time of drought; or because forsaken by the shepherds; or it may design the shepherds themselves that dwelled in them, that should mourn because there was no pasture for their flocks, the grass being dried up, and withered away: and indeed it may be rendered, *the pastures of the shepherds shall mourn*[s]; being destroyed by the drought, as the cattle upon them are said to mourn and groan, Joel i. 18: *and the top of Carmel shall wither;* a fruitful mountain in the land of Israel; there were two of this name, one in the tribe of Judah, near which Nabal dwelt, 1 Sam. xxv. 2. another in the tribe of Asher, near to Ptolemais or Aco; some think the former is meant, as being nearer Tekoa, and more known to Amos; others the latter, because Israel or the ten tribes are prophesied against; though Carmel may be taken for any and all fruitful places in the land; and the top or chief of it withering may signify the destruction of every thing pleasant and useful. Some think Amos speaks figuratively in the language of a herdsman or shepherd, as artificers and mechanics do in their own way[t]; and so by *shepherds* he means kings and princes; and, by their *habitations*, their kingdoms, cities, towns, and palaces; and, by *Carmel*, their wealth, riches, and precious things, which should all be destroyed; and to this agrees the Targum, "the habitations of kings shall become desolate, and the strength of their fortresses shall be made a desert."

Ver. 3. *Thus saith the Lord*, &c.] Lest it should be thought that the words that Amos spoke were his own, and he spake them of himself, this and the following prophecies are prefaced in this manner; and he begins with the nations near to the people of Israel and Judah, who had greatly afflicted them, and for that reason would be punished; which is foretold, to let Israel see that those judgments on them did not come by chance; and lest they should promise themselves impunity from the prosperity of these sinful nations; and to awaken them to a sense of their sin and danger, who might expect the visitation of God for their transgressions; as also to take off all offence at the prophet, who began not with them, but with their enemies: *for three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn away* the punishment *thereof;* Damascus was an ancient city; it was in the times of Abraham, Gen. xv. 2. It was the *metropolis* of Syria, Isa. vii. 8. and so Pliny calls it, *Damascus of Syria*[u]. Of the situation of this place, and the delightfulness of it, see the note on Jer. xlix. 25. and of its founder, and the signification of its name, see the note on Acts ix. 2. to which may be added, that though Justin[w] says it had its name from Damascus, a king of it before Abraham and Israel, whom he also makes kings of it; and Josephus[x] would have Uz the son of Aram the founder of it, to which Bochart[y] agrees; yet the Arabic writers ascribe the building of it to others; for the Arabs have a tradition, as Schultens[z] says, that there were Canaanites anciently in Syria; for they talk of Dimashc the son of Canaan, who built the famous city of Damascus, and so it should seem to be called after his name; and Abulpharagius[a] says, that Murkus or Murphus, as others call him, king of Palestine, built the city of Damascus twenty years before the birth of Abraham: from this place many things have their names, which continue with us to this day, as the *damask* rose, and the *damascene* plum, transplanted from the gardens that were about it, for which it was famous; and very probably the invention of the silk and linen called *damasks* owes its rise from hence. It is here put for the whole country of Syria, and the inhabitants of it, for whose numerous transgressions, signified by *three* and *four*, the Lord would not turn away his fury from them, justly raised by their sins; or the decree which he had passed in his own mind, and now made a declaration of, he would not revoke; or not inflict the punishment they had deserved, and he had threatened. The sense is, that

[s] נאות הרעים pascua pastorum, Vatablus, Piscator, Grotius, Burkius.

[t] Navita de ventis, de tauris narrat arator,
Enumerat miles vulnera, pastor oves. Propert. L. 2. Eleg. 1.

[u] Nat. Hist. l. 36. c. 8.

[w] E Trogo, l. 36. c. 2.

[x] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 4.

[y] Phaleg. l. 2. c. 8.

[z] Apud Universal History, vol. 2. p. 260.

[a] Hist. Dynast. p. 13.

he would not spare them, or have mercy on them, or defer the execution of punishment any longer; he would not forgive their transgressions. So the Targum, "I will not pardon them." De Dieu refers it to the earthquake before mentioned, that God would not turn away that, but cause it to come, as he had foretold, for the transgressions of these, and other nations after spoken of; but rather it refers to Damascus; and so some render it, *I will not turn*, or *convert it* [b]; to repentance, and so to my mercy; but leave it in its sins, and to my just judgments. Kimchi thinks that this respects four particular seasons, in which Damascus, or the Syrians, evilly treated and distressed the people of Israel; first in the times of Baasa; then in the times of Ahab; a third time in the days of Jehoahaz the son of Jehu; and the fourth in the times of Ahaz; and then they were punished for them all: *because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron*; that is, "the "inhabitants of the land of Gilead," as the Targum; this country lay beyond Jordan, and was inhabited by the Reubenites and Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh; who were used in a very cruel manner, by Hazael king of Syria, as was foretold by Elisha, 2 Kings viii. 12. not literally, as in 2 Sam. xii. 31. but by him they were beat, oppressed, and crushed, as the corn of the threshing-floor; which used to be threshed out by means of a wooden instrument stuck with iron teeth, the top of which was filled with stones to press it down, and so drawn to and fro over the sheaves of corn, by which means it was beaten out, to which the allusion is here: see the note on 1 Cor. ix. 9. This was done by Hazael king of Syria, who is said to destroy the people, and make them *like the dust by threshing*, 2 Kings x. 32, 33. and xiii. 3, 7.

Ver. 4. *But I will send a fire into the house of Hazael, &c.*] For so doing; into his family, his sons' sons, one of whom perhaps was Rezin, that Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria slew, as Aben Ezra observes. This denotes the judgments of God upon his posterity for his cruel usage of the Israelites; and designs an enemy that should come into his country, and war made in the midst of it, by which it should be depopulated; and this being by the permission and providence of God, and according to his will, is said to be sent by him: *which shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad*; a name frequently given to the kings of Syria; there was one of this name the immediate predecessor of Hazael, whose servant he was; and he left a son of the same name that succeeded him, 2 Kings viii. 7, 15. and xiii. 24. these may denote the royal palaces of the kings of Syria, which should not be spared in this time of desolation; though rather by them may be intended the temples, which he and Hazael are said by Josephus [c] to build in the city of Damascus, whereby they greatly adorned it; and for these and other acts of beneficence they were deified by the Syrians, and worshipped as gods; and even to the times of Josephus, he says, their statues were carried in pomp every day in honour of them; and so the house of Hazael, in the preceding clause, may signify a temple that was either built by him, or for the worship of him, since he was deified as well as Ben-hadad; and it may be observed, that as Adad was a common name of the kings of Syria; for, according to Nicholas of Damascus [d], ten kings that reigned in Damascus were all called Adad; so this is a name of the god they worshipped. Pliny speaks of a god worshipped by the Syrians, whose name must be Adad; since, according to him, the gem *adadunephros* had its name from him [e]; and Macrobius [f] is express for it, that the chief god of the Assyrians was called Adad, which signifies one; see the note on Isa. lxvi. 17.

Ver. 5. *I will break also the bar of Damascus, &c.*] Or *bars*, the singular for the plural, by which the gates of the city were barred; and, being broken, the gates would be easily opened, and way made for the enemy to pass into the city and spoil it; or it may signify the whole strength and all the fortifications of it. So the Targum, "I will break the strength of Damascus:" *and cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven*; or, *of an idol*, as the Vulgate Latin version. It is thought to be some place where idols were worshipped by the Syrians; their gods were the gods of the valleys, which they denied the God of Israel to be, 1 Kings xx. 20. Mr. Maundrell [g] says, that near Damascus there is a plain still called the valley of Bocat, and which he thinks is the same with this Bicat-aven, as it is in the Hebrew text; and which lies between Libanus and Antilibanus, near to the city of Heliopolis; and the Septuagint and Arabic versions here call this valley the plain of On, which Theodoret interprets of an idol called On. Father Calmet [h] takes it to be the same with Heliopolis, now called Balbec, or Baal-beck, the valley of Baal; where was a famous temple dedicated to the sun, the magnificent remains whereof are still at this day visible. Balbec is mentioned by the Arabians as the wonder of Syria; and one of their lexicographers says it is three days' journey from Damascus, where are wonderful foundations, and magnificent vestiges of antiquity, and palaces with marble columns, such as in the whole world are nowhere else to be seen; and such of our European travellers as have visited it are so charmed with what they beheld there, that they are at a loss how to express their admiration. On the south-west of the town, which stands in a *delightful plain* on the west foot of Antilibanus, is a Heathen temple, with the remains of some other edifices, and, among the rest, of a magnificent palace [i]. Some late travellers [k] into these parts tell us, that "upon a rising ground near the north-east extremity "of this *plain*, and immediately under Antilibanus, is "pleasantly situated the city of Balbec, between Tripoli of Syria, and Damascus, and about sixteen "hours distant from each.—This plain of Bocat (they "say) might by a little care be made one of the richest "and most fertile spots in Syria; for it is more fertile "than the celebrated vale of Damascus, and better watered than the rich plains of Esdraelon and Rama.

[b] לא אשיבנו non convertam eum, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius.
[c] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 4. sect. 6.
[d] Apud Joseph. Antiqu. l. 7. c. 5. sect. 2.
[e] Nat. Hist. l. 37. c. 11.
[f] Saturnal. l. 1. c. 23.

[g] Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 119, 120. Ed. 7.
[h] Dictionary, in the word *Heliopolis*.
[i] Universal History, vol. 2. p. 266.
[k] Authors *of the Ruins of Balbec*.

"In its present neglected state it produces corn, some "good grapes, but very little wood.—It extends in "length from Balbec almost to the sea; its direction "is from north-east by north, to south-west by south; "and its breadth from Libanus to Antilibanus is "guessed to be in few places more than four leagues, "or less than two." It seems to be the same with Bicat-lebanon, or the valley of Lebanon, Josh. xi. 17. and with that which Strabo[l] calls the hollow plain; the breadth of which to the sea (he says) is two hundred furlongs, and the length from the sea to the midland is double that: *and him that holdeth the sceptre from the house of Eden*: that is, the king from his pleasure-house; or it may be understood of the name of some place in Syria, where the kings of it used sometimes to be, and had their palace there, called Beth-eden; and it seems there is still a place near Damascus, on Mount Libanus, called Eden, as the above traveller says; and Calmet[m] takes it to be the same that is here spoken of: *and the people of Syria shall go into captivity unto Kir, saith the Lord*: which last clause is added for the certainty of it, and accordingly it was punctually fulfilled; for in the times of Rezin, which was about fifty years after this prophecy of Amos, though Kimchi says but twenty-five, Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria came up against Damascus, took it, and carried the people captive to Kir, 2 Kings xvi. 9. The Targum and Vulgate Latin version call it Cyrene, which some understand of Cyrene in Egypt; see Acts ii. 10. but this cannot be, since it was in the hands of the king of Assyria; but rather Kir in Media is meant; see Isa. xxii. 6. which was under his dominion; and so Josephus says[n], that he carried captive the inhabitants of Damascus into Upper Media.

Ver. 6. *Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Gaza*, &c.] The chief city of the Philistines, and put for the whole country, and designs the inhabitants of it; *and for four, I will not turn away* the punishment *thereof*; see the note on ver. 3: *because they carried away captive the whole captivity*; which cannot be understood of the captivity of the whole nation, either of Israel or Judah, who were never carried captive by the Philistines; but of their carrying away all the substance of the house of Jehoram king of Judah, and of all his sons and his wives, and left him not one son but the youngest, 2 Chron. xxi. 17: *to deliver* them *up to Edom*; or, *to shut* them *up in Edom*[o]; which country also revolted from Jehoram, when he and the captains of his chariots going out against them, were compassed in by them, ver. 8. 9, 10. Some think this refers to the time when Sennacherib invaded Judea, and many of the Jews fled to Palestine for succour, but instead of being sheltered were delivered up to the Edomites; but this was in the times of Hezekiah, after Amos had prophesied, and therefore can't be referred to; and for the same reason this cannot be applied to the Edomites and Philistines invading and smiting Judah, and carrying them captive, 2 Chron. xxviii. 17, 18.

Ver. 7. *But I will send a fire on the wall of Gaza*, &c.] An enemy that shall pull down and destroy the walls of it: this was fulfilled in the times of Uzziah, under whom Amos prophesied; and very likely in a very short time after this prophecy, who went out and warred against the Philistines, and broke down the wall of Gaza, 2 Chron. xxvi. 6. or else in the times of Hezekiah, who smote the Philistines unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, 2 Kings xviii. 8. or however in the times of Nebuchadnezzar, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, ch. xxv. 20. as also in the times of Alexander the great, who, after he had taken Tyre, besieged Gaza, and after two months' siege took it, as Diodorus Siculus relates[p]; the wall being undermined and thrown down, he entered in at the ruins of it, as Curtius[q] says; in the times of the Maccabees the suburbs of it were burnt by Jonathan, and the place taken, 1 Maccab. xi. 61, 62: *which shall devour the palaces thereof*; the palaces of the governor, and of other great men in it; (the governor of it, when Alexander took it, was Batis;) and the stately towers of it, of which there were many. This city was about fifteen miles south of Ascalon, and about four or five north of the river Bezor, and at a small distance from the Mediterranean. It was situated on an eminence, surrounded with the most beautiful and fertile valleys, watered by the above-mentioned river, and a number of other springs; and at a further distance encompassed on the inland side with hills, all planted with variety of fine fruit-trees. The city itself was strong, both by its situation, and by the stout *walls* and stately *towers* that surrounded it, and built after the Philistine manner[r]. Arrian also says[s], it was a great city built on high ground, and encompassed with a strong *wall*; and was distant from the sea at least twenty furlongs, or two miles and a half; see the note on Acts viii. 26.

Ver. 8. *I will cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod*, &c.] The same with Azotus, Acts viii. 40. another principal city of the Philistines: this perhaps was fulfilled when Tartan was sent against it by Sargon king of Assyria, and took it, Isa. xx. 1. or however in the times of the Maccabees, when Jonathan took it, and burnt it, and the cities round about it; and took their spoils, and burnt the temple of Dagon, and those that fled to it; and what with those that were burnt, and those that fell by the sword, there perished about eight thousand, 1 Maccab. x. 84, 85. this was so strong a place, that, according to Herodotus[t], it held out a siege of twenty-nine years, under Psammitichus king of Egypt. It was, according to Diodorus Siculus[u], two hundred and seventy furlongs, or thirty-four miles, from Gaza before mentioned; and it was about eight or nine from Ashkelon, and fourteen or fifteen from Ekron after mentioned: *and him that holdeth the sceptre from Ashkelon*: another of the five lordships of the Philistines, whose king or governor should be cut off, with the inhabitants of it; this was done by Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. xlvii. 5, 6, 7. This place was about fifteen

[l] Geograph. l. 16. p. 519.
[m] Dictionary, in the word *Eden*.
[n] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 12. sect. 3.
[o] להסגיר לאדום τȣ συγκλεισαι εις την Ιδουμαιαν, Sept.; ut concluderent eam in Idumea, Vulg. Lat.; ad concludendum in Edom, Montanus.
[p] Bibliothec. tom. 2. l. 17. p. 526.
[q] Hist. l. 4. c. 5, 6.
[r] Universal History, vol. 2. p. 490.
[s] De Expeditione Alex. l. 2. p. 150.
[t] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 157.
[u] Bibliothec. l. 19. p. 703.

miles from Gaza, Mr. Sandys [w] says ten, but it was eight or nine miles from Ashdod; and, as Josephus [x] says, was five hundred and twenty furlongs from Jerusalem. It was the birth-place of Herod the great, who from thence is called an Ashkelonite; but the king or governor of it was cut off before his time. It was governed by kings formerly. Justin [y] makes mention of a king of Ashkelon; according to the Samaritan interpreter, Gen. xx. 1, it is the same with Gerar, which had a king in the times of Abraham; hence a sceptre is here ascribed to it: *and I will turn mine hand against Ekron*: to destroy that; another of the chief cities of the Philistines. It was about ten miles from Gath; four of the five lordships are here mentioned, but not Gath, which was the fifth; see 1 Sam. vi. 17, 18. because, as Kimchi says, it was in the hands of Judah. All these places were inhabited by Heathens, and guilty of gross idolatry, which must be one of the transgressions for which they were punished. Gaza was a place much given to idolatry, as it was even in after-times; when other neighbouring cities embraced the Christian religion, the inhabitants of it were violent persecutors; hence that saying of Gregory Nazianzen [z], "who knows not the madness "of the inhabitants of Gaza?" here stood the temple of the god Marnas [a], which with the Syrians signified the lord of men: at Ashdod or Azotus stood the temple of Dagon, where he was worshipped, 1 Sam. v. 2. 1 Maccab. x. 84. Near Ashkelon, as Diodorus Siculus [b] relates, was a large and deep lake, full of fishes; and by it was a temple of a famous goddess, called by the Syrians Derceto, who had a woman's face, but the rest of her body in the form of a fish; being, as the fable goes, changed into one upon her casting herself into the above lake on a certain occasion; hence the Syrians abstained from fishes, and worshipped them as gods. Herodotus [c] calls this city a city of Syria, and speaks of a temple dedicated to Urania Venus; and in the Talmud [d] mention is made of the temple of Zeripha, or of a molten image at Ashkelon; and, besides idolatry, this place seems to have been famous for witchcraft; for it is said [e] that Simeon ben Shetach hung on one day at Ashkelon fourscore women for being witches; and, at Ekron, Baal-zebub or the god of the fly was worshipped: *and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, saith the Lord God*: all the other towns and cities belonging to them, besides those mentioned; which very likely had its accomplishment in the times of the Maccabees, when they fell into the hands of the Jews.

Ver. 9. *Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Tyrus*, &c.] Or Tyre, a very ancient city in Palestine; of which see the note on Isa. xxiii. 1: *and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof*; see the note on ver. 3: *because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom*: such of the Israelites that fell into their hands, or fled to them for shelter, they delivered up to the Edomites, their implacable adversaries, or sold them to them, as they did to the Grecians, Joel iii. 6: *and remembered not the brotherly covenant*; either the covenant and agreement that should be among brethren, as the Jews and Edomites were; which the Tyrians should have remembered, and persuaded them to live peaceably; and not have delivered the one into the hands of the other, to be used in a cruel manner as slaves; or else the covenant made between Hiram king of Tyre, and David king of Israel, and which was renewed between Hiram and Solomon, on account of which they called each other brethren, 2 Sam. v. 11. 1 Kings v. 1, 12. and ix. 13. The Phœnicians, of whom the Tyrians were the principal, are noted for being faithless and treacherous [f]. *Punica fides* [g] was the same as *French faith* now; the perfidy of Hannibal is well known [h]. Cicero [i] says the Carthaginians, which were a colony of the Tyrians, were a deceitful and lying people; and Virgil [k] calls the Tyrians themselves *Tyrios bilingues*, double-tongued, which Servius interprets deceitful, as referring more to the mind than to the tongue; and observes from Livy the perfidy of the Phœnicians in general, that they have nothing true nor sacred among them; no fear of God, no regard to an oath, nor any religion; and which are the three or four transgressions for which they are said here they should be punished; for, besides their ill usage of the Jews, their idolatry no doubt came into the account: the god that was worshipped at Tyre was Hercules, by whom was meant the sun, as Macrobius [l] observes; and as there were several Heathen gods of this name, he whom the Tyrians worshipped is the fourth of the name with Cicero [m]; the same is the Melicarthus of Sanchoniatho [n], which signifies the king of the city, by which Bochart [o] thinks Tyre is intended. To be a priest of Hercules was the second honour to that of king, as Justin [p] oberves; and so careful were the Tyrians of this deity, that they used to chain him, that he might not depart from them; see Jer. x. 4. and a most magnificent temple they had in honour of him, and which, they pretended, was exceeding ancient, as old as the city itself, the antiquity of which they speak extravagantly of. Herodotus [q] says he saw this temple, and which was greatly ornamented, and particularly had two pillars, one of gold, and another of emerald; and inquiring of the priests, they told him it was built when their city was, ten thousand three hundred years before that time; but according to their own historians [r], Hiram, who lived in the days of Solomon, built the temple of Hercules, as well as that of Astarte; for though she is called the goddess of the Sidonians, she

[w] Travels, p. 151.
[x] De Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 2. sect. 1.
[y] E Trogo, l. 18. c. 3.
[z] Orat. 3 adv. Julian. p. 87.
[a] Hieronymus in Isa. xvii. fol. 29. K.
[b] Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 92.
[c] Clio, sive l. 1. c. 105.
[d] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 11. 2.
[e] T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 23. 2.
[f] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 5. c. 10.
[g] Vid. Reinesium de Ling. Punic. c. 2. sect. 12.
[h] Vid. Valer. Maxim. l. 9. c. 6.
[i] Contra Rullum, Orat. 16.
[k] Æneid. l. 1.
[l] Saturnal. l. 1. c. 20.
[m] De Natura Deorum, l. 3.
[n] Apud Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. l. 2. p. 38.
[o] Canaan, l. 2. col. 709.
[p] E Trogo, l. 18. c. 4.
[q] Euterp. , sive l. 2. c. 44.
[r] Menander & Dius apud Joseph. Antiqu. l. 8. c. 5. sect. 3.

was also worshipped by the Tyrians; as he also ornamented the temple of Jupiter Olympius, and annexed it to the city, which deity also it seems had worship paid it in this place.

Ver. 10. *But I will send a fire on the wall of Tyrus, &c.*] An enemy to destroy the walls of it: this was done either by Salmaneser king of the Assyrians, in the times of Eulæus king of the Tyrians, of whose expedition against it Josephus[s] makes mention: or by Nebuchadnezzar, who took it after thirteen years' siege of it, in the time of Ithobalus[t]: or by Alexander, by whom it was taken, as Curtius[u] relates, after it had been besieged seven months: *which shall devour the palaces thereof*; of the governor, the great men and merchants in it. Alexander ordered all to be slain but those that fled to the temples, and fire to be put to the houses; which made it a most desolate place, as the above historian has recorded.

Ver. 11. *Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Edom, &c.*] Or the Edomites, the posterity of Esau, whose name was Edom, so called from the red pottage he sold his birthright for to his brother Jacob: *and for four, I will not turn away* the punishment *thereof*; see the note on ver. 3. Among these three or four transgressions, not only what follows is included, but their idolatry; for that the Edomites had their idols is certain, though what they were cannot be said; see 2 Chron. xxv. 14: *because he did pursue his brother with the sword*; not Esau his brother Jacob; for though he purposed in his heart to slay him, which obliged him to flee; and frighted him, upon his return, by meeting him with four hundred men; yet he never pursued him with the sword; but his posterity, the Edomites, not only would not suffer the Israelites their brethren to pass by their borders, but came out against them with a large army, Numb. xx. 18. 19, 20. and in the times of Ahaz they came against Judah with the sword, and smote them, and carried away captives, 2 Chron. xxviii. 17. and were at the taking and destruction of Jerusalem, and assisted and encouraged in it, Psal. cxxxvii. 7. Obad. ver. 11—14. though to these latter instances the prophet could have no respect, because they were after his time: *and did cast off all pity*: bowels of compassion, natural affection, such as ought to be between brethren, even all humanity: or *corrupted*, or *destroyed all pity*[w]: shewed none, but extinguished all sparks of it, as their behaviour to the Israelites shewed, when upon their borders in the wilderness: *and his anger did tear perpetually*: it was deeply rooted in them; it began in their first father Esau, on account of the blessing and birthright Jacob got from him; and it descended from father to son in all generations, and was vented in a most cruel manner, like the ravening of a lion, or any other beast of prey: *and kept his wrath for ever*: reserved it in their breasts till they had an opportunity of shewing it, as Esau their father proposed to do, Gen. xxvii. 41.

Ver. 12. *But I will send a fire upon Teman, &c.*] A principal city of Edom or Idumea, so called from Teman a grandson of Esau, Gen. xxxvi. 11. Jerom[x] says there was in his time a village called Theman, five miles distant from the city Petra, and had a Roman garrison; and so says Eusebius[y]: who places it in Arabia Petræa; it is put for the whole country; it signifies the south. So the Targum renders it, "a fire in "the south." The *fire* signifies an enemy that should be sent into it, and destroy it: this was Nebuchadnezzar, who, as Josephus[z] says, five years after the destruction of Jerusalem led his army into Cœlesyria, and took it; and fought against the Ammonites and Moabites, and very probably at the same time against the Edomites: *which shall devour the palaces of Bozrah*: another famous city of the Edomites; there was one of this name in Moab; either there were two cities so called, one in Edom, and another in Moab; or rather this city lay, as Jarchi says, between Edom and Moab; and so sometimes is placed to one, and sometimes to another, as it might belong to the one and to the other, according to the event of war. It is the same with Bezer in the wilderness, appointed a Levitical city, and a city of refuge, by Joshua, ch. xx. 8. and belonged to the tribe of Reuben; but being on the borders of that tribe, and of Moab and Edom, it is ascribed to each, as they at different times made themselves masters of it. It is the same with Bostra, which Ptolemy[a] places in Arabia Petræa; and being on the confines of Arabia Deserta, and surrounded on all sides with wild deserts, it is commonly spoken of as situated in a wilderness. Jerom[b] speaks of it as a city of Arabia in the desert, to the south, looking to Damascus; and, according to the Persian[c] geographer, it is four days' journey southward from Damascus; and Eusebius places it at the distance of twenty-four miles from Adraa or Edrei. The destruction of this place is prophesied of by Jeremiah, ch. xlviii. 24. and xlix. 13. and perhaps these prophecies were accomplished when Nebuchadnezzar made war with the Ammonites and Edomites, as before observed; or however in the times of the Maccabees, when Judas Maccabeus took this city, put all the males to the sword, plundered it, and then set fire to it, which literally fulfilled this prophecy, 1 Maccab. v. 28. It was afterwards rebuilt, and became a considerable city; in the time of the above Persian geographer[d], it had a very strong castle belonging to it, a gate twenty cubits high, and one of the largest basins or pools of water in all the east. In the fourth century there were bishops of this place, which assisted in the councils of Nice, Antioch, Ephesus, and Chalcedon, as Reland[e] observes; though he thinks that Bostra is not to be confounded with the Bezer of Reuben, or with the Bozra of Moab and Edom; though they seem to be all one and the same place.

Ver. 13. *Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of the children of Ammon, &c.*] These are the de-

[s] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 14. sect. 2.
[t] Hist. Phœnic. apud Joseph. contr. Apion. l. 1. c. 21.
[u] Hist. l. 4. c. 4.
[w] שחת רחמיו corruperit misericordias suas, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus; corrumpens miserationes suas, Junius & Tremellius; corrupit, Piscator, Cocceius.
[x] De locis Hebr. fol. 95. B.

[y] Onomast. ad vocem Θαιμαν.
[z] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7.
[a] Geograph. l. 5. c. 17.
[b] De locis Hebr. in voce Theclaulis, fol. 92. B.
[c] Apud Calmet, Dictionary, on the word Bozr.
[d] Apud Calmet, ut supra.
[e] Palestina Illustrata, tom. 2. l. 3. p. 666.

scendants of Ben-ammi, a son of Lot's, by one of his daughters, Gen. xix. 38. are distinguished from the Ammonites, 2 Chron. xx. 1. were near neighbours of the Jews, but great enemies to them, though akin: *and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof*; see the note on ver. 3. Among these transgressions, for which God would punish these people, are to be reckoned, not only their ill treatment of the Gileadites after mentioned, but other sins, which are all included in this number, and particularly their idolatry; for idolaters they were, though the children of Lot; and originally might have had better instruction, from which they departed. Moloch or Milcom, which signifies a king, was the abomination or idol of the Ammonites, 1 Kings xi. 5, 7. The image of this idol, according to the Jews, had seven chapels, and he was within them; and his face was the face of a calf or ox; and his hands were stretched out as a man stretches out his hands to receive any thing of his friend; and they set it on fire within, for it was hollow; and every one according to his offering went into these chapels; he that offered a fowl went into the first chapel; he that offered a sheep, into the second chapel; if a lamb, into the third; a calf, into the fourth; a bullock, into the fifth; an ox, into the sixth; but he that offered his son, they brought him into the seventh; and they put the child before Moloch, and kindled a fire in the inside of him, until his hands were like fire; and then they took the child, and put him within its arms; and beat upon tabrets or drums, that the cry of the child might not be heard by the father[f]. Benjamin of Tudela[g] reports, that in his time, at Gibal, the border of the children of Ammon, a day's journey from Tripoli, was found the remains of a temple of the children of Ammon; and an idol of theirs sitting upon a throne; and it was made of stone, and covered with gold; and there were two women sitting, one on its right hand, and the other on its left: and before it an altar, on which they used to sacrifice and burn incense to it, as in the times of the children of Ammon. Chemosh also was worshipped by the Ammonites, Judg. xi. 24. which was also the god of the Moabites; of which see the note on Jer. xlviii. 7: *because they have ripped up the women with-child of Gilead, that they might enlarge their border*; this Hazael king of Syria did, according to Elisha's prophecy; and very likely the children of Ammon might join with him, inasmuch as they bordered on the countries which he smote, 2 Kings viii. 12. and x. 32, 33. This was an instance of shocking cruelty and inhumanity, to destroy at once the innocent and the impotent, though frequently done by enemies, 2 Kings xv. 16. Hos. xiii. 16. The reason of it was not only that they might possess their land, but keep it when they had got it; there being no heir to claim it, or molest them in the possession of it; see Jer. xlix. 1. though some read the words, *because they divided, or cleaved the mountain of Gilead*[h]; so Aben Ezra and Kimchi, though they mention the other sense: this they did to get into the land of Gilead, as Hannibal cut through the Alps; or rather to remove the borders of it, and lay it even with their own, and so enlarge theirs; which, as Kimchi says, was a very great iniquity, being one of the curses written in the law, Deut. xxvii. 17. thus one sin leads on to another. Some by *mountains* understand towers or fortified cities, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe; such as were built on mountains, which sense is approved by Gussetius[i].

Ver. 14. *But I will kindle a fire in the wall of Rabbah*, &c.] Which was the metropolis of the children of Ammon, and their royal city, 2 Sam. xii. 26. This is to be understood of an enemy that should destroy it, perhaps Nebuchadnezzar; or of war being kindled and raised in their country; this place being put for the whole; see the note on Jer. xlix. 2: *and it shall devour the palaces thereof*; the palaces of the king, and his nobles: *with shouting in the day of battle*: with the noise of soldiers when they make their onset, or have gained the victory; see Jer. xlix. 2: *with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind*: denoting that this judgment should come suddenly, and at an unawares, with great force, irresistibly; and a tempest added to fire, if literally taken, must spread the desolation more abundantly, and make it more terrible.

Ver. 15. *And their king shall go into captivity*, &c.] Not only the common people that are left of the sword shall be carried captive, but their king also. This was Baalis their last king, who was accessary to the murder of Gedaliah, Jer. xl. 14. whom the king of Babylon had set over the remnant of the Jews left in Judea; which might provoke him to send Nebuzaradan his general against him, who put his country to fire and sword, destroyed his chief city Rabbah, and carried him and his nobles into captivity. Some understand this of Milchom, or Moloch, the god of the children of Ammon, who should be so far from saving them, that he himself should be taken and carried off; it being usual with the conquerors to carry away with them the gods of the nations they conquered; see Jer. xlviii. 7. and xlix. 3. So Ptolemy Euergetes king of Egypt, having conquered Callinicus king of Syria, carried captive into Egypt the gods he then took, Dan. xi. 8. and it was usual with the Romans to carry the gods of the nations captive which they conquered, and to carry them in their triumphs as such; so Marcellus was blamed for rendering the city of Rome envied and hated by other nations, because not men only, but the gods also, were carried in pomp as captives: and of Paulus Æmylius it is said, that the first day of his triumph was scarce sufficient for the passing along of the captive statues, pictures, and colosses, which were drawn on two hundred and fifty chariots[k]: *he and his princes together, saith the Lord*; which is repeated, and especially the last words added, for the confirmation of it. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, *their priests and their princes*, as in Jer. xlix. 3. This was fulfilled five years after the destruction of Jerusalem, as Josephus[l] relates.

[f] Yelammedenu apud Yalkut Simeoni in Jer. vii. 31. fol. 61. 4.
[g] Itinerarium, p. 33.
[h] בקעם הרות ea quod sciderint montes, Pagninus; so some in Drusius.
[i] Ebr. Comment. p. 216.
[k] Vid. Plutarch. in Vita Marcelli & Æmylii.
[l] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7. Vid. Judith i. 12.

CHAP. II.

In this chapter the prophet foretels the calamities that should come upon the Moabites for their transgressions, ver. 1, 2, 3. and the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem for their iniquities, ver. 4, 5. also the judgments of God that should come upon Israel the ten tribes for their sins, which sins are enumerated; their oppression of the poor, their lewdness and idolatry, ver. 6, 7, 8. and which are aggravated by the blessings of goodness bestowed upon them, both temporal and spiritual, ver. 9, 10, 11, 12. wherefore they are threatened with ruin, which would be inevitable, notwithstanding their swiftness, strength, and courage, and their skill in shooting arrows, and riding horses, ver. 13, 14, 15, 16.

Ver. 1. *Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Moab,* &c.] Or the Moabites, who descended from the eldest son of Lot, by one of his daughters; and, though related, were great enemies to the Israelites; they sent for Balaam to curse them when on their borders, and greatly oppressed them in the times of the judges: *and for four, I will not turn away* the punishment *thereof*; see the note on ch. i. 3. Idolatry, as well as the sin next charged, must be one of these four transgressions: the idols of Moab were Chemosh and Baal-peor: of the former see the note on Jer. xlviii. 7. and of the latter see the note on Hos. ix. 10: *because he burnt the bones of the king of Edom into lime*; either like *to lime*, or *for lime*; he burnt them thoroughly, till they came to powder as small and as white as lime, and used them instead of it to plaster the walls of his palace, by way of contempt, as the Targum; and so Jarchi and Kimchi: this is thought probable by Quinquarboreus [a], for which he is blamed by Sanctius, who observes, there is no foundation for it in Scripture; and that the ashes of the bones of one man would not be sufficient to plaster a wall; and, besides, could never be brought to such a consistence as to be fit for such a purpose; yet, if it only means bare burning them, so as that they became like lime, as the colour of it, it could not be thought so very barbarous and inhuman, since it was the usage of some nations, especially the Romans, to burn their dead: no doubt something shocking is intended, and which usage to the dead is resented by the Lord. Sir Paul Rycaut [b] relates a piece of barbarity similar to this, that the city of Philadelphia was built with the bones of the besieged, by the prince that took it by storm. Kimchi thinks, as other interpreters also do, that it refers to the history in 2 Kings iii. 27. where the king of Moab is said to offer his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead for a burnt-offering; which he understands, not of the king of Moab's son, but of the king of Edom's son, here called a king, because he was to have succeeded his father in the kingdom; but it seems rather to be the king of Moab's own son that he offered; nor is it likely that the king of Edom's son was in his lands; for he would have broke through into the king of Edom, but could not; and then did this rash action; not in wrath and fury, but in a religious way. The prophet here refers to some fact, notorious in those times, the truth of which is not to be questioned, though we have no other account of it in Scripture; very probably it was the same king of Moab that did it, and the same king of Edom that was so used, mentioned in the above history; the king of Moab being enraged at him for joining with the kings of Israel and Judah against him, who afterwards falling into his hands, he used him in this barbarous manner; or very likely being possessed of his country after his death, or however of his grave, he took him out of it, and burnt his bones to lime, in revenge of what he had done to him. This was a very cruel action thus to use a human body, and this not the body of a private person, but of a king; and was an act of impiety, as well as of inhumanity, to take the bones of the dead out of his grave, and burn them; and which though done to a Heathen prince, God, who is the Creator of all, and Governor of the whole world, and whose vicegerents princes are, resented; and therefore threatened the Moabites with utter destruction for it.

Ver. 2. *But I will send a fire upon Moab,* &c.] Either on the whole country, or on some particular city so called, as in all the other prophecies; and there was a city called Moab, now Areopolis, see the note on Jer. xlviii. 4. though it may be put for the whole country, into which an enemy should be sent to destroy it, even Nebuchadnezzar: *and it shall devour the palaces of Kerioth*; a principal city in the land of Moab; according to Kimchi, it was the royal city, and therefore mention is made of the palaces of it, here being the palace of the king and his princes; see Jer. xlviii. 24. though the word may be rendered *cities*, as it is by the Septuagint and Arabic versions; and so the Targum, "and shall consume the palaces "of the fortified place;" and so may signify all the cities of Moab, and their palaces: or however may be put for them: *and Moab shall die with tumult, with shouting,* and *with the sound of the trumpet*; that is, the Moabites shall die, not in their beds, and in peace, but in war, amidst the howlings of the wounded, the shouts of soldiers, the clashing of arms, and the sound of trumpets.

Ver. 3. *And I will cut off the judge from the midst thereof,* &c.] Either from the midst of Moab, the country in general; or from Kerioth in particular, so Kimchi; meaning their principal governor, their king, as Aben Ezra; for kings sometimes have acted as judges, took the bench, and sat and administered justice to their subjects: *and I will slay all the princes thereof with him, saith the Lord*; the king, and the princes of the blood, and his nobles; so that there should be none to succeed him, or to protect and defend the people; the destruction should be an entire

[a] Scholia in Targum in loc.

[b] The present State of the Greek Church, ch. 2.

one, and inevitable, for the mouth of the Lord had spoken it. This was fulfilled at the same time as the prophecy against the children of Ammon by Nebuchadnezzar, five years after the destruction of Jerusalem [a], which is next threatened.

Ver. 4. *Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Judah*, &c.] With whom Benjamin must be joined; for the two tribes are meant as distinct from the ten tribes, under the name of Israel, following. The prophet proceeds from the Heathens round about to the people of God themselves, for the ill usage of whom chiefly the above nations are threatened with ruin, lest they should promise themselves impunity in sin; though, if they rightly considered things, they could not expect it; since, if the Heathens, ignorant of the will of God, and his law, were punished for their sins, then much more those who knew it, and did it not, Luke xii. 47. and he begins with Judah, partly because he was of that tribe, lest he should be charged with flattery and partiality, and partly because of the order of his prophecy, which being chiefly concerned with Israel, it was proper that what he had to say to Judah should be delivered first: *and for four, I will not turn away* the punishment *thereof:* the prophet retains the same form as in his prophecies against the Heathen nations; his own people, and God's professing people, being guilty of numerous transgressions, as well as they, and more aggravated than theirs; see the note on ch. i. 3: *because they have despised the law of the Lord:* a law so holy, just, and good, and so righteous, as no other nation had; and yet was not only not observed, but contemned: other nations sinned against the light of nature, and are not charged with breaches of the law of God, which was not given them; but these people had it, yet lightly esteemed it; counted it as a strange thing; walked not according to it, but cast it away from them; which was a great affront to the sovereignty of God, and a trampling upon his legislative power and authority: *and have not kept his commandments:* or *statutes* [b]; the ordinances of the ceremonial law, which he appointed them to observe for the honour of his name, as parts of his worship; and to lead them into the designs of his grace and salvation by the Messiah: *and their lies caused them to err:* either their *idols*, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; which are lying vanities, and deceive, and by which they were made to err from the pure worship of the living and true God to superstition and idolatry; or the words of the false prophets, as Kimchi; the false doctrines they taught, contrary to the word of God, directing them to seek for life by their own works; and promising them peace, when destruction was at hand; and daubing with untempered mortar; and as no lie is of the truth, but against it, so one untruth leads on to another: *after the which their fathers have walked*, after which lies, idols, and errors, as in Ur of the Chaldees, in Egypt, in the wilderness, and even in later times: this was no excuse to them that they followed the way of their ancestors, but rather an aggravation of their guilt, that they imitated them, took no warning by them; but filled up the measure of their iniquities, and shewed themselves to be a seed of evil-doers, a generation of wicked men, the sons of rebellious parents.

Ver. 5. *But I will send a fire upon Judah*, &c.] An enemy, Nebuchadnezzar, who should burn, waste, and destroy, all that were in his way: *and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem;* the chief city of Judah, the royal city, where stood the temple, the palace of the most High, and the palaces of the king and his nobles: these were burnt with fire when it was taken by the Chaldean army, about two hundred years after this prophecy, Jer. lii. 13.

Ver. 6. *Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Israel*, &c.] The ten tribes rent from the house of David in the times of Rehoboam, and who departed from the true worship of God, and set up calves at Dan and Beth-el: *and for four, I will not turn away* the punishment *thereof;* the following part of this prophecy is taken up in pointing at the sins and punishment of Israel; now the prophet is come to the main business he was sent to do: *because they sold the righteous for silver;* meaning not any particular person, as Joseph sold by his brethren, for in that they were all concerned, Judah as well as the rest; nor Christ, as others [s], sold for thirty pieces of silver; since the persons here charged with it, and the times in which it was done, will not agree with that case; but the sense is, that the judges of Israel were so corrupt, that for a piece of money they would give a cause against a righteous man, and in favour of an unjust man that bribed them: *and the poor for a pair of shoes;* that is, for a mere trifle they would pervert justice; if two men came before them with a cause, and both poor; yet if one could but give a pair of shoes, or any thing he could part with, though he could not give money; so mean and sordid were they, they would take it, and give the cause for him, however unjust it was.

Ver. 7. *That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor*, &c.] Either were greedy after money, the dust of the earth, and even that small portion of it the poor were possessed of; they could not be easy that they should enjoy that little of it they did, but were desirous to get it out of their hands by oppression and injustice: or they were eagerly desirous of throwing the poor upon the earth, and trampling upon them, and dragging them through the dust of it, thereby filling their heads and covering their faces with it; and caused them to put their mouths in the dust, and be humble suppliants to them. Some think there is an allusion to an ancient custom, which Joseph ben Gorion [t] speaks of, that a guilty person should stand before the judges, clad in black, and his head covered with dust; and this these judges desired here might be done by the rich, that the poor might be accused by them, from whom they expected gifts: *and turn aside the way of the meek;* decline doing them justice, pervert it, and hinder the course of it, denying it to those who are humble, meek, and modest; or else by

[a] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7. Vid. Judith i. 12.

[b] חקיו statuta ejus, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, &c.

[s] Vid. Galatin. Cathol. Ver. Arcan. l. 4. c. 24.

[t] Hist. Heb. c. 44. apud Drusium in loc.

one means or another turned them from the good ways in which they were walking, and by degrees at length brought them to such impudence and immodesty as is next expressed, so Aben Ezra: *and a man and his father will go in unto the same maid, to profane my holy name*; that is, will be guilty of such uncleanness, as not only to have and enjoy the same harlot, but of such incest, as that the son would lie with his father's wife, and the father lie with his son's wife; a sin which was not named among the Gentiles, 1 Cor. v. 1. and whereby the name of God was blasphemed among them, as if their religion taught them and encouraged them in such filthy actions; see Rom. ii. 24.

Ver. 8. *And they laid themselves down upon clothes laid to pledge by every altar*, &c.] That is, the clothes they took in pledge of poor people, which they should have restored before sun-setting, Exod. xxii. 26, 27. these they spread by every altar, of which they had many erected to their idols, and on these as on carpets they slept by them, as was usual with the Gentiles; who not only in common used to lie and sleep on garments, or carpets, or skins spread on the floor[s], but upon such in the temples of their idols, in order to obtain good dreams; so in the temple of Amphiaraus in Greece, after purgations and sacrifices to him, and to the gods whose names were engraven on the same altar, they slew a ram, and spread the skin, on which they laid themselves down, and had dreams, the signification and events of which they presently interpreted[t]; and Jerom says[u], they used to spread the skins of the sacrifices, and lie upon them, that they might by dreams know things to come, which custom in the temple of Æsculapius continued to his times; and this custom might be imitated by the Jews; and so they are described by such, *who sleep in the temples of idols*, in the Vulgate Latin version of Isa. lxv. 4. see the note there; but very false it is what Strabo[w] says, that the Jews were taught this custom by Moses; telling them that such as lived soberly and righteously ought to sleep in the temple, where they might expect good dreams for themselves and others, as good gifts and signs from God, which others might not expect: or else the sense is, they laid themselves down on these clothes, and feasted on them; it being their custom at meals not to sit upright, but to recline on couches; or as the manner of the Turks and other eastern nations to sit on carpets; and it was also the custom of the Heathens to feast in their temples, and by their altars, in honour of their gods. So Herodotus relates[x], that at a festival of Juno with the Argives, the mother of Cleobis and Biton prayed the goddess, whom they had drawn to the temple, oxen not being ready, that she would give to them what was best for men; after which prayer, it is said, they sacrificed and *feasted* and the young men falling asleep in the temple, never rose more, but finished this life: the deity judging it better for a man to die than to live; and this custom of feasting in idols' temples obtained in the times of the apostles, as appears from 1 Cor. viii. 10. and which was now observed by the Israelites, with this aggravation of their sin, that they laid themselves on the garments of the poor they had taken for a pawn, when they were performing their idolatrous rites; which must be very provoking to God: *and they drink the wine of the condemned in the house of their god*: either wine which used to be given to condemned malefactors to cheer and refresh them; which custom among the Jews was founded on Prov. xxxi. 6, 7. see the note there. The manner was to put a grain of frankincense into a cup of wine, which they gave to the malefactor just as he was going to be executed, that his mind might be disturbed and become insensible; and which was usually the free gift of honourable women, out of compassion to the sufferer; and if they did it not, it was provided at the expense of the public[y]; but this seems to be done rather to intoxicate and stupify them, that they might not feel their pain and misery, than to cheer; and is thought to be the potion which was offered to Christ, and he refused, Mark xv. 23. but whether such a custom obtained in the times of the prophet is a question; nor does it seem very likely that these men would choose such sort of wine; wherefore rather wine bought with the money they received by the fines and amercements of those they unjustly condemned is intended. The Targum renders it the wine of rapine; and this they were not content to drink only in their own houses, but drank it at their festivals in the temples of their idols, such as were built for the calves of Dan and Beth-el, and other idols.

Ver. 9. *Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them*, &c.] Here the Lord by the prophet reckons up the many favours and blessings he had bestowed upon Israel, which was an aggravation of their sins, and shewed them to be guilty of great ingratitude, and a justification of him in his punishment of them. He drove out the seven nations of Canaanites from before them, to make way for them, and destroyed them, of which the Amorite was a principal, and is here put for all the rest: *whose height was like the height of the cedars*; being both tall of stature, and in great honour and dignity with the other nations, and in very opulent and flourishing circumstances: *and he was strong as the oaks*, not only like the tall cedars of Lebanon for their height and largeness of stature, but like the sturdy oaks for the strength of their bodies, being of the race of the giants, Numb. xiii. 28, 32, 33. Deut. iii. 11: *yet I destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath*; that is, utterly destroyed him, root and branch, so that nothing of him remained; still persisting in the metaphor of a tree. Jarchi interprets it of their superior and inferior princes; but it seems best to understand it of children with their parents, the one being the fruit, the other the root; and, both being destroyed, there must be utter ruin.

Ver. 10. *Also I brought you up from the land of Egypt*, &c.] Where they were bond-slaves, and in great affliction and distress, and unable to help themselves; but the Lord wrought deliverance for them,

[s] Vid. Gloss. in Aristophan. Plutum, p. 55 & Nubes, p. 125.
[t] Pausanias, Attica, sive l. 1. p. 65. Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 6. c. 2.
[u] Comment. in Isa. lxv. 4.

[w] Geograph. l. 16. p. 523.
[x] Clio, sive l. 1. c. 31.
[y] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 10. fol. 198. 4. Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 13. sect. 2, 3.

and brought them out of this house of bondage with a high hand and a mighty arm: *and led you forty years through the wilderness*; going before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night; providing them with all things necessary, with food and raiment, and protecting them from all their enemies: *to possess the land of the Amorite*; the whole land of Canaan, so called from a principal nation of it.

Ver. 11. *And I raised up of your sons for prophets*, &c.] Such as Moses, Joshua, and the seventy elders, and others; not only to foretel things to come, but to teach and instruct the people in the doctrines and duties of religion, and to warn them of their sins, and the danger of them: *and of your young men for Nazarites*; as Samson, Samuel, and others; whose vow not only obliged them from shaving their hair, but to abstain from drinking wine, and eating grapes, which the youthful age is inclined unto; but such grace was given them, as enabled them to deny themselves sensual gratifications, and to be examples of piety and constant attendance on the service of God, and instructing the people. The Targum is, "of your "young men for teachers;" these were the spiritual mercies, as the former were the temporal ones, the Lord bestowed on these people, for the truth of which he appeals to them: is it *not even thus, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord?* can ye deny it? the thing was too notorious to be contradicted.

Ver. 12. *But ye gave the Nazarites wine to drink*, &c.] Contrary to their vow and calling, and in contempt of it, and to make them like themselves; they either persuaded them, or forced them to it: *and commanded the prophets, saying, prophesy not*; hard and heavy things, judgments and denunciations of vengeance, only smooth things; by this authoritative language it appears that this is said of the rulers and governors of the people, as king, princes, and priests; see ch. vii. 12, 13.

Ver. 13. *Behold, I am pressed under you*, &c.] With the weight of their sins, with which they had made him to serve, and had wearied him; his patience was quite wore out, he could bear them no longer: *as a cart is pressed* that is *full of sheaves*; as a cart in harvest-time, in which the sheaves of corn are carried home; when one sheaf is laid upon another, till they can lay no more, and the cart is loaded and overloaded with them, and ready to break, or be pressed into the earth with them: thus Jehovah represents himself as loaded and burdened with the sins of these people, and therefore would visit for them, and inflict deserved punishment. Some render it actively, *behold, I press*[z], or *am about to press your place, as a cart full of sheaves presseth*[a]; the horse or horses which draw it, especially the last; or the ground it goes upon; or as a cart stuck with iron spikes, and loaded with stones, being drawn over a corn-floor, presses the full sheaves, and beats out the grain, which was their way of pressing it: so the Lord signifies he would afflict and distress this people, bring them into strait circumstances, by a close siege, and other judgments, which should ruin and destroy them; and which was first begun by Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and finished by Salmaneser, who carried away the ten tribes captive. So the Targum, "behold, I bring distress upon you, "and it shall straiten you in your place, as a cart is "straitened which is loaded with sheaves."

Ver. 14. *Therefore the flight shall perish from the swift*, &c.] They should be so straitened and cooped up, and be so loaded with pressures, that those, as swift of foot as Asahel, should not be able to make their escape by fleeing: *and the strong shall not strengthen his force*; should not increase it, or muster it up, and exert it to such a degree, as to be able to defend and secure himself from the enemy: *neither shall the mighty deliver himself; his soul* or *life*; a soldier, a man of war, an expert and courageous officer at the head of his troop, or even the general of the army; see Psal. xxxiii. 16.

Ver. 15. *Neither shall he stand that handleth the bow*, &c.] That is, at some distance, and can make use of his instruments of war afar off; yet will not think it safe to stand his ground, but will betake himself to his heels as fast as he can to save himself: *and he that is swift of foot shall not deliver* himself; this is repeated, lest any should place confidence in their agility, and to shew how complete and inevitable the affliction will be: *neither shall he that rideth the horse deliver himself*; by fleeing on horseback, no more than he that is on foot; no ways that can be devised or thought on would preserve from this general calamity; see Psal. xxxiii. 17.

Ver. 16. *And he that is courageous among the mighty*, &c.] Or *strong in his heart*[b]; one that is of a great heart, famous for courage and bravery, that excels in it among the mighty; the most valiant soldiers and officers: *shall flee away naked in that day*; shall throw away his armour, nay, put off his clothes, as being both a hinderance to him in his flight, and that he may make the better speed: *saith the Lord*; which is added to shew the certainty of all this; it might be depended upon that so it would be, since the Lord God of truth had spoken it; and it was fulfilled about fourscore years after this prophecy.

[z] מעיק angustabo, Vatablus; coarctans, Montanus; arcto, Mercerus; premo, coarctabo, angustiis afficiam, Drusius; pressurus sum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius; arctaturus sum, Liveleus.

[a] תעיק coarctares, Montanus; premit, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius.

[b] אמיץ לבו fortis corde suo, Vatablus, Piscator; fortis animo, Junius & Tremellius, Drusius; validus corde suo, Mercerus; qui corde firmo est, Cocceius.

CHAP. III.

IN this chapter the prophet goes on with his prophecy against Israel, whom God had highly favoured, and yet sinned against him, and therefore must expect to be punished by him; and the rather, since he and they were not agreed; and therefore there could be no communion between them, ver. 1, 2, 3. and by various similes are set forth the cause of divine judgments, the certain design of them, and their continuance till the end is answered; which should be attended to, since every thing of this kind is of God, who giving his prophets notice of it, they are under an absolute necessity of declaring it; nor should they be blamed for it, ver. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. and even the Heathen nations are appealed unto as witnesses of the sins of Israel, that caused such a denunciation of wrath; their tumults, oppression, injustice, violence, and robbery, ver. 9, 10. wherefore an adversary is threatened to be sent among them, that should utterly destroy them, so that few should escape, ver. 11, 12. particularly their idolatry and luxury seem to have been reigning sins, which had a great hand in bringing on their ruin, and for which the Lord would punish them, ver. 13, 14, 15.

Ver. 1. *Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, &c.*] The prophecy against Israel begins in the preceding chapter, where notice is taken of their sins, at least some of them, and of their aggravated circumstances, and sure destruction; and here they are called upon to hearken and listen to what the Lord by his prophet had spoken, and was about to speak unto them; and to *receive* this word, as the Targum; to receive it as the word of God, and not men, and with all humility and reverence; and to take it, and apply it to themselves, to whom it justly belonged; and to make a proper use and improvement of it by humiliation and reformation. A word this was, *against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt;* it was but a family that went down into Egypt, and, though it greatly increased there, it was no more when it was brought up from thence: a family under the peculiar care of Jehovah, as the bringing them out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, when greatly distressed there, abundantly shews; and which was a wonderful blessing and favour; and therefore often mentioned, and led on to many other blessings and mercies: a family which was the Lord's own, and therefore he had a right to chastise and correct them for their sins. It seems by this phrase, *the whole family*, as if the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin were included; though the prophecy seems chiefly intended against the ten tribes, which went by the name of Israel, ever since the breach in Rehoboam's time, as distinct from Judah.

Ver. 2. *You only have I known of all the families of the earth, &c.*] All the families or nations of the earth, and all the inhabitants of it, are known by the Lord, as he is the omniscient God; but none had been known by him as a family, or a nation, with that love and affection as this family had been, or distinguished by his favours and blessings as they, not only temporal, but spiritual; besides the land of Canaan, and all the good things in it, they had the law of the Lord, his word, worship, and ordinances, among them; he chose them for himself above all people, and gave peculiar marks of his affection to them, and special instances of his goodness, and of his care over them, and concern for them; see Deut. iv. 6, 7, 8. and vii. 6, 7. Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20. Rom. ix. 4, 5. *Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities; or visit upon you*[c]; or *against you;* in a way of chastisement and correction; they were a family he had highly favoured, and yet departed from him; children he had brought up in a tender manner, and brought out of a most miserable condition, and yet rebelled against him; he had followed and loaded them with his benefits, and they had proved ungrateful to him; he had given them a revelation of his mind and will, and they had rejected it, and therefore knowing, and not doing it, were worthy of more stripes; their sins were more aggravated than others', being against goodness and mercy, light and knowledge; and therefore the Lord was determined to make an example of them; see 1 Pet. iv. 17.

Ver. 3. *Can two walk together except they be agreed?*] Unless they meet together, and appoint time and place, when and where they shall set out, what road they will take, and whither they will go; without such consultation and agreement, it cannot be thought they should walk together; and not amicably, unless united in friendship, and are of the same affection to each other, and of the same sentiments one with another; or it is much if they don't fall out by the way. The design of these words is to shew, that without friendship there's no fellowship, and without concord no communion; as this is the case between man and man, so between God and man; and that Israel could not expect that God should walk with them, and shew himself friendly to them, and continue his favours with them, when they walked contrary to him; when they were so disagreeable to him in their sentiments of religion, in their worship, and the rites of it, and in the whole of their conduct and behaviour. And to a spiritual walk with God, and communion with him, agreement is requisite. God and man were originally chief friends, but sin set them at variance; a reconciliation became necessary to their walking together again; which was set on foot, not by man, who had no inclination to it, nor knew how to go about it if he had, and much less able to effect it; but by the Lord, the offended party: it began in his thoughts, which were thoughts of peace; it was set on foot by him in the council of peace, and concluded in the covenant of peace; and his Son was sent to bring it

[c] אפקד עליכם visitabo super vos, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; visito, i. e. visitare soleo, Mercerus; super vobis, Cocceius; contra vos, Piscator.

about; and through his obedience, sufferings, and death, through his sacrifice and satisfaction, the agreement is made on the part of God, his justice is satisfied; but still it is necessary man should be agreed too; this is brought out by the Spirit of God, who shews the sinner the enmity of his mind, the sin and danger of it, slays this enmity, and puts in new principles of light, life, and love; when the soul is reconciled to God's way of salvation, and loves the Lord, and delights in him; and both being thus agreed, the one by the satisfaction of Christ, and the other by the Spirit of Christ, see Rom. v. 10, they walk comfortably together: the saint walks with God, not only as in his sight and presence, but by faith, and in his fear, in the ways and ordinances of the Lord; and particularly is frequent in prayer and meditation, in which much of his walk with God lies: and God walks with him; he grants his gracious presence; manifests his love and favour to him; talks with him by the way; discloses the secrets of his heart; and indulges him with nearness and communion with him; but all is founded on mutual agreement. And so it must be between men and men, that walk in a religious way; regenerate and unregenerate persons cannot walk together, there being no concord, 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15. nor can all sorts of professors; they must agree in the way Christ, and in the fundamental principles of religion; and in worship, and the manner of it; and in all the ordinances of the Gospel, and the manner of administering them.

Ver. 4. *Will a lion roar in the forest when he hath no prey?* &c.] He will not, unless he has it in his sight, or in his paws; he roars when he first sees it, whereby he terrifies the creature, that it cannot move till he comes up to it; and when he has got it in his paws, he roars over it, to invite others to partake with him. Now prophecy from the Lord is compared to the roaring of a lion, ch. i. 2. and this is never in a way of judgment without a cause; the sin of men, or of a nation, which makes them a prey to the wrath and fury of God. *Will a young lion cry*, or *give forth his voice out of his den, if he have taken nothing?* that is, if the old lion has taken nothing, and brought nothing unto him; which signifies the same as before; unless by the young lion is meant the prophets of the Lord, who never prophesy but when they have a commission from him, and a people are pointed out to them as the just prey of his wrath and vengeance. All the images here used are very natural; the lion is for the most part in woods and forests, hence called the *lion out of the forest*, Jer. v. 6. as he is by Theocritus [d]; where his voice is heard, but not unless he is in sight of his prey, or has got it, even though ever so hungry; but when he has it in view, he roars so terribly, that, as Basil [e] observes, many animals that could escape him through their swiftness, yet are so affrighted at his roaring, that they have no power to move; and they have their dens either in caves or in thickets, where are the she-lioness and the young lions, to whom the prey is brought; see Nah. ii. 11, 12.

Ver. 5. *Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin is for him?* &c.] No, there must be a snare set, or a bird can never be taken in it; and that is done, not by chance, but with the design of the fowler; yea, with the knowledge and will of God himself, Matt. x. 29. the design of this is to shew, that no judgment or affliction comes upon a people, or they into one, by chance, or without the appointment of God; they are his nets and snares, which he on purpose spreads and sets for persons, to take them in; and unless he did do so, they would not fall into any; see Job v. 6, 7. and xxiii. 14. and Ezek. xii. 13. *Shall one take up a snare from the earth;* the Targum adds, out of its time: *and have taken nothing at all?* when men set a snare to catch any thing, do they take it up before any thing is caught? they do not; they let it stand till something is insnared in it, and so their end answered, and then they take it up, and not before. And thus when God denounces or brings a judgment, or an affliction, upon a people, does he remove it before the end is answered by it? he does not; if the end is to bring men to a sense of sin, and humiliation for it; or to bring near to God who have been wandering from him; or to try their graces, or take away their sin; when such an end is answered, then, and not till then, is the snare taken up, or the affliction removed; till such an end is brought about, the distress is continued, or the threatening of it; and of this Israel is hereby assured.

Ver. 6. *Shall a trumpet be blown in the city,* &c.] Meaning not any trumpet blown, as the silver trumpet for the gathering of the people to worship, or the jubilee-trumpet, which proclaimed liberty to them, or any other, expressive of joy and gladness; but the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war, or what is blown by the watchmen on the walls, descrying an enemy, or some danger, near: *and the people not be afraid?* they must, they usually are, lest their lives, and their children's, should be taken away, and their substance become a prey to the enemy: or, *and the people not run together* [f]; into some one place for shelter, or to consult together how to provide for their safety, and secure themselves from danger. So when the prophets of the Lord, by his order, lift up their voice like a trumpet, to shew his people their transgressions; or when, as watchmen, they blow the trumpet, to give notice of approaching danger; can they hear such denunciations of his wrath for their sins, and not tremble at them, or not take some ways and methods to escape it? *Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?* which is not to be understood of the evil of sin, of which God is not the author, it being contrary to his nature and will; and though he permits it to be done by others, yet he never does it himself, nor so much as tempts men to it, Jam. i. 13, 14. unless the words should be rendered, as they may be, *shall there be evil in a city, and shall not the Lord do* or *work* [g]? shall sin be committed in a city, all sorts of sin, in the most bold and extravagant manner, and will not the Lord do something to shew his resentment of it? is it not time for him to arise and work for

[d] ἐκ δρυμοῖο λέων, Theocrit. Idyll. 3.
[e] In Hexaemeron, Homil. 9.
[f] לא יחרדו non accurrit, Drusius, Tarnovius.

[g] ויהוה לא עשה and shall not the Lord do somewhat? marg. of our Bibles.

his name's sake? will he not visit for these things, and be avenged on such a city, and the inhabitants of it? but this may be interpreted of the evil of affliction or judgment; which, wherever it comes, is by the order and appointment of God, and is inflicted by him: thus evil, as well as good, comes out of the mouth and hand of the most High; and he creates the evil of adversity, as well as makes peace and prosperity; see Job ii. 10. Lam. iii. 38. Isa. xlv. 7.

Ver. 7. *Surely the Lord God will do nothing, &c.*] In the world, in a nation or city; no remarkable event has happened, or shall happen, to the sons of men; *but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets*; what he willed and determined to do, which was a secret in his own breast, till revealed; and this generally and for the most part, he makes known to those that fear and serve him; and especially to whom he employs in public service, as his prophets and ministers, previous to his accomplishment of it: thus he revealed to Noah the drowning of the old world by the flood; to Abraham the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah; and to the same servant and friend of his the affliction of his posterity four hundred years in a strange land, and then to be brought out with great substance: to Abijah the Shilonite the rending of ten tribes from the house of David: to Jeremiah the seventy-years' captivity of the Jews in Babylon: to Isaiah their deliverance from thence, through Cyrus by name; to Daniel the four monarchies, the nature, rise, and fall of them: and to John, the disciple of Christ, all the material things that should come to pass, relating to the church and world, from the first times of the Gospel to the second coming of Christ; which that book is a revelation of that bears that name; see Gen. xviii. 17. and so that grand affair, which God has brought about in the world, the salvation of his people by his son, which was a secret hid in his heart before the world began, this he revealed to his servants before it was effected; not only the scheme of it, but the author of it, whom he very early gave notice of; and who was spoken of by the mouth of all the prophets, from the beginning of the world; declaring who and what he was, the son of God; that he should be incarnate, and born of a virgin; when he should appear, and where, and in what part of the world; also in what way and manner he should obtain salvation, by his obedience and sufferings; and all the circumstances relating thereunto are most minutely and exactly declared by him. Yea, God reveals unto his saints in common the secret of his purposes, respecting their election, redemption, and regeneration, which is made known in effectual vocation; and of the blessings of his grace in the covenant, and also of his providences; and of his love, grace, and mercy; and of his Gospel, and the mysteries of it; thus he deals with them as his friends, rather than as his servants; see Psal. xxv. 14. John xv. 15.

Ver. 8. *The lion hath roared, who will not fear? &c.*] Amos said this from his own experience, who, having been a herdsman in the wilderness of Tekoa, had often heard a lion roar, which had put him into a panic, both for himself, and the cattle he kept: the figure is explained in the next clause: *the Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?* whether it be to foretel future events, which the Lord has made known shall come to pass; or to preach the word, which is to prophesy to edification, to exhortation, and comfort, 1 Cor. xiv. 3. or to perform the more private exercises of religion, as singing of psalms, praying, &c. 1 Chron. xxv. 1, 2, 3. 1 Cor. xi. 4, 5. these things who can forbear doing, to whom the Lord has spoken either in a dream or vision, or in his word, and by his spirit; and to whom he has given a call and commission, and gifts and graces, qualifying them for such service? who that has the fear of God in his heart, and his glory in view, and the good of others, that can refrain from it? nay, it is of dangerous consequence to refuse it; for if the roaring of a lion is so terrible, and if the wrath of an earthly king is as the roaring of a lion, much more the wrath and displeasure of the King of kings. Jonah declined prophesying when the Lord spoke to him, but what was the consequence of it? the prophet by this seems to justify himself in prophesying, and that he ought not to be blamed for it, seeing the Lord had given him the word, and therefore he ought to publish it. This may be particularly applied to the ministers of the word, who have a call, a charge and gifts from Christ, and on whom there is a necessity laid to preach the Gospel; and who should not shun to declare it on any account; nor can they, who have it in their hearts, and as fire in their bones; who have seen and heard, and handled of the word of life, let what will be the consequence of it; see Psal. lxviii. 11. Acts iv. 20. and v. 20, 29. 1 Cor. ix. 16.

Ver. 9. *Publish in the palaces at Ashdod, and in the palaces in the land of Egypt, &c.*] This is spoken to the prophets, to publish and declare in all the courts of the Philistines and Egyptians, and among all the princes and great men therein, the sins of the people of Israel, and the punishment God threatened them with; and let them, even these very Heathens, judge whether there was not a just proportion between them, and whether their sins did not deserve such calamities to be brought upon them, the Lord by his prophets had denounced. *And say, assemble yourselves on the mountains of Samaria*; the metropolis of the ten tribes, Isa. vii. 9. and which was built upon a mountain, and several others were about it, and joined to it; where these princes of Ashdod or Azotus in Palestine, and of Egypt, are called to leave their courts, and meet together to behold the iniquities committed by Israel, and to sit in judgment upon them, and declare their sense of what was just and fitting to be done to such a people: *and behold the great tumults in the midst thereof*; the riots of its inhabitants, the noise of them, committing all manner of outrages and wickedness: *and the oppressed in the midst thereof*; the poor, the fatherless, and the widow, injured in their persons and properties, plundered of their substance, or defrauded of it.

Ver. 10. *For they know not to do right, &c.*] What is just and right between man and man, no, not in one single instance; they did not regard it, or advert to it; they were under no concern about it; and were so much under the power of their lusts, that they knew not how to do it; and had used themselves so long to such wicked and unjust ways, that they had lost at least the practical knowledge of doing justice; they knew

what was right in the theory, but not in the practice; bribes blinded their eyes; for this seems to design judges, civil magistrates, such who had the administration of justice and the execution of the laws in their hands. The Targum is, "they know not to execute "the law;" see Jer. iv. 22. *Who store up violence and robbery in their palaces*: treasured up riches in their palaces gotten in a violent way, by oppression and injustice; and which was no other, nor better, than robbery. This shews that persons in power and authority, that lived in palaces, in great splendour and grandeur, are here meant.

Ver. 11. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] Because of these tumults and riots, oppression and injustice, violence and robbery: *an adversary there* shall be *even round about the land*; not Tyre, as Theodoret renders the word; but the king of Assyria, who invaded the land of Israel in the days of Hoshea, took Samaria, and carried Israel captive, and placed them in foreign countries, 2 Kings xvii. 6: *and he shall bring down thy strength from thee*: take away their riches, demolish their fortresses, and strip them of every thing in which they put their confidence: *and thy palaces shall be spoiled*: plundered of the treasures laid up in them, and pulled down to the ground; and a just retaliation this for their being the repositories of ill-gotten substance and wealth.

Ver. 12. *Thus saith the Lord, as the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion*, &c.] Or what the lion has left, to shew to his master that it had been seized and torn by a beast of prey; for otherwise it is a most daring thing, and not usual, for a shepherd to take any thing out of a lion's mouth, though David did: and here it is said to be not a whole sheep, or a lamb, but *two legs, or a piece of an ear*: the body of the creature being devoured by the lion, only some offal left he cared not for; two shanks of the legs that had no flesh upon them, and the gristle of the ear, as the Targum; having satisfied his hunger with the best of it: signifying hereby that only a few of the Israelites should escape the enemy, and those poor and insignificant, he made no account of; and this in a miraculous manner, it being like taking any thing out of the mouth of a lion, to which a powerful enemy is compared, and particularly the king of Assyria, Jer. l. 17: *so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria*; only a few of them, and those the poorest; [illegible] city will be escape will be next to a miracle. wh[illegible] and sickly, or faint-taken; even such ϐ*örner of a bed*: who either through hearted [illegible] ue there, or slothfulness, danger being near; or through poverty, having only a corner or a piece of a bed to lie on; or through cowardice they hid themselves in one part of it: *and in Damascus* in *a couch*; or *in a bed of Damascus*[h]; the chief city in Syria, taken much about the same time as Samaria was; and where some of the Israelites might betake themselves, and think themselves secure as persons laid on a couch: or *at the bed's feet*[i], as some render it; or *in a corner of a couch*[k], as before. The Targum paraphrases it, "that "dwell in Samaria, in the strength of power, trusting "in Damascus."

Ver. 13. *Hear ye, and testify in the house of Jacob*, &c.] The prophets and priests, whose business it was to speak to the people from the Lord, and declare his will to them, and to admonish them of their sin and danger, are here called upon to hearken to what the Lord was about to say, and to testify and publish it to the people of Israel, the posterity of Jacob, though sadly degenerated: *saith the Lord God, the God of hosts*; the eternal Jehovah, the Being of beings, the God of the whole earth, the God of the armies above and below; and, being so great, ought to be heard with the greatest attention and reverence in what follows.

Ver. 14. *That in the day that I shall visit the transgressions of Israel upon him*, &c.] The three or four mentioned in the preceding chapter, the great multitude of them, their profaneness, uncleanness, and luxury, their injustice and oppression of the poor; when he should visit and punish for these sins, as he would by the hand of the Assyrian, he would not forget their idolatry; though no notice is taken of this before, in the appeal to the Heathen princes, who were likewise guilty of it: *I will also visit the altars of Beth-el*: where one of the calves Jeroboam made was set up and worshipped; and where was an altar erected, and sacrifice offered on it, 1 Kings xii. 28—33. and here the plural number is put for the singular; though it may be, that in process of time more altars might be set up as they increased in idolatry, and as seems from Hos. viii. 11. and x. 1. and now the Lord would shew his resentment at them, and punish those that worshipped and sacrificed there. So the Targum, "that "worship at the altars in Beth-el." *And the horns of the altar shall be cut off, and fall to the ground*; for it seems this altar was made after the form of that at Jerusalem, with four horns at the four corners of it; and which were reckoned the more principal parts of it, and the more sacred, where the blood of the sacrifices was poured, and to which persons in distress fled and laid hold of for refuge; but now these should be of no use unto them, since they would be entirely demolished by the enemy, and laid level with the ground.

Ver. 15. *And I will smite the winter-house with the summer-house*, &c.] Both the one and the other shall fall to the ground, being beat down by the enemy, or shook and made to fall by the earthquake predicted, ch. i. 1. as Kimchi thinks: kings and great personages had houses in the city in the winter-season, in which they lived for warmth; and others in the country in the summer-time, to which they retired for the benefit of the air; or they had, in one and the same house, a summer and a winter parlour; see Judg. iii. 20. Jer. xxxvi. 22. it signifies that the destruction should reach city and country, and deprive them of what was for their comfort and pleasure: *and the houses of ivory shall perish*: or *of the tooth*[l]; the elephant's tooth, of which ivory is made. Ahab made a house of ivory; and perhaps more were made by others afterwards, following his example, 1 Kings xxii. 39. not that these houses

[h] ברמשק ערש in sponda Damasci, Tigurine version; in grabbato Damasci, so some in Drusius; in lectis Damascenis, Castalio; so Abendana.

[i] In crure spondæ, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius.

[k] Angulo grabati, Pagninus; in angulo strati, Montanus. So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 75. 1.

[l] בתי השן domus dentis, Montanus, Mercerus, Vatablus.

were made wholly of ivory, only *covered* with it, as the Targum here paraphrases it; or they were cieled or wainscotted with it, or were inlaid and entrailed with it, and were reckoned very curious work; but should be demolished, and perish in the general ruin: *and the great houses shall have an end, saith the Lord*: the houses of princes, nobles, and other persons of figure and distinction; houses great in building, or *many* in number, as Kimchi observes, and as the word[w] will bear to be rendered; these, which the builders and owners of them thought would have continued many ages, and have perpetuated their names to posterity, should now be thrown down, and be no more; of which they might assure themselves, since the Lord had said it.

CHAP. IV.

IN this chapter, the great ones, or the people of Israel, are threatened with calamities for their oppression of the poor, ver. 1, 2, 3, and in an ironical manner are reproved for their idolatry, ver. 4, 5. then follows an enumeration of several judgments that had been upon them, yet had had no effect on them, to bring them to repentance, nor even mercies, ver. 6—11. and notwithstanding all this, in a wonderful gracious manner, they are called upon to prepare to meet their God, who is described by his power, greatness, and goodness, ver. 12, 13.

Ver. 1. *Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan*, &c.] Or *cows of Bashan*[x]; a country beyond Jordan, inhabited by the tribes of Gad and Reuben, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, very fruitful of pasturage, and where abundance of fat cattle were brought up; to whom persons of distinction, and of the first rank, are here compared. Aben Ezra, Jarchi, and Kimchi, interpret them of the wives of the king, princes, ministers of state, and great men; and so it may be thought that Amos, a herdsman, in his rustic manner, compliments the court-ladies with this epithet, for their plumpness, wantonness, and petulancy. Though it may be the princes and great men themselves may be rather intended, and be so called for their effeminacy, and perhaps with some regard to the calves they worshipped; and chiefly because being fat and flourishing, and abounding with wealth and riches, they became wanton and mischievous; like fat cattle, broke down their fences, and would be under no restraint of the laws of God and man; entered into their neighbours' fields, seized on their property, and spoiled them of it. So the Targum paraphrases it, "ye rich of substance." In like manner the principal men among the Jews, in the times of Christ, are called bulls of Bashan, Psal. xxii. 12. *That are in the mountains of Samaria*; like cattle grazing on a mountain; the metaphor is still continued: Samaria was the principal city of Ephraim, the metropolis of the ten tribes, Isa. vii. 9. situated on a mountain; Mr. Maundrell[y] says, upon a long mount, of an oval figure, having first a fruitful valley, and then a ring of hills running about it. Here the kings of Israel had their palace, and kept their court, and where their princes and nobles resided. Ahab is said to be king of Samaria, 1 Kings xxi. 1. *Which oppress the poor, which crush the needy*; by laying heavy taxes upon them; exacting more of them than they are able to pay; lessening their wages for work done, or withholding it from them; or by taking from them that little they have, and so reducing them to the utmost extremity, and refusing to do them justice in courts of judicature: *which say to their masters, bring, and let us drink*; Kimchi, who interprets these words of the wives of great men, supposes their husbands are here addressed, who are, and acknowledged to be, their masters or *lords*; see 1 Pet. iii. 6. whom they call upon to bring them money taken from the poor, or for which they have sold them, that they may have wherewith to eat and drink, fare sumptuously, and live in a grand manner, feasting themselves and their visitors: or these are the words of inferior officers to superior ones, desiring they might have leave to pillage the poor, that so they might live in a more gay and splendid manner, and in rioting and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness. So the Targum, "give us power, that we may "spoil it." Or rather these words are directed to the masters of the poor, who had power over them, had them in their clutches, in whose debt they were; or they had something against them, and therefore these corrupt judges, and wicked magistrates, desire they might be brought before them; who for a bribe would give the cause against them, right or wrong, so long as they got something to feast themselves with; or they are spoken by the rich, to the masters of the poor, to whom they had sold them, to bring them the purchase-money, that they might indulge and gratify their sensual appetites; see ch. ii. 6, 7. and Mic. iii. 1, 2, 3.

Ver. 2. *The Lord God hath sworn by his holiness*, &c.] That is, by himself, holiness being his nature, and an essential attribute of his; this is done to ascertain the truth of what is said, and that men may be assured of the certain performance. Some render it, *by his holy place*; and interpret it of the temple; so Aben Ezra and Kimchi; which is not likely; see Matth. v. 34. Jam. v. 12. The Targum is, "the Lord God "hath sworn by his word in his holiness." *That, lo, the days shall come upon you*; speedily, swiftly, and at an unawares: *that he will take you away with hooks, and your posterity with fish-hooks*; the enemy, the king of Assyria, or God by him, would take them out of their own land, as fish out of water, out of their own element, and carry them captive into a strange land, both them and their posterity; and which should be

[w] בתים רבים ædes multæ, V. L.; domus multæ, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Cocceius, Burkius.

[x] פרות הבשן vaccæ Basan, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Vatablus, Drusius, Mercerus, Grotius, Cocceius.

[y] Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 59. Ed. 7.

as easily done as fish are taken with the hook, even though they were as the kine of Bashan. The word for fish-hooks signifies *thorns* [r], and is by some so rendered; these perhaps being used in angling, before iron hooks were invented. The Targum is, "that "people shall take you away on their shields, and your "daughters in fishermen's [s] boats;" see Jer. xvi. 16.

Ver. 3. *And ye shall go out at the breaches*, &c.] Not at the gates of the city, as they had used to do at pleasure; but at the breaches of the walls of it, made by the enemy, in order to make their escape, if possible; they who had broke down the fences of law and justice, and injured the poor and needy, shall now have the walls of their city broken down, and they themselves exposed to the most imminent danger, and glad to get out of them to save their lives: *every* cow *at that* which is *before her*; every woman, as Jarchi and Kimchi; or every great person, compared to the kine of Bashan, shall make up as fast as he can to the breach before him, to get out; shall follow one another as quick as they can, and clamber on one another's backs, as such cattle do, to get out first; which shews the hurry and confusion they should be in, upon the taking of their city Samaria: *and ye shall cast them into the palace, saith the Lord*: either their children, or their substance, which they shall cast into the royal palace, or fort, or citadel, for safety. Some render it, *ye shall cast yourselves*; so Abarbinel; that is, such as could not get out at the breaches should betake themselves to the palace or fort for their security. The Targum of the whole is, "and they shall break down the wall upon "you, and bring you out, gathered every one before "him, and carry you beyond the mountains of Ar-"menia." And so some others, taking it to be the name of a place, render it, *ye shall be cast into Armon*, or Mona; which Bochart [t] suspects to be the same with Minni, mentioned with Ararat, a mountain in Armenia, Jer. li. 27.

Ver. 4. *Come to Beth-el and transgress*, &c.] This, and what follows, are ironical and sarcastic speeches, not giving liberty to sin, but in this way reproving for it: Beth-el was one of the places where the calves were placed and worshipped; and here they are bid to go thither, and go on with and continue in their idolatrous worship, by which they transgressed the law of God, and mark what would be the issue of it. The se[illegible] *At* the same with Eccles. xi. 9. see [illegible] multiply acts of *Gilgal multiply transgr*[illegible] place where high places and idolatr[illegible] erected, and idols worshipped; as it had formerly been a place of religious worship of the true God, the ten tribes made use of it in the times of their apostacy for idolatrous worship; see Hos. iv. 15, and ix. 15, and xii. 11. *And bring your sacrifices every morning*: and offer them to your idols, as you were wont formerly to offer them unto the true God, according to the law of Moses, Exod. xxix. 38, 39: *and your tithes after three years*; the third year after the sabbatical year was the year of tithing; and after the tithe of the increase of the fruits of the earth, there was *maaser sheni*, the second tithe, the same with *maaser ani*, the poor's tithe, which was given to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, to eat with them, Deut. xiv. 22—28. and xxvi. 12. and this they are sarcastically bid to observe in their idolatrous way. It is, in the Hebrew text, *after three days*; and so the Targum, "your tithes in three days;" days being put for years, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe. It may be rendered, *after three years of days* [u]; three complete years.

Ver. 5. *And offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven*, &c.] Which some observe was contrary to the law, which forbids all leaven in a meat-offering; or *burning* it in any offering, Lev. ii. 11. which the word [w] here used suggests was done by these idolaters, as well as eaten by them, their priests not liking to eat unleavened bread; but, though it was forbidden in the meat-offering, was allowed, yea, ordered, with the sacrifice of thanksgiving, Lev. vii. 13. So Abarbinel understands it here, as what was according to law, but ironically commanded to be offered to idols: *and proclaim and publish the free offerings*: let all know of them when you make your free-will offerings, and invite them to partake of them: *for this liketh you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord God*: or ye love to offer such sacrifices to your idols, rather than to the Lord God; preferring these to him, and delighting more in the worship of them than of him.

Ver. 6. *And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities*, &c.] Meaning a famine, having no food to foul them with, or to stick in them. This was not the famine in Samaria, 2 Kings vi. 25. for that was only in that city, and for a short time, whilst besieged; whereas this was in all the cities in Israel; rather therefore it designs the famine predicted by Elisha, which should be upon the land for seven years, 2 Kings viii. 1: *and want of bread in all your places*; this is the same with the former clause, and explains it, and still makes the famine more general, being not only in their cities, but in all their places of abode, their towns and villages: *yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord*; this judgment had no influence upon th[illegible] to bring them to a sense of their evils, [illegible]ticularly their idolatry, and to repentance for them, and to reclaim them from them, and return them to the Lord, and to his worship, as the Targum paraphrases it.

Ver. 7. *And also I have withholden the rain from you*, &c.] As he did for the space of three years successively in the days of Ahab, as predicted by Elijah, 1 Kings xvii. 1. and xviii. 1. the consequences of which are very bad to men and beast, and bring on a scarcity of food for both, and a famine if long withheld: *when there were yet three months to the harvest*; that is, three months before the harvest, as Jarchi; when, as Kimchi observes, there was need of rain: this was the latter rain, which was usually given and expected about this time, and on which the goodness

[r] בסירות spinis, Mercerus, Liveleus, Drusius, Grotius.
[s] So it is interpreted by R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 65. 2. likewise Elias says the word signifies a small ship, or a boat that is in a large ship, Tishbi, p. 59. So Vatablus interprets it, scaphas piscatorias, sive cymbas; and some in Munster.

[t] Geograph. Sacr. l. 1. c. 3. col. 20.
[u] לשלשת ימים post tres annos dierum, Piscator.
[w] קטר incendendo, Munster, Tigurine version; incendite incensum, Vatablus.

of the crop, and so of the harvest, greatly depended; these three months before barley-harvest were December, January, and February, that being in March; and before the wheat-harvest, February, March, and April, that being in May usually: *and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city*: so that it might appear to be not by the course of nature, or through the influence of the planets, or by chance; but was according to the direction of divine Providence, the hand of God was manifestly in it: yea, *one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered*; one piece of ground or field had a plentiful shower on it, whereby it became fruitful; and another field or close on the other side of the hedge, or partition had none, whereby what did spring up withered away and came to nothing; or *one inheritance*[a], or farm, as some render it; one man's estate was well watered with rain from heaven, and brought forth much fruit; and another man's estate, for want of it, was barren, and brought forth nothing: thus God was pleased to do in his providence, to shew his sovereignty, and to chastise men for their sins; and in such a manner as that they might, if not blind, easily perceive his hand in it.

Ver. 8. *So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water*, &c.] Two or three cities, that is, the inhabitants of them, being without water, went up and down in quest of any city or place where they could find water for themselves and cattle to drink: *but they were not satisfied*: could not get enough for their present use, and much less to carry back with them to supply them for any length of time; such a scarcity there was of it in other parts; see 1 Kings xviii. 5, 6: *yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord*: this had no more effect upon them than the other, to relinquish their former courses, and return unto the Lord by humiliation and repentance.

Ver. 9. *I have smitten you with blasting and mildew*, &c.] *Blasting* is what we commonly call *blights*, generally occasioned by an east wind; and so Kimchi interprets the word here used; and the Vulgate Latin version renders it, *a burning wind*; which causes the buds and leaves of trees to shrivel up as if they were burnt with fire. *Mildew* is a kind of clammy dew, which falling upon corn, *&c.* corrupts and destroys by its moisture; and is a kind of jaundice to the fruits of the earth; and has its name, as that, from yellowness, in the Hebrew language: when the Lord is said to smite them with these, the sense is, that he sent these upon the fruits of their gardens, fields, and vineyards, which consumed them: *when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig-trees and your olive-trees increased, the palmer-worm devoured* them; just when they were budding and blossoming, and bringing forth fruit; and so what the blasting and mildew did not consume, that the palmer-worm, a kind of locust, did; which has its name from its biting and cutting off the leaves and branches of trees, as of those mentioned, vines, olives, and fig-trees, with which the land of Canaan abounded, the cutting off which was a great calamity. The Targum is, "the multitude of "your gardens, *&c.* the palmer-worm hath eaten:" *yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord*; this dispensation of Providence was also without its desired fruit and effect; see the note on ver. 6.

Ver. 10. *I have sent among you the pestilence, after the manner of Egypt*, &c.] Like that which was sent among the first-born of Egypt, and cut them off in one night; or when in the way of Egypt, as the Targum; either as in the wilderness, when they came out of Egypt, so Jarchi interprets it; see Numb. xvi. 46—49. or the Lord sent the pestilence as they went in the way to Egypt for help and succour, or for shelter, or for food in time of famine; for they went thither, as Kimchi says, because of the famine, to fetch food from thence; and this was displeasing to the Lord, and he sent the plague among them, which cut them off in the way: *your young men have I slain with the sword*; of the enemy in battle; or as they were in the way to Egypt, being sent there to fetch food, but were intercepted by the enemy: *and have taken away your horses*; on which they rode to Egypt on the above errand; or rather which they brought up from thence, contrary to the command of God: *and have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils*; such numbers of their armies being slain, and these lying unburied, the smell of them was very noisome: *yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord*; still they continued obstinate and impenitent; see the note on ver. 6.

Ver. 11. *I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah*, &c.] Either their houses were burnt, or their bodies consumed by fire from heaven, with lightning; not whole cities, but the habitations of some particular persons, or they themselves: *and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning*; some escaped such an awful calamity, their houses were not consumed, whilst others were; and their persons were safe, whilst others, just by them, were struck dead at once: *yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord*; neither the judgments of God on themselves and others had any effect upon them to humble and reclaim them: such dispensations, without the grace of God is exerted, rather harden than soften; and, instead of bringing men to repentance, cause them to blaspheme; see Rev. xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11. nor will the mercy and goodness of God, which should lead persons to repentance, attain that end, unless accompanied with the spirit and grace of God; who, notwithstanding such mercies and deliverances, will remain senseless, stupid, obdurate, and impenitent; see Rev. ix. 20, 21.

Ver. 12. *Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel*, &c.] What he would do is not expressly and particularly said; it is commonly understood to be something in a way of judgment, and worse than what he had done, since they had no effect upon them; or these things should be done over again, until an utter end was made of them; or the reference is to ch. iii. 11—15. and iv. 2, 3. and the following words are usually interpreted, either ironically, since the Lord was coming forth as an enemy to issue the controversy with them; they are called upon to meet him in a hostile way, and muster up all their forces, exert all

[a] חלקה fundus, Mercerus, Vatablus; hæreditas, Targum.

their power and strength, and make use of their best weapons and military skill, and see what would be the consequence of all this; feeble worms set in opposition to the mighty God; thorns and briers he can easily go through, and burn up quickly: or else they are seriously addressed, and exhorted to meet the Lord in the way of his judgments, by humiliation, repentance, and reformation; not knowing but that after all he may be gracious and merciful to them, and turn away the fierceness of his anger from them; see ch. v. 15. but I rather think the words are a promise or intimation of doing something to Israel in a way of special grace and kindness, notwithstanding their conduct and behaviour, and the ineffectualness both of judgments and providential mercies; for the words may be rendered, as the same particle should be in Hos. ii. 15, *notwithstanding*, or *nevertheless, thus will I do unto thee*[w]; what I have from all eternity purposed and resolved to do, and what I have promised again and again, by the mouth of all the holy prophets, from the beginning of the world, I would do; namely, send my Son to be thy Saviour and Redeemer: and *because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel;* the Messiah that was then to come was God, and so equal to the work of redemption and salvation he was to do; and the God of spiritual and mystical Israel, even all the elect, Jews and Gentiles, to be redeemed by him; was to be their Immanuel, God in their nature, and therefore to be met with the utmost joy and pleasure; see Zech. ix. 9. for this meeting him is not to be understood in a hostile way, and as spoken ironically to the enemies of Christ to oppose him, encounter with him, and mark the issue of it, who in time would cause them to be brought before him and slain, as some interpret the words; but in a friendly manner, as he was met by those that were waiting for his coming, such as Simeon and others; and by those John the Baptist called upon to prepare the way of the Lord; and as he was by his own disciples, who embraced him by faith, received him with joy, and left all and followed him; and as all such are prepared to meet him who are made truly sensible of sin, and of their own righteousness as insufficient to justify from it, and have seen the glory, fulness, and suitableness of his salvation. Christ is to be met with in his house and ordinances; and men are prepared for it when the desires of their hearts are towards him, and their graces are exercised on him; which preparation is from himself: he'll be met at his second coming by his spiritual Israel; and they will be prepared for it who believe it, love it, and long for it; have their loins girt, and their lights burning, and they waiting for their Lord's coming; see Matt. xxv. 1—10. Luke xii. 35, 56. and so at the hour of death, which is the day of the Lord; a preparation and readiness for which lies not in external humiliation, outward reformation, a moral righteousness, or a bare profession of religion, and submission to ordinances; but in regeneration, in faith in Christ, and spiritual knowledge of him; in a being washed in his blood, and clothed with his righteousness; for which readiness all truly sensible sinners will be concerned, and which is all from the grace of God; see Matt. xxiv. 43, 44. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read it, *prepare to call upon thy God;* and the Targum paraphrases it, "to receive the doctrine of the law of "thy God;" rather the doctrine of the Gospel; but the former sense is best; for the confirmation of which it may be observed, that when God is said to do a thing to any, it is usually in a way of grace; and that when preparation is made to meet a divine Person, it is always meant of the Son of God; and that it is a common thing in prophecy, that when the Lord is threatening men with his judgments, to throw in a promise or prophecy of the Messiah, for the comfort of his people.

Ver. 13. *For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, &c.*] These words are a description of the glorious Person, *thy God* and Saviour, to be met; he is the Creator of all things, that formed the mountains, and so was before them, as in Prov. viii. 25, 26. and able to surmount and remove all mountains of difficulties that lay in his way of working out salvation for his people: *and createth the wind;* or *spirit;* not the Holy Spirit, which is increated; but either angels, whom he makes spirits; or the spirit and soul of man he is the Creator of; or rather the natural wind is meant, which is his creature, he holds in his fists, restrains and commands, at his pleasure, Matt. viii. 26, 27: *and declareth unto man what is his thought;* not what is man's thought, though he knows what is in man without any information, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, and can reveal them to men, and convince them that he knows them, Matt. ix. 4. but rather the thought of God, the meditation of his heart, concerning the salvation of men; his thoughts of peace, which are the deep things of God, and which Christ, lying in the bosom of his Father, was privy to, and has declared, John i. 18. The Septuagint and Arabic versions, reading the words wrong, render them, *declaring to men his Christ;* which, though true of God, is not the sense of this clause. The Targum is, "what are "his works[x]?" his works of creation, providence, redemption, and grace: *that maketh the morning darkness;* or *darkness morning*, or *the morning out of darkness*[y]; being the day-spring from on high, the morning star, the sun of righteousness, that, rising, made the Gospel day, after a long night of Jewish and Gentile darkness; and who made the same dispensation a morning to one, and darkness to another, John ix. 39. The Septuagint version is, *making the morning and the cloud;* the Vulgate Latin version, *making the morning cloud;* his coming was as the morning, Hos. vi. 3: *and treadeth upon the high places of the earth;* the land of Israel, which is Immanuel's land, is said by the Jews to be higher than other lands; Jerusalem higher than any part of Judea, and the mountain the temple was built on higher than Jerusalem: here Christ trod in the days of his flesh, and from the mount of Olives ascended to heaven, after he had trampled upon and spoiled principalities and powers, spiritual wickednesses in high places, and when he led captivity cap-

[w] לכן nihilominus, tamen. Vid. Noldium, p. 507.
[x] So Kimchi and R. Sol. Urbin. Obel Moed, fol. 45. 2.

[y] עשה שחר עיפה faciens obscuritatem aurorum, Drusius.

tive. Jarchi interprets it of humbling the mighty and proud, who are compared to the high places of the earth. The Targum is, "to declare to men what are "his works, to prepare light for the righteous as the "morning light, who goes and prepares darkness for "the wicked, that he may break the wicked of the "earth;" *the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name*; he is the Jehovah, the Lord our righteousness, the God and Governor of the armies of heaven, the hosts of angels, and to whom all creatures on earth are subject; all power in heaven and earth belongs unto him; this is Israel's God, his Redeemer and Saviour, he is called upon to prepare to meet.

CHAP. V.

IN this chapter the prophet exhorts Israel to hear his lamentation over them for their impending ruin, ver. 1, 2, 3. nevertheless to seek the Lord, and all that is good; to forsake their idols, and repent of their sins, in hopes of finding mercy, and living comfortably; or otherwise they must expect the wrath of God for their iniquities, especially their oppression of the poor, ver. 4—15. otherwise it would be a time of weeping and wailing, of darkness and distress, however they might harden or flatter themselves, or make a jest of it, ver. 16—20. for all their sacrifices and ceremonial worship would signify nothing, so long as they continued their idolatry with them, ver. 21—26. and therefore should surely go into captivity, ver. 27.

Ver. 1. *Hear ye the word which I take up against you*, &c.] And which was not his own word, but the word of the Lord; and which he took up by his direction as a heavy burden, as some prophecies are called, and this was; and which, though against them, a reproof for their sins, and denunciation of punishment for them, yet was to be heard; for every word of God is pure, and to be hearkened to, whether for us or against us; since the whole is profitable, either for doctrine and instruction in righteousness, or for reproof and correction. It may be rendered, *which I take up concerning you*, or *over you*[a]: *even a lamentation, O house of Israel*: a mournful ditty, an elegiac song over the house of Israel, now expiring, and as it were dead. This word was like Ezekiel's roll, in which were written *lamentation, and mourning, and woe*, Ezek. ii. 10. full of mournful matter, misery, and distress, as follows:

Ver. 2. *The virgin of Israel is fallen*, &c.] The kingdom of Israel, so called, because it had never been subdued, or become subject to a foreign power, since it was a kingdom; or because, considered in its ecclesiastic state, it had been espoused to the Lord as a chaste virgin; and perhaps this may be ironically spoken, and refers to its present adulterate and degenerated state, worshipping the calves at Dan and Beth-el; or else because of its wealth and riches, and the splendour and gaiety in which it appeared; but now, as it had fallen into sin and iniquity, it should quickly fall by it, and on account of it, into ruin and misery; and, because of the certainty of it, it is represented as if it was already fallen: *she shall no more rise*: and become a kingdom again, as it never has as yet, since the ten tribes were carried away captive by Salmaneser king of Assyria, to which calamity this prophecy refers. The Targum is, "shall not rise "again this year;" very impertinently; better Kimchi and Ben Melech, for a long time; since as they think, and many others, that the ten tribes shall return again, as may seem when all Israel shall be converted and saved, and repossess their own land; see Hos. i. 10, 11. and iii. 5. Rom. xi. 25, 26. Abendana produces a passage out of Zohar, in which these words are interpreted, that the virgin of Israel should not rise again of herself, she not having power to prevail over her enemies; but God will raise her up out of the dust, when he shall raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, who shall reign in future time over all the tribes together, as it is said in ch. ix. 11: *she is forsaken upon her land*: by her people, her princes, and her God; or prostrate on the ground, as the Targum; she was cast upon the ground, and dashed to pieces by the enemy as an earthen vessel, and there left, her ruin being irrecoverable; so whatever is cast and scattered, or dashed to pieces on the ground, and left, is expressed by the word here used, as Jarchi observes: *there is none to raise her up*: her princes and people are either slain by the sword, famine, and pestilence, or carried captive, and so can yield her no assistance; her idols whom she worshipped cannot, and her God she forsook will not.

Ver. 3. *For thus saith the Lord God*, &c.] This is a reason why there were none to raise her up: since *the city that went out by a thousand shall leave an hundred*; that is, the city in which there were a thousand persons constantly going in and out; or which sent, or caused to go out, or furnished, a thousand men upon occasion for war, had only a hundred persons left in it; or there remained but a hundred of the thousand they sent out, the rest being destroyed by one means or another: *and that which went forth by an hundred shall leave ten, to the house of Israel*: where there were a hundred persons going out and coming in continually; or which sent out a hundred men to the army to fight their battles, had now only ten remaining; to such a small number were they reduced all over the land, so that there were none, or not a number sufficient, to raise up Israel to its former state and glory.

Ver. 4. *For thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel*, &c.] Or *yet*[b], notwithstanding all this, though such judgments were threatened and denounced, and such desolations should certainly come, in case of impenitence, and an obstinate continuance in a course

[a] עליכם de vobis, Tigurine version, Mercerus, Piscator, Cocceius; super vos, Pagninus, Montanus; pro vobis, Vatablus.

[b] כי attamen, Gratius.

of sin; yet hopes are given of finding mercy and kindness upon repentance and reformation, at least to the remnant of them; see ver. 15: *seek ye me, and ye shall live*; seek my fear, as the Targum; fear and reverence, serve and worship, the Lord God; return unto him by repentance; seek to him by prayer and supplication; acknowledge your sins, and humble yourselves before him, and implore his pardoning grace and mercy: *and ye shall live*; in your own land, and not be carried out of it; live comfortably, in great plenty of good things; and live spiritually, enjoying the favour of God, and his presence in his ordinances, and live eternally in the world to come.

Ver. 5. *But seek not Beth-el*, &c.] Don't go to Beth-el, the place where one of Jeroboam's calves was set up and worshipped, to consult the oracle, idols, and priests there; or to perform religious worship, which will be your ruin, if not prevented by another course of living: *nor enter into Gilgal*; another place of idolatry, where idols were set up and worshipped; see the note on ch. iv. 4: *and pass not to Beer-sheba*; a place in the further part of the land of Israel; it formerly belonged to Judah, but was now in the hands of the ten tribes, and where idolatrous worship was practised; see ch. viii. 14. it having been a place where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had dwelt, and worshipped the true God: *for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity*; that is, the inhabitants of it; they will not be able with their idols and idol-worship to save themselves, and therefore go not thither. There is an elegant paronomasia here[a], as there is also in the next words: *and Beth-el shall come to nought*; which also was called Beth-aven, the house of vanity, or of an idol, which is nothing in the world; and therefore, because of the idolatry in it, should come to nothing, be utterly destroyed, and the inhabitants of it. So the Targum, "they that are in Gilgal, and worship "calves in Beth-el."

Ver. 6. *Seek the Lord, and ye shall live*, &c.] This is repeated to stir up unto it, because of their backwardness and slothfulness, and to shew the importance and necessity of it. By the *Lord* may be meant the Messiah, Israel's God that was to come, and they were to prepare to meet, ch. iv. 12. and the rather, since life spiritual and eternal is only to be had from him, and he is to be sought unto for it, and all the blessings of it, peace, pardon, righteousness, rest, and salvation, as well as temporal deliverance, and all outward mercies: *lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and devour it*; that is, lest his wrath and fury break out like fire, as the Targum, by sending an enemy to invade the land, destroy it, and carry the inhabitants of it captive; even all the ten tribes, who frequently go by the name of Ephraim the son of Joseph, that being the principal tribe, and the first king of them being of it: *and* there be *none to quench it in Beth-el*; the calf worshipped there, and the priests that officiated, would not be able to avert the stroke of divine vengeance, or turn back the enemy, and save the land from ruin. The Targum is, "and there be "none to quench it, because of your sins, who have "been serving idols in Beth-el."

Ver. 7. *Ye who turn judgment to wormwood*, &c.] This seems to be spoken to kings and judges, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi observe; in whose hands is the administration of justice, and who often pervert it, as these did here addressed and complained of; that which was the most useful and salubrious, and so the most desirable to the commonwealth, namely, just judgment, was changed into the reverse, what was as bitter and as disagreeable as wormwood; or *hemlock*, as it might be rendered, and as it is in ch. vi. 12. even injustice: *and leave off righteousness in the earth*; leave off doing it among men: or rather, *leave* it *on the earth*[b]; who cast it down to the ground, trampled upon it, and there left it; which is expressive not only of their neglect, but of their contempt of it; see Dan. viii. 12.

Ver. 8. Seek him *that maketh the seven stars*, &c.] Which some connect with the preceding words, without a supplement, *they leave righteousness on the ground, who maketh the seven stars*; understanding it of Christ, the Lord our righteousness, who is made unto us righteousness, whom the Jews rejected and despised, though the Maker of the heavens and the constellations in them. Some continue, and supply the words thus, and remember not him *that maketh the seven stars*, as Kimchi; or forget him, as Japhet in Aben Ezra. The Targum is, "they cease to fear him that maketh," *&c.*; they have no regard unto him, no awe and reverence of him, or they would not act so unjustly as they do. There is but one word for the *seven stars* in the original text, which signifies that constellation called the Pleiades, and so the same word is rendered, Job ix. 9. and xxxviii. 31. and the Vergiliæ, because they appear in the spring of the year, when they yield their sweet influences, which the Scripture ascribes to them, and are desirable; hence they have their name in Hebrew from a word which signifies desire: *and Orion*; another constellation; for Aben Ezra says, it is not one star, but many; and as he, with the ancients he mentions, takes the former to be the tail of Aries, and the head of Taurus; so this to be the heart of Scorpio. This constellation appears in winter, and is a sign of bad weather. Virgil calls it Nimbosus Orion; and it has its name in Hebrew from unsettledness and inconstancy, the weather being then very variable. Amos, being a herdsman, had observed the appearances and effects of these constellations, and adored the Maker of them, whom others neglected: *and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night*; maketh the constant revolution of day and night, and the days longer in the summer, and shorter in winter, as Kimchi interprets it; and also the various changes of prosperity and adversity, turning the one into the other when he pleases: *that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth*; as in the time of the universal deluge, to which some Jewish writers apply this, as Jarchi observes; or rather draws up by the heat of the sun the waters of the sea into the air, and forms them into clouds, where they lose their saltness, and become sweet; and then lets them down in plentiful and gentle showers, to water, refresh, and

[a] הגלגל גלה יגלה.
[b] הניחו in terram prosternunt, Piscator; justitiam in terram reliquerunt, i. e. humi prosternentis & deserentis, Mercerus; collocant humi, Junius & Tremellius.

fructify the earth; which is an instance of divine power, wisdom, and goodness. The Targum is, "who "commands many armies to be gathered like the "waters of the sea, and scatters them upon the face "of the earth." Some, who understand these words of Christ our righteousness, interpret the whole mystically of his raising up the twelve apostles, comparable to stars; and of his turning the Gentiles, who were darkness itself, to the light of the Gospel; and of his giving up the Jews, who were formerly light, to judicial blindness and darkness; and of his watering the earth with large showers of the divine word. *The Lord is his name;* he is the true Jehovah, that can and does do all this.

Ver. 9. *That strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong,* &c.] Such as have been taken by an enemy, who have been stripped of their armour, and spoiled of all their goods and substance, and have no friends nor allies, nor any thing to help themselves with; the Lord can supply them with strength, furnish them with weapons, and send them helpers, so that they shall rise up against their conquerors and spoilers, and in their turn subdue them. The Targum is, "that "strengthens the weak against the strong;" or causes the weak to prevail over the strong. A learned man, from the use of the word in the Arabic language, chooses to render it, *who intends,* or *designs, destruction to the strong*[*]; that is, in his secret purposes, and which he brings about in providence; though he is doubtful whether it may not have the signification of recreation and refreshment, and whether the construction and circumstances will admit of it; and some do so translate it, *who refreshes himself with destruction against the strong*[*]; takes delight and pleasure in it; it is a recreation to him: *so that the spoiled shall come against the fortress;* lay siege to it, and take it, in which the spoiler thought himself secure, with the spoil and substance he had taken from the spoiled; such sudden changes and vicissitudes can God bring upon men when he pleases. Some apply this to the Romans strengthened against the Jews, and besieging their fortified city Jerusalem; but not very aptly.

Ver. 10. *They hate him that rebuketh in the gate,* &c.] Openly and publicly in the courts of judicature: wicked judges hated the prophets of the Lord, such as Amos, who faithfully reproved them for the perversion of justice, even when they were upon the bench: or the people were so corrupt and degenerate, that they hated those faithful judges who reproved them for their vices in the open courts of justice, when they came before them. The former sense seems best, and more agreeable to the context: *and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly;* not only hate him, but abhor him, can't bear the sight of him, or to hear his name mentioned that speaks out his mind freely and honestly, and tells them of their sins, and advises them to repent of them, and leave them.

Ver. 11. *Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor,* &c.] This seems to be spoken to the princes, judges, and civil magistrates, as Kimchi observes; who oppressed the poor and needy, and crushed them to the ground, trampled upon them, stripped them of the little substance they had, and left them destitute; exercising a cruel and tyrannical power over them, they having none to stand by them, and deliver them: *and ye take from him burdens of wheat:* which perhaps he had been gleaning in the field, and was carrying home for the support of his family; or which he had gotten with great labour, and was all he had in the world: this they took away from him, for the payment of pretended debts, or lawsuits; or as not in right belonging to him, but taken out of fields where he should not have entered: *ye have built houses of hewn stones;* in a very grand and pompous manner for themselves and their children, with money they had extorted from the poor, and got by oppression and injustice: *but ye shall not dwell in them;* at least but a very short time; for quickly and suddenly the enemy will come and turn you out of them, and destroy them, which would be a just retaliation for their spoiling the houses of the poor: *ye have planted pleasant vineyards;* well situated, and filled with the choicest vines, which promise a large produce of the best wine: *but ye shall not drink wine of them;* for before the grapes are fully ripe they should be either taken away by death, or be carried captive, and others should dwell in their houses, and drink the wine of their vineyards.

Ver. 12. *For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins,* &c.] Their sins were numerous, and of the first magnitude, attended with very heavy aggravations; and these with all their circumstances were well known to the omniscient God, and therefore he determined to punish them as he had threatened. Some of their transgressions are pointed out, as follow: *they afflict the just;* who are so both in a moral and evangelic sense; not comparatively only, but really; and particularly whose cause was just, and yet were vexed and distressed by unjust judges, who gave the cause against them, made them pay all costs and charges, and severely mulcted them: *they take a bribe;* of those that were against the just, and gave the cause for them. The word signifies a *ransom*[']. The Targum renders it false mammon. Corrupt and unjust judges are here taxed: *and they turn aside the poor in the gate* from their right; in the court of judicature, where they should have done them justice, such courts being usually held in the gates of cities; but instead of that they perverted their judgment, and did them wrong.

Ver. 13. *Therefore the prudent shall keep silence at that time,* &c.] Not the prophets of the Lord, whose business it was at all times to reprove, and not hold their peace, let the consequence be what it would; though the Targum calls them teachers; but private persons, whose wisdom it would be to say nothing; since reproof would do no good to these persons, and they would bring a great deal of hatred, ill will, and trouble upon themselves, as well as would bear the name of God blasphemed, which would be very afflictive to them: or the sense is, they would not speak

[*] המבליג שד על עז qui intendit, destinat destructionem forti, Hottinger Smegma Orientale, l. 1. c. 7. p. 129.

[*] Qui recreat se vastatione contra fortem *sive* robustum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius. So Stockius, p. 126.

['] כופר pretium redemptionis, Mercerus, Liveleus, Drusius; Ty- trou, Cocceius.

to God on the behalf of these wicked men, knowing the decree was gone forth; nor say one murmuring word at it, believing it was in righteousness; and being struck also with the awfulness of God's righteous judgments: *for it is an evil time;* in which sin abounded, and miseries and calamities on account of it.

Ver. 14. *Seek good, and not evil,* &c.] Seek not unto, or after, evil persons and evil things; not the company and conversation of evil men, which is infectious and dangerous; nor any thing that is evil, or has the appearance of it, especially the evil of evils, sin; which is hateful to God, contrary to his nature and will; is evil in its own nature, and bad in its consequences, and therefore not to be sought, but shunned and avoided; but seek that which is good, persons and things: seek the *summum bonum,* the chief good, God, who is essentially, perfectly, immutably, and communicatively good, the fountain of all goodness, and the portion of his people; seek Christ the good Saviour and sacrifice, the good Shepherd, and the good Samaritan, who is good in all his relations, as a father, husband, and friend, and in whom all good things are laid up; seek the good Spirit of God, who works good things in his people, and shews good things to them, and is the Comforter of them; seek to him for assistance in prayer, and to help in the exercise of every grace, and in the discharge of every duty, and as the guide into all truth, and to eternal glory; seek the good ways of God, the way of truth, the path of faith and holiness, and especially the good way to the Father, the way of life and salvation by Christ; seek the good word of God, the Scriptures of truth, the promises contained in them, and the Gospel of them; seek the company of good men, and that good part that shall not be taken away, the true grace of God, the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; seek the glories of another world, the goodness of God laid up, the best things which are reserved to last: *that ye may live;* comfortably, spiritually, and eternally, which is the consequence of all this; see the notes on ver. 4, 6: *and so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken;* as they used to say, and boasted of; though they had not the temple, the ark of the testimony, the symbols of the divine Presence, as Judah had; but this they would have in reality, both his gracious presence here, and his glorious presence hereafter, did they truly and rightly seek those things; than which nothing is more desirable to good men, or can make them more comfortable, or more happy. The Targum is, "seek to do well, and not to do "ill, that ye may live; and then the word of the "Lord God of hosts shall be your help, as ye "have said."

Ver. 15. *Hate the evil, and love the good,* &c.] *Evil* is not only not to be sought, but to be hated, especially the evil of sin, because of its evil nature, and pernicious effects and consequences; and, if it was for no other reason but because it is hateful and abominable unto God, therefore they that love him should hate evil, even with a perfect hatred; as all good men do, though it is present with them, and cleaves unto them, and they do it, Psal. xcvii. 10. Rom. vii. 15. and xii. 9. and *good* is to be loved for its goodness' sake, and the good effects of it; a good God is to be loved, and all good men, and all good things; the good word of God, and his commands and ordinances; and highly to be esteemed, and affectionately regarded; *and establish judgment in the gate,* openly, publicly, in every court of judicature, which used to be kept in the gates of cities; not only execute judgment and justice in all cases brought into court, but let it have its constant course, and be always practised according to the settled laws of it: *it may be that the Lord God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph;* who should escape the fire that should break out of his house, and devour it, even the ten tribes, ver. 6. such of them as should seek the Lord, and that which is good; for in the worst of times God reserves a remnant for himself, as in the times of Elijah, Isaiah, Christ, and his apostles; a remnant according to the election of grace, to whom he has been gracious in the choice and reserve he has made of them; in the stores of grace he has laid up for them; in the provision and mission of his Son as a Saviour; and in waiting the time of their conversion, when he is gracious to them, in regenerating, quickening, pardoning, and justifying of them; and still will be in the visits of his love; in the supplies of his grace, in supporting them under afflictions, temptations, desertions, &c. and in giving them his word and ordinances for their comfort and relief: nor is this *may be* to be understood in a way of doubt or hesitation, but of good hope, yea, of a holy confidence; and so some render it, *without doubt the Lord God of hosts will be gracious*[s], &c. see Zeph. ii. 3.

Ver. 16. *Therefore the Lord, the God of hosts, the Lord, saith thus,* &c.] The connexion of these words is not with those that immediately precede, but with the whole context; seeing neither promises nor threats, exhortations, good advice, and intimations of grace and mercy, had no effect, at least upon the generality of the people, therefore the Lord declared as follows: *wailing shall be in all streets;* in all the streets of the towns and cities of Israel, because of the slain and wounded in them: *and they shall say in all the highways, alas! alas!* in the several roads throughout the country, as travellers pass on, and persons flee from the enemy; they shall lament the state of the kingdom, and cry Woe, woe, unto it, in what a miserable condition and circumstances it is in: *and they shall call the husbandmen to mourning;* who used to be better employed in tilling their land, ploughing, sowing, reaping, and gathering in the fruits of the earth; but now should have no work to do, all being destroyed, either by the hand of God, by blasting and mildew, and vermin, or by the trampling and forage of the enemy; and so there would be just occasion for mourning: *and such as are skilful of lamentation to wailing;* that have got the art of mourning, and were expert in making moans, and using plaintive tones, and who assisted at funerals, and other doleful occasions; and who are made use of to this day in some countries, particularly in Ireland; and were by the old Romans, by whom they were called *siticines, præfici,* and *præficæ;* and these mourning men and

[s] אוּלַי sine dubio, Turnovius; so Burkius.

women were also employed among the Jews at such times; see Matt. ix. 23. in Jer. ix. 17, the mourning women are called *cunning women*; and so Lucian[h] calls them *σοφισται των θρηνων*, *sophists at lamentations*, artists at them, well skilled therein, such as those are here directed to be called for. Mr. Lively, our countryman, puts both clauses together, and renders them thus, *the husbandmen shall call to mourning and wailing such as are skilful of lamentation*; to assist them therein, because of the loss of the fruits of the earth; and such a version is confirmed by Jarchi, though he paraphrases it to a different sense; "companies of husbandmen shall meet those that plough "in the fields with the voice of mourners that cry in "the streets."

Ver. 17. *And in all vineyards* shall be *wailing*, &c.] The vines being destroyed, and no grapes to be gathered, and put into the press; when there used to be great shoutings, and large expressions of joy, at the gathering in of the vintage, and pressing the grapes; but now there shall be a different tone; see Jer. xlviii. 32, 33: for *I will pass through thee, saith the Lord*: through their cities, towns, and country, fields and vineyards, and destroy all in his way, as he passed through Egypt when he destroyed their first-born.

Ver. 18. *Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord*, &c.] Either the day of Christ's coming in the flesh, as Cocceius interprets it; and which was desired by the people of Israel, not on account of spiritual and eternal salvation, but that they might be delivered by him from outward troubles and enemies, and enjoy temporal felicity; they had a notion of him as a temporal Saviour and Redeemer, in whose days they should possess much outward happiness, and therefore desired his coming; see Mal. iii. 1, 2. or else the day of the Lord's judgments upon them, spoken of by the prophet, and which they were threatened with, but did not believe it would ever come; and therefore in a scoffing jeering manner, expressed their desire of it, to shew their disbelief of it, and that they were in no pain or fear about it, like those in Isa. v. 19: *to what end is it for you?* why do you desire it? what benefit do you expect to get by it? *the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light*; it will bring on affliction, calamities, miseries, and distress, which are often in Scripture expressed by *darkness*, and not prosperity and happiness, which are sometimes signified by *light*; see Isa. v. 30. and viii. 22. Esth. viii. 16. and even the day of the coming of Christ were to the unbelieving Jews darkness, and not light; they were blinded in it, and given up to judicial blindness and darkness; they hating and rejecting the light of Christ, and his Gospel, and which issued in great calamities, in the utter ruin and destruction of that people, John iii. 19, 20. and ix. 39.

Ver. 19. *As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him*, &c.] That is, should the day of the Lord come as they desired, they would not be the better for it; it would be only going from one trouble to another, like escaping Scylla, and falling into Charybdis: or as if a man, upon the sight of a lion, and at his yell, should take to his heels, and flee *from the face* of him, as the phrase is[i], and a bear, a less generous, and more cruel and voracious creature, especially when bereaved of its whelps, should meet him, and seize him: or should he get clear of them both, *or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him*: should he get into a house, and so escape the lion and the bear, and lean upon the wall of the house to support and ease him, being out of breath in running from these creatures; yet a serpent lurking in the wall of an old house bites him, and the venom and poison of it issues in his death; so he gains nothing by fleeing from the lion, or escaping the bear. These proverbial expressions signify that the Israelites would be no gainers by the day of the Lord, but rather fall into greater evils, and more distressing calamities. Some Jewish writers interpret the lion and the bear of Laban and Esau; the lion (they say[k]) is Laban, who pursued after Jacob to take away his life; the bear is Esau, who stood in the way to kill all that came, the mother with the children; but are much better interpreted of the Chaldeans, Persians, and Grecians, by Jerom; whose words are, "fleeing from the face of "Nebuchadnezzar the lion, ye will be met by Ahasuerus, under whom was the history of Esther; or "the empire of the Assyrians and Chaldeans being destroyed, the Medes and Persians shall arise; and "when upon the reign of Cyrus ye shall have returned, "and at the command of Darius shall have begun to "build the house of the Lord, and have confidence in "the temple, so as to rest in it, lean your weary hands "on its walls; then shall come Alexander king of the "Macedonians, or Antiochus, surnamed Epiphanes, "who shall abide in the temple, and bite like a serpent, not without in Babylon, and in Susa, but "within the borders of the holy land; by which it "appears that the day ye desire is not a day of light "and joy, but of darkness and sorrow." The interpretation is pretty and ingenious enough, since the characters of the lion, bear, and serpent, agree with the respective persons and people mentioned; Nebuchadnezzar is often compared to a lion, Jer. iv. 7. and l. 17. and the Babylonian and Chaldean monarchy is represented by one in Dan. vii. 4. and the Persian monarchy by a bear, ver. 5. to which the Persians are compared, the Jews say[l], because they eat and drink like a bear, are as fat as bears, and hairy like them, and as restless as they; and so the Persians were noted for their luxury and lust, as well as their cruelty; and, wearing long hair, are called hairy persons in the Delphic oracle, which Herodotus[m] interprets of them; see the note on Dan. vii. 5. and Antiochus may not unfitly be compared to a serpent; see Dan. viii. 23, 24, 25. and xi. 23. see the notes there: but what is to be objected to this sense is, that the words are spoken to the ten tribes, or Israel, who were carried captive by the Assy-

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[h] Dialog. περι πενθ.

[i] מפני a facie, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus; a faciebus, Montanus; a conspectu, Mercerus.

[k] Pirke Eliezer, c. 37. fol. 41. 1.

[l] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 72. 1. & Avoda Zara, fol. 2. 2.

[m] Erato, sive l. 6. c. 19. Vid. Calliope, sive l. 9. c. 81.

rians; and not the two tribes, or the Jews, who fell into the hands, first of the Chaldeans, then the Persians, and then the Grecians, particularly into the hands of Antiochus; see Dan. vii. 4, 5. Ezra i. 1.

Ver. 20. *Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light?* &c.] The design of such a question is strongly to affirm, that, in this day of the Lord spoken of, there should be nothing but misery and distress, and no prosperity and happiness, at least to the wicked Israelites, or the unbelieving Jews: *even very dark, and no brightness in it?* signifying that there should be no deliverance, nor the least glimmering view or hope of it; that the calamity should be so very great, and the destruction so entire, that there should be no mixture of mercy, nor the least appearance of relief.

Ver. 21. *I hate, I despise your feast-days,* &c.] Kimchi thinks this is said, and what follows, with respect to the kingdom of the house of Judah, which kept the feast the Lord commanded; but it is not necessary so to understand it; for doubtless the ten tribes imitated the worship at Jerusalem, and kept the feasts as the Jews did there, in the observance of which they trusted; but the Lord rejects their vain confidence, and lets them know that these were no ways acceptable to him; and were so far from atoning for their sins, that they were hated, abhorred, and despised by him, being observed in such a manner and with such a view as they were. *And I will not smell in your solemn assemblies:* a sweet savour of rest, as in Gen. viii. 21. take no pleasure in their duties and services performed, in their solemn assemblies convened together for religious purposes, nor accept of them; but, on the contrary, dislike and abhor them; see Isa. i. 11—14.

Ver. 22. *Though ye offer me burnt-offerings, and your meat-offerings, I will not accept* them, &c.] The daily burnt-offerings, morning and night, and others which were wholly the Lord's; and the *minchah*, or bread-offering, which went along with them; in which they thought to do God service, and to merit his favour; but instead of that they were unacceptable to him, being neither offered up in a proper place, if in a right manner according to the law of Moses; however, not in the faith of the great sacrifice, Christ; nor attended with repentance towards God: *neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts:* even though their peace-offerings were of the best of the herd. Aben Ezra says the creature here meant is the same which in the Ishmaelitish or Arabic language is called جاموس *giamus*, a creature bigger than an ox, and like one, which is called a buffle or buffalo. And so Ben Melech says it means one of the kinds of the larger cattle; for not a lamb, a ram, or a sheep, is meant, as the word is sometimes rendered by the Septuagint, but a creature like an ox; not larger, or the wild ox, as the above Hebrew writers, but smaller; with which agrees the description Bellonius[a] gives of the Syrian *bubalus* or *buffalo*, which he calls a small ox, full bodied, little, smooth, sleek, fat, and well made; and is no doubt the same the Arabs call *almari*, from its smoothness.

Ver. 23. *Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs,* &c.] The ten tribes, very probably, imitated the temple-music at Jerusalem, both vocal and instrumental, and had their songs and hymns of praise, which they sung to certain tunes; but the music of these is called a *noise*, being very disagreeable to the Lord, as coming from such carnal and wicked persons; and therefore he desires it might cease, be took away, and he be no more troubled with it: *for I will not hear the melody of thy viols:* which may be put for all instruments of music used by them, as violins, harps, psalteries, &c. the sound of which, how melodious soever, the Lord would turn a deaf ear unto, and not regard.

Ver. 24. *But let judgments run down as waters,* &c.] Or *roll*[b]; in abundance, with great rapidity, bearing down all before them, which nothing can resist; signifying the plenty of justice done in the land, the full and free exercise of it, without any stoppage or intermission: *and righteousness as a mighty stream:* the same thing expressed in different words; though some think that not the execution of judgment and justice by men is here exhorted to, but the vindictive justice of God is threatened; which like a mighty torrent of water should come down, overwhelm, bear away, and destroy all before it, even all the transgressors in Israel.

Ver. 25. *Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings,* &c.] No; they were not offered to God, but to devils, to the golden calf, and to the host of heaven; so their fathers did *in the wilderness forty years;* where sacrifices were omitted during that time, a round number for a broken one, it being about thirty-eight years; and these their children were imitators of them, and offered sacrifice to idols too, and therefore deserved punishment as they: even ye, *O house of Israel?* the ten tribes, who are here particularly charged and threatened; see Acts vii. 42. and the note there.

Ver. 26. *But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch,* &c.] The god of the Ammonites; see the note on ch. i. 13. and on Jer. vii. 31. called theirs, because they also worshipped it, and caused their seed to pass through the fire to it; and which was carried by them in a shrine, or portable tent or chapel. Or it may be rendered, *but ye have borne Siccuth your king*[c]; and so Siccuth may be taken for the name of an idol, as it is by Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, to whom they gave the title of king, as another idol went by the name of the queen of heaven; perhaps by one was meant the sun, and by the other the moon. *And Chiun, your images:* Moloch or Siccuth was one, and Chiun another image, or rather the same; and this the same with Chevan, which in the Arabic and Persic languages is the name of Saturn, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi say; and is so rendered by Montanus here; and who in the Egyptian tongue was called Revan, or Rephan, or Remphan; as by the Septuagint here, and in Acts vii. 43. *The*

[a] Apud Bochart. Hierozoic. p. 1. l. 2. c. 28. col. 282.

[b] ויגל volvatur, Munster, Mercerus, Liveleus, Drusius; volvat se, Montanus, Vatablus; revolvet se, Piscator; provolvatur, Cocceius.

[c] סכות מלככם Siccuth regem vestrum, Munster, Montanus, Vatablus, Calvin, Mercerus.

star of your god, which ye made to yourselves; or the star *your god*[s]; meaning the same with Chiun or Saturn; perhaps the same with the star that fell from the air or sky, mentioned by Sanchoniatho[t]; which Astarte, the wife of Chronus or Saturn, is said to take and consecrate in Tyre; this they made for themselves, and worshipped as a deity. The Targum is, "ye have "borne the tabernacle of your priests, Chiun your "image, the star your God, which ye have made to "yourselves." Various are the senses put upon the word Chiun. Some read it Cavan, and take it to signify a *cake;* in which sense the word is used in Jer. vii. 18. and xliv. 19. and render it, *the cake of your images*[u]; and supposing that it had the image of their gods impressed upon it. Calmet interprets it *the pedestal of your images*[v]; and indeed the word has the signification of a *basis*, and is so rendered by some[w]; and is applicable to Moloch their king, a king being the basis and foundation of the kingdom and people; and to the sun, intended by that deity, which is the basis of the celestial bodies, and of all things on earth. Some take Moloch and Chiun to be distinct deities, the one to be the sun, the other the moon; but they seem rather to be the same, and both to be the Egyptian ox, and the calf of the Israelites in the wilderness, the image of which was carried in portable tents or tabernacles, in chests or shrines; such as the Succoth-benoth, or tabernacles of Venus, 2 Kings xvii. 30. and those of Diana's, Acts xix. 24. the first of these portable temples we read of, is one drawn by oxen in Phœnicia, mentioned by Sanchoniatho[x]; not that the Israelites carried such a tent or tabernacle during their travels through the wilderness, whatever they might do the few days they worshipped the calf; but this is to be understood of their posterity in after-times, in the times of Amos; and also when Salmaneser carried them captive beyond Damascus, as follows. It may be further observed, for the confirmation and illustration of what has been said concerning Chiun, that the Egyptian Anubis, which Plutarch[y] says is the same with Saturn, is called by him Kyon, which seems to be no other than this word Chiun: and whereas Stephen calls it Rephan, this is not a corruption of the word, reading Rephan or Revan for Chevan; nor has he respect to Rimmon, the god of the Syrians, but it is the Egyptian name for Saturn; which the Septuagint interpreters might choose to make use of, they interpreting for the king of Egypt: and Diodorus Siculus[z] makes mention of an Egyptian king called Remphis, whom Braunius[a] takes to be this very Chiun; see Acts vii. 43. but Repha, or Rephan, was the same with Chronus, or Saturn, from whence came the Rephaim[b], who dwelt in Ashtaroth-carnaim, a town of Ham or Chronus; see Gen. xiv. 5. Some[c], who take Siccuth for an idol, render it in the future, *ye shall carry, &c.* and take it to be a prediction of Amos, that the Israelites should, with great reproach and ignominy, be obliged by the Assyrians, as they were led captive, to carry on their shoulders the idols they had worshipped, and in vain had trusted in, as used to be done in triumphs; see the note on ch. i. 15.

Ver. 27. *Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus,* &c.] The chief city of Syria; and which, as Aben Ezra says, lay to the east of the land of Israel, and was a very strong and fortified place: and Syria being in alliance with Israel, the Israelites might think of fleeing thither for refuge, in the time of their distress; but they are here told that they should be taken captive, and be carried to places far more remote than that: Stephen says, *beyond Babylon;* as they were, for they were carried into Media, to Halah and Habor by the river of Gozan, to the cities of the Medes; their way to which lay through Syria and Babylon; see Acts vii. 43. and the note there: *saith the Lord, whose name is the God of hosts;* and therefore is able to do what he threatens; and it might be depended upon it would be certainly done, as it is clear, beyond all contradiction, it has been done; see 2 Kings xvii. 6.

CHAP. VI.

THIS chapter seems to be directed both to the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the ten tribes of Israel, under the names of Zion and Samaria, and to the principal men in both: who are reproved and threatened for their carnal security and self-confidence, being in no fear of the evil day, though they had no reason for it no more than other people, ver. 1, 2, 3. are charged with wantonness, luxury, intemperance, and want of sympathy with those in distress, ver. 4, 5, 6. therefore are threatened to be carried captive first, and their city to be delivered up; which, for the certainty of it, is not only said, but swore to, ver. 7, 8. and a great mortality in every house, and the destruction of all houses, both great and small, ver. 9, 10, 11. and since a reformation of them seemed impracticable, and not to be expected, but they gloried in their wealth, and boasted of their strength, therefore they should be afflicted by a foreign nation raised against them, which affliction should be general, from one end of the country to the other, ver. 12, 13, 14.

Ver. 1. *Woe to them* that are *at ease in Zion,* &c.] Or *secure*[d] there; which was a strong hold, the city of David, the seat of the kings of Judah; where their

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s כוכב אלהיכם sidus deum vestrum, Liveless; sidus, vel stellam deos vestros, Calvin.

t Apud Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. l. 1. p. 38.

u כיון צלמיכם placentam imaginum vestrarum, Pagninus, Tigurine version, Vatablus.

v Dictionary, in the word *Chiun.*

w Basim imaginum vestrarum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; statumen, Burkius.

x Apud Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. l. 1. p. 35.

y De Iside.

z Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 56.

a Selecta Sacra, l. 4. c. 9. sect. 132. p. 455.

b Vid. Cumberland's Sanchoniatho, p. 120.

c Vid. Scholia Quinquarborei in loc. So Jarchi and Lyra.

d השאננים secure sedentibus, Munster; securos, Mercerus, Castalio, Burkius.

court was kept, and the princes and chief men resided, and thought themselves safe, the place being well fortified with walls, towers, and bulwarks: or *at ease*: that is, in easy, prosperous, comfortable circumstances of life; as Job was before his troubles, and others he mentions, Job xvi. 12. and xii. 5. and xxi. 23. though to be in such a state is not criminal, but a blessing of providential goodness, for which men should be thankful, and make use of it aright: but *woe to the rich in Zion*[d], as the Vulgate Latin version renders it, when they have nothing else but temporal riches; this is all their portion, and the whole of their consolation, Luke vi. 24. when they trust in these uncertain riches, and consume them on their lusts, as described in the following verses; are unconcerned at the troubles of others, and give them no relief, but despise them, Job xii. 5. Psal. cxxiii. 4. and even are thoughtless about their own future state, and put away the evil day far from them, Luke xii. 19, 20. and such are they who like Moab are at ease from their youth, as to their spiritual state, Jer. xlviii. 11. never had any true sight of sin, or sense of danger; never complain of a body of sin, or are concerned about sins of omission or commission; nor troubled with the temptations of Satan, and have no fears and doubts about their happiness; and such there be who yet are in Zion, or in a church-state, which Zion often signifies; and being there, trust in it, and in the privileges of it, and so are secure, and at ease; such are the foolish virgins and hypocrites, who place their confidence in a profession of religion, in being church-members, and in their submission to external ordinances, and so cry Peace, peace, to themselves, when destruction is at hand: and are moreover at ease, and wholly unconcerned about the affairs of Zion, both temporal and spiritual, and especially the latter; they don't trouble themselves about the doctrines they hear, whether truth or error; and about the success of them, whether they are made useful for conversion and edification; and about the continuance of a Gospel ministry, and a succession in it; and about the discipline of the church of God, and the walk of professors; or about what trials and afflictions are like to come upon the churches: or about the judgments of God in the earth; and therefore such carnal secure persons are either called upon to awake out of their sleep, and come off of their beds of ease, and shake off their vain confidence and carnal security; for the word may be rendered *ho*[e], as a note of calling, as in Isa. lv. 1. Zech. ii. 6. or a threatening of calamity is denounced upon them, that the day of the Lord should come upon them as a thief in the night, or as a snare upon them that dwell on earth, and they be surprised with the midnight cry, and with the terrors of devouring flames, as the foolish virgins and hypocrites in Zion will, Matt. xxv. 6, 7. Isa. xxxiii. 14. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it, *who despise Zion*, or *neglect* her; and the word is sometimes used of insolent persons, and to express their insolence; see Isa. xxxvii. 29. and so may be understood, not of the Jews in Jerusalem, but of the ten tribes, as the following clause: who despised Zion, the city of solemnities, the temple, and the worship of God there, and set up the calves at Dan and Beth-el, and worshipped them; and therefore a woe is denounced upon them. *And trust in the mountain of Samaria*; in the city of Samaria, built on a mountain, a strong fortified city, where they thought themselves safe; the royal city of the kings of Israel, the head of Ephraim, and the metropolis of the ten tribes, who here are intended: though the words may be rendered, and the sense given a little different from this, as woe to the *confident* ones that are in Samaria[f]; not that put their trust in Samaria, but dwell there; but, however, are confident in their own strength, wealth, and might. The Targum is, "that trust in "the fortress of Samaria;" see 1 Kings xvi. 24. *Which are named the chief of the nations*; the persons at ease in Zion, and trusted in Samaria, were the principal men of both nations, Judah and Israel; or these cities of Zion and Samaria were the chief of the said nations; Zion, which was near Jerusalem, and includes it, was the metropolis of Judea; as Samaria was the head city of Ephraim, or the ten tribes. The Targum is, "that "put the name of their children, as the name of the "children of the nations;" as the Jews did in after-times, giving their children the names of Alexander, Antipater, &c. *To whom the house of Israel came*; meaning not to the seven nations, of which the two named cities were chief, into which Israel entered, and took possession of, and dwelt in; for Samaria never belonged to them, but was built by Omri king of Israel, long after the entrance of the Israelites into the land of Canaan, 1 Kings xvi. 24. but the cities of Zion and Samaria, into which the whole house of Israel came, or had recourse unto, at certain times: the ten tribes came to Samaria, where their kings resided, the court was kept, and the seats of judgment were; and the two tribes came to Zion, to Jerusalem, to the temple there, to worship the Lord.

Ver. 2. *Pass ye unto Calneh, and see, &c.*] What is become of that city, which was in the land of Shinar, an ancient city, as early as the days of Nimrod, and built by him, and was with others the beginning of his kingdom, Gen. x. 10. it belonged to Babylon, and is by Jarchi here interpreted by it, being put for Babel, as he supposes. According to Jerom[g], it is the same city, sometimes called Seleucia, in his days Ctesiphon; very probably it had been lately taken by the king of Assyria, and therefore made mention of; see Isa. x. 9. where it is called Calno. *And from thence go ye to Hamath the great*; the same with Antiochia, as Jarchi and Jerom; called the great, to distinguish it from Hamath the less, sometimes called Epiphania; or from Hamath-zobah, near Tadmor, or Palmyra, in the wilderness, 2 Chron. viii. 3, 4. though it might be so called with respect to its own grandeur and magnificence; as Sidon is called *Sidon the great*, though there was no other, Josh. xi. 8. for it was a royal city; we read of Toi, king of Hamath, in the times of David, 2 Sam. viii. 9, 10. It is placed by Josephus[h] on the

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[d] Opulentis, Tigurine version.
[e] הוי heus, Piscator, Tarnovius, Burkius.
[f] הבטחים בהר שמרון confidentibus qui habitant in monte Samariæ, Livelens; securis qui habitant in monte Samariæ, Drusius.
[g] Quæst. in Gen. fol. 66. M.
[h] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 10. sect. 1.

north of the land of Canaan; and so it appears to be, and to be between Damascus and the Mediterranean sea, from Ezek. xlvii. 15, 16, 17. and xlviii. 1. Abu'lfeda[i], a learned prince, who reigned in Hamath, and should know its situation, places it on the Orontes, between Hems and Apamea, that river surrounding it on the east and north. The learned Vitringa[k] thinks that neither Antiochia nor Epiphania are meant, but the city Emissa; which Ammianus Marcellinus[l] makes mention of along with Damascus, as a famous city in Syria, equal to Tyre, Sidon, and Berytus: and of the same opinion was Theodoret[m] among the ancients, and so Calmet[n] of late. And so Hamath and Damascus are mentioned together as recovered by Jeroboam, 2 Kings xiv. 28. very probably the kingdom of Hamath became subject to the kings of Damascus; see Jer. xlix. 23. but, be it what place it will, it is very likely it had been lately spoiled by the king of Assyria; see Isa. xxxvii. 13. *Then go down to Gath of the Philistines;* one of their five principalities, and a chief one, so called to distinguish it from other Gaths, as Gath-hepher, Gath-rimmon. It stood about five or six miles south of Jamnia, about fourteen south of Joppa, and thirty-two west of Jerusalem. A village of this name is shewn, as Jerom[o] says, five miles from Eleutheropolis, as you go to Diospolis or Lydda, and is taken to be the same place. It is famous for being the birthplace of Goliah; and is called in 2 Sam. viii. 1, compared with 1 Chron. xviii. 1, Metheg-ammah, or the bridle of Ammah, or Metheg and her mother; that is, Gath and her daughters. Reland[p] thinks Gath is the city Cadytis of Herodotus[q], who says it is a city of the Syrians, called Palestines or Philistines, and speaks of the mountains of it; and this city was not far from the mountainous country of Judea: now this city had been taken by Hazael, king of Syria, and its wall was broke down by Uzziah, king of Judah, 2 Kings xii. 17. 2 Chron. xvi. 6. Be they *better than these kingdoms? or their border greater than your border?* that is, do Calneh, Hamath, and Gath, excel in dignity and grandeur, in wealth and strength, the kingdoms of Israel and Judah? or are they of a larger circumference, and exceed them in length and breadth? no, they did not; and therefore the more ungrateful were Israel and Judah to sin against the Lord as they had done, who had given them such rich and large kingdoms, and therefore might expect to be taken and spoiled as well as they: though some think there is a change of number and persons in the text, and that the sense is, are you better than these kingdoms, or your border greater than theirs? and, if not, you may expect to fare as they; see a like expression in Nah. iii. 8.

Ver. 3. *Ye that put far away the evil day,* &c.] The day of Israel's captivity, threatened by the Lord, and prophesied of by the prophets; by this prophet, and by Hoshea and others: this they endeavoured to put out of their minds and thoughts, and supposed it to be at a great distance, yea, hoped it never would be; and like the Jews, with respect to their captivity, and the destruction of their city, said it was not near, but prolonged, yea, would never come to pass, Ezek. xi. 3. and xii. 22. so some men put far from them the day of death; which though to a good man is better than the day of his birth, yet to a wicked man is an evil and terrible day; he don't care to hear or speak, or think of it, lest it should damp his carnal joys and pleasures: as also the day of Christ's coming to judgment; which though a good man hastens to in his affections, desires, and prayers, wicked men set at the greatest distance, yea, scoff at it, as believing it never will be, and to shew that they are in no pain or uneasiness about it; see Isa. lvi. 12. Matt. xxiv. 48. 2 Pet. iii. 4—12. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, *who are separated to the evil day;* appointed to it; fore-ordained to this condemnation; destined to ruin and destruction for their sins; see Prov. xvi. 4. *And cause the seat of violence to come near;* boldly venture upon the commission of acts of injustice, rapine, and violence, on a presumption the evil day threatened will never come; or place themselves on the bench in courts of judicature, and there, without any manner of concern, commit the greatest acts of unrighteousness, as believing they shall never be called to an account for them by God or man.

Ver. 4. *That lie upon beds of ivory,* &c.] That were made of it, or inlaid with it, or covered with it, as the Targum; nor was it improbable that these were made wholly of ivory, for such beds we read of: Timæus says[r], the Agrigentines had beds entirely made of ivory; and Horace[s] also speaks of such beds: and if any credit can be given to the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem on Gen. l. 1, Joseph made his father Jacob to lie on a bed of ivory. Indeed, the Latin interpreters of these Targums render it a cedar bed; but Buxtorf[t] conjectures that ivory is meant by the word used; and so Bochart[u] translates it; on these they lay either for sleep and rest, or to eat their meals. *And stretch themselves upon their couches;* for the same purposes, living in great splendour, and indulging themselves in ease and sloth; as it was the custom of the eastern countries, and is of the Arabs now; that they make little or no use of chairs, but either sitting cross-legged, or lying at length, have couches to lie on at their meals; and when they indulge to ease, they cover or spread their floors with carpets, which for the most part are of the richest materials. Along the sides of the wall or floor, a range of narrow beds or mattresses is often placed upon these carpets; and, for their further ease and convenience, several velvet or damask bolsters are placed upon these, or mattresses[w], to lean upon, and take their ease; see Ezek. xiii. 18. and thus, and in some such-like manner, did the principal men of the people of Israel indulge themselves. Some render it, *abound with superfluities:* the Septuagint and

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[i] See the Universal History, vol. 2. p. 316.
[k] Comment. in Jesaiam, c. 10. 9.
[l] Lib. 23.
[m] Comment. in Jer. iv. 15. and xlix. 23.
[n] Dictionary, in the word *Hamath*.
[o] De locis Hebr. fol. 92. A.
[p] Palestina Illustrata, tom. 2. l. 3. p. 669.
[q] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 159. & Thalia, sive l. 3. c. 5.

[r] Apud Ælian. Var. Hist. l. 12. c. 29.
[s] ——— Rubro ubi cocco
Tincta super lectos canderet vestis eburnos.
Horat. Serm. l. 2. Satyr. 6. v. 102.
[t] Lexic. Talmud. col. 2475.
[u] Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 24. col. 258.
[w] See Shaw's Travels, p. 209. Ed. 2.

Vulgate Latin versions, *are lascivious;* and the Arabic version, *burn in lust;* and so some of the Jewish writers interpret it of their committing adulteries, and all uncleanness, on their beds and couches. *And eat the lambs out of the flock;* pick the best and fattest of them for their use: so the Targum, "eat the fat of "the sheep:" *and the calves out of the midst of the stall;* where they are put, and kept to be fattened; from thence they took what they liked best, and perhaps not out of their own flocks and stalls, but out of others', and with which they pampered themselves to excess.

Ver. 5. *That chant to the sound of the viol,* &c.] Or *psaltery;* an instrument of twelve cords, and that gave twelve sounds, as Josephus [x] says, being stricken with the fingers; and to these sounds these men chanted or quivered, made like sounds with their voice, which they raised higher or lower, according to the sound of the instrument: they *particularized,* as the word signifies [y]; or observed the divisions and distinctions of notes and sounds, by the modulation of their voice: and *invent to themselves instruments of music, like David;* not content with old ones, such as were used in former times, they invented new instruments and new tunes, and new songs to sing to them; as David made songs and invented several instruments of music to sing them upon and to, in religious worship, and for the praise and glory of God; so these men invented new ones to indulge their carnal mirth and jollity, in which they thought themselves to be justified by the example of David.

Ver. 6. *That drink wine in bowls,* &c.] Not in small cups or glasses, but in large bowls, that they might drink freely, even to drunkenness; hence we read of the drunkards of Ephraim, or the ten tribes, Isa. xxviii. 1. or *drink in bowls of wine;* which is much to the same sense. The Targum is, "that drink wine "in silver phials." *And anoint themselves with the chief ointments;* which Jarchi says was balsam, and the best is that which grew about Jericho; this they did not for moderate refreshment, but for pleasure, and to indulge themselves in luxury: *but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph;* or the *breach* of him [z]; that was made upon him by some enemy or another: either what had been already made; Kimchi thinks it respects the carrying captive of some before the reign of Jeroboam; or it may regard the distress Pul king of Assyria gave to Israel, in the times of Menahem; or the carrying captive the inhabitants of several places by Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, in the times of Pekah, 2 Kings xv. 19, 29. or else, as Jarchi thinks, this refers to some breach and affliction to come, which these men were unconcerned about; even what they heard from the mouth of the prophets should come to them; that the kingdom of the house of Israel should cease, and be utterly took away, Hos. i. 4, 6. which was fulfilled by Salmaneser, who carried Israel captive into the cities of the Medes, 2 Kings xvii. 6. but the prophecy of this did not trouble them, or make them *sick* at heart, as the word [a] signifies, nor any present affliction that might attend them; they did not weep with them that weep, were men of hard hearts, that had no sympathy with their brethren and fellow-creatures. It is thought that here is some allusion to the carriage of Joseph's brethren to him, when in the pit, and sold by them into Egypt; or to the chief butler's forgetfulness of him, when advanced, and amidst his cups.

Ver. 7. *Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive,* &c.] That is, these men, who were the first and chief in the nation, who would not believe the day of Israel's captivity would ever come; or, however, had very distant apprehensions of it; but indulged and gratified their several senses of tasting, hearing, smelling, in a carnal way, and had no sympathy with and compassion upon their afflicted brethren; these should be the first the enemy should lay hold upon, and carry captive; as we find the royal family, the princes and nobles, the courtiers and chief tradesmen, were the first that were carried captive of the Jews, in Jeconiah's captivity, 2 Kings xxiv. 12, 14. *And the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed;* that stretched themselves upon couches, ver. 4. they shall have no more banquets or feasting-bouts to attend to, by stretching themselves out, and lying upon couches at their ease; these shall be taken from them; and be glad of bread and water in an enemy's country, without a couch to recline upon. Some understand this of a funeral-banquet, as in Jer. xvi. 5. and so the sense is, that when they die, they shall not have that honour done to their memory, as to have a funeral-feast provided for those that attend their burial, as was customary. Kimchi interprets it, *the mourning* of such *shall draw nigh* [b]; and according to his father, Joseph Kimchi, the word in the Arabic language signifies to lift up the voice, either in mourning or joy; and so may signify, that as all feasts, and the joy that attends them, should be removed, which is the sense of the Targum, instead of that, mourning should take place; or they should be deprived of the common ceremony at death, of mourning men and women.

Ver. 8. *The Lord God hath sworn by himself,* &c.] Because he could swear by no greater, Heb. vi. 13. which shews the importance and certainty of the thing sworn to, and is as follows: *saith the Lord, the God of hosts, I abhor the excellency of Jacob;* or, *the pride of Jacob* [c]; of Israel, of the ten tribes, remarkable for their pride; hence called the crown of pride, Isa. xxviii. 3. it may include all that was glorious, valuable, and excellent among them, of which they were proud; their kingdom, riches, wealth, and strength, their fortified cities and towns: if Judah is comprehended in this, it may regard the temple, which was their ex-

[x] Antiqu. l. 7. c. 12. sect. 3.

[y] הפורטים particularizantes, Montanus; qui particularia habent cantica, Pagninus; qui particulatim canunt, Vatablus, Mercerus; variis modulationibus concinunt, Tigurine version.

[z] על שבר super contritione, Pagninus, Montanus; propter confractionem Josephi, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; ob fractionem Josephi, Cocceius.

[a] לא נחלו neque afficiuntur ægritudine, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.

[b] סר ad veniet, Munster; appropinquabit, Mercerus; veniet, Calvin. So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 84. 2.

[c] את גאון superbiam, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; fastum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius.

cellency, and in which they gloried. So the Targum paraphrases it, "the house of the sanctuary of the "house of Jacob;" and in like manner Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, interpret it. *And hate his palaces*; the palaces of the king and nobles, and great men, which should fall into the enemy's hand, and be plundered and destroyed; which is meant by the Lord's abhorrence and hatred of them, this being an evidence of it. *Therefore will I deliver up the city, with all that is therein*; or, *with its fulness*[d]; with all its inhabitants and riches; according to Jarchi, the city of Jerusalem is meant; though rather the city of Samaria, unless both are intended, city for cities; since the chief men both of Israel and Judah seem to be addressed, ver. 1.

Ver. 9. *And it shall come to pass*, &c.] When the city is delivered up and taken: *if there remain*; who are not carried captive, or destroyed by the sword: *ten men in one house*; that is, many, a certain number for an uncertain: that *they shall die*; either with famine, or by the pestilence, though they have escaped the other calamities; so general shall the destruction be, by one means or another.

Ver. 10. *And a man's uncle shall take him up*, &c.] That is, his father's brother, as Kimchi; or his near kinsman, as the Targum; to whom the right of inheritance belongs, and also the care of his funeral; he shall take up the dead man himself, in order to inter him, there being none to employ in such service; the mortality being so universal, either through the pestilence raging everywhere, or through the earthquake, men being killed by the fall of houses upon them; which Aben Ezra takes to be the case here; see ver. 11. and ch. i. 1. and iii. 13. *And he that burneth him*; which may be read disjunctively, *or he that burneth him*[e]; his mother's brother, according to Judah ben Karis in Aben Ezra; for which there seems to be no foundation. The Targum renders it in connexion with the preceding clause, "shall take him up from the "burning;" and so Jarchi interprets of a man's being found, and taken up in a house, burnt by the enemy at the taking of the city: but it is best to understand it of one whose business it was to burn the dead; which, though not commonly used among the Jews, sometimes was, 1 Sam. xxxi. 12. and so should be at this time, partly because of the infection, and to stop the contagion; and chiefly because a single man could not well carry whole bodies to the grave, to bury them; and therefore first burnt their flesh, and then buried their bones, as follows: *to bring out the bones out of the house*; in order to bury them: *and shall say unto him that is by the sides of the house*; or, *in the corner of it*[f], as the Targum; either the uncle shall say to the burner, that is searching the house for the dead; or the uncle and burner, being one and the same person, shall say to the only surviving one of the ten, that is got into some corner of the house through fear or melancholy, under such a sad calamity, is there *yet any with thee?* any dead corpse to be brought out and burned and buried? *and he shall say, no*: there are no more: or there is *an end* of them all[g]; the last has been brought out: or, as the Targum, "they are "perished;" they are all dead, and carried out: *then shall he say, hold thy tongue*; lest the neighbours should hear, and be discouraged at the number of the dead in one house; or say not one word against the providence of God, nor murmur and repine at his hand, since it is just and righteous: *for we may not make mention of the name of the Lord*; being forbid by their superiors; or it is not right to do it by way of complaint, since our sins have deserved such judgments to come upon us; or it will be to no purpose to make mention of the name of the Lord, and pray unto him to turn away his hand, since destruction is determined, the decree is gone forth. The Targum is, "he shall say, remove "(that is, the dead), since while they lived they did "not pray in the name of the Lord." And so the Syriac and Arabic versions make this to be the reason of the mortality, *because they remembered not the name of the Lord*; or, *called not upon it*.

Ver. 11. *For, behold, the Lord commandeth*, &c.] Hath determined and ordered the judgment before, and what follows: Kimchi paraphrases it, hath decreed the earthquake, as in ch. iii. 15. of which he understands the following: *and he will smite the great house with breaches*; or *droppings*[h]; so that the rain shall drop through: *and the little house with clefts*; so that it shall fall to ruin; that is, he shall smite the houses both of great and small, of the princes, and of the common people, either with an earthquake, so that they shall part asunder and fall; or, being left without inhabitants, shall of course become desolate, there being none to repair their breaches. Some understand, by the *great house*, the ten tribes of Israel; and, by the *little house*, the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; to which sense the Targum seems to incline, "he will smite the great kingdom with a mighty "stroke, and the little kingdom with a weak stroke."

Ver. 12. *Shall horses run upon the rocks? or will one plough there with oxen?* &c.] Will any man be so weak and foolish, to propose or attempt a race for horses upon rocks, where they and their riders would be in danger of breaking their necks? or would any man act so unwise a part, as to take a yoke of oxen to plough with them upon a rock, where no impression can be made? as vain and fruitless a thing it would be to attempt to bring such persons under a conviction of their sins, and to repentance for them, and reformation from them, who are given up to a judicial hardness of heart, like that of a rock, as are the persons described in the next clause; or as such methods with horses and oxen would be contrary to all the rules of reason and prudence, so as contrary a part do such persons act whose characters are next given, and there is no probability of bringing them to a better sense and practice of things. *For ye have turned judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock*: that which would be beneficial to a nation, than which nothing is more so, as the exercise of justice and judgment, into that which is bitter

[d] ומלאה & plenitudinem ejus, Mercerus, Piscator, Cocceius.
[e] ומסרפו aut vespillo, Tigurine version; aut ustor ejus, Junius & Tremellius.
[f] בירכתי in penitissimis domus, Cocceius.
[g] אפס finis est, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Calvin, Drusius.
[h] רסיסים guttis, seu stillis, Piscator; ψακάς, quæ est minuta & rorans pluvia, Drusius.

and pernicious to it, as injustice and oppression; see ch. v. 7.

Ver. 13. *Ye which rejoice in a thing of nought, &c.*] In their wealth and riches, which are things that are not, because of the uncertainty of them; and, in comparison of true riches, have no solidity and substance in them, Prov. xxiii. 5. or in any of the things of this world, the lusts of it, the honours of it, human wisdom or strength; all are things of nought, of no worth, give no satisfaction, and are of no continuance, and not to be gloried in, Jer. ix. 23. or in their idols, for an idol is nothing in the world, 1 Cor. viii. 4. and yet they rejoiced in them, Acts vii. 41. or in their own works of righteousness, as men of a pharisaical temper do, as these people were; these indeed are something, when done in obedience to the will of God, and according to that, and from right principles, and in the exercise of faith and love, and with a view to the glory of God, and as they are evidences of true grace, and profitable to men, and tend to glorify God, and serve the interest of religion; but they are things of nought, and not to be rejoiced and gloried in, in the business of justification before God, and in the affair of salvation: the same may be said of a mere outward profession of religion depended on, and all external rites and ceremonies, or submission to outward ordinances, whether legal or evangelical. The phrase may be rendered, *in that which is no word*[i]; is not the word of God, nor according to it; indeed every thing short of Christ and his righteousness, and salvation by him, are things of nought, and not to be rejoiced in, Phil. iii. 3, 4, 5, and iv. 4. *Which say, have we not taken to us horns by our own strength?* by which we have pushed our enemies, got victory over them, and obtained power, dominion, and authority; all which horns are an emblem of. So Sanchoniatho[k] says, Astarte put upon her own head a bull's head, as an ensign of royalty, or a mark of sovereignty; by which, as Bishop Cumberland[l] thinks, is plainly meant the bull's horns, since it is certain that a horn, in the eastern languages, is an emblem or expression noting royal power, as in 1 Sam. ii. 10. and in other places; see Dan. vii. 24. thus the kings of Egypt wore horns, as Diodorus relates; and perhaps for the same reason the Egyptians adorned Isis with horns[m]. And all this they ascribed not to God, but to themselves. The Targum interprets *horns* by riches; but it rather signifies victory[n], and power and government, which they took to themselves, and imputed to their own strength, valour, and courage: very probably here is an allusion to their ensigns, banners, shields, or helmets, on which horns might be figured or engraven, being the arms of Ephraim, the son of Joseph, the chief of the ten tribes, who are here spoken of. Ephraim is often put for the ten tribes, or the kingdom of Israel; and Joseph, whose son he was, *his glory* was *like the firstling of a bullock*, and *his horns* are said to be like the horns of *unicorns*: *with them*, it is promised, *he shall push the people together, to the ends of the earth, and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh*, Deut. xxxiii. 17. and it may be, as the lion seems to be the ensign of the tribe of Judah, to which he is by Jacob compared; so the ox or the unicorn might be the ensign of the tribe of Ephraim: and so the ancient Jews, as Aben Ezra on Numb. ii. 2. observes, say, that the form of a man was on the standard of Reuben; and the form of a lion on the standard of Judah; and the form of an ox on the standard of Ephraim, *&c.*; and others[o] of them say that the standard of Joseph was died very black, and was figured for the two princes of Ephraim and Manasseh; upon the standard of Ephraim was figured an ox, because *the firstling of a bullock*; and on the standard of Manasseh was figured an unicorn, because *his horns are like the horns of unicorns*. Now the Israelites, or those of the ten tribes, at the head of which Ephraim was, set up their banners, not in the name of the Lord, but in their own strength; and attributed their conquests and dominions to their own conduct and courage, the horns of their own strength, and not to God[p]. And this also is the language of such persons, who ascribe regeneration and conversion, faith, repentance, the cleansing of a man's heart, and the reformation of his life, yea, his whole salvation, to the power and strength of his free will, when man has no strength at all to effect any of these things; these are all vain boasts, and very disagreeable and offensive to the Lord; and for such-like things persons stand here reproved by him, and threatened with woes; for *woe* must be here supplied from ver. 1.

Ver. 14. *But, behold, I will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel, saith the Lord, the God of hosts, &c.*] The Assyrian nation, under its king, Salmaneser; who invaded Israel, came up to Samaria, and after a three-years' siege took it, and carried Israel captive into foreign lands, 2 Kings xvii. 5, 6: *and they shall afflict you*; by battles, sieges, forages, plunders, and burning of cities and towns, and putting the inhabitants to the sword: *from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of the wilderness*; from Hamath the less, said by Josephus[q] and Jerom[r] to be called Epiphania, in their times, from Antiochus Epiphanes; it was at the entrance on the land of Israel, and at the northern border of it; so that *the river of the wilderness*, whatever is meant by it, lay to the south; by which it appears that this affliction and distress would be very general, from one end of it to the other. Some, by this river, understand the river of Egypt, at the entrance of Egypt in the wilderness of Ethan; Sihor or Nile; which, Jarchi says, lay south-west of Israel, as Hamath lay north-west of it. And a late traveller[s] observes, that the south and south-west border of the tribe of Judah, containing within it the whole or the greatest part of what was called the *way of the spies*, Numb. xxi. 1, and afterwards Idumea, extended itself from the Elenitic gulf of the Red sea, along by that of Hiero-

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[i] ללא דבר in non verbo, Montanus.
[k] Apud Euseb. Evangel. Prepar. l. 2. p. 38.
[l] Sanchoniatho's History, p. 35.
[m] Vid. Pignorii Mensa Isiaca, p. 30.
[n] Vicimus, & domitem pedibus calcamus amorem, Venerunt capiti cornua sera meo. Ovid. Amor. l. 2. Eleg. 10.
[o] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 178. 3.
[p] Vid. Lydium de Re Militari, l. 4. c. 4. p. 164.
[q] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 2.
[r] Comment. in Isa. x. fol. 20. G. & in Zech. ix. fol. 116. L. De locis Heb. fol. 88. E. & Quæst. in Gen. fol. 67. B.
[s] Dr. Shaw's Travels, p. 367, 368. Ed. 2.

opolis, quite to the Nile westward; the Nile consequently, in this view and situation, either with regard to the barrenness of the Philistines, or to the position of it with respect to the land of promise, or to the river Euphrates, may, with propriety enough, be called *the river of the wilderness*, Amos vi. 14. as this district, which lies beyond the eastern or Asiatic banks of the Nile, from the parallel of Memphis, even to Pelusium, (the land of Goshen only excepted,) is all of it dry, barren, and inhospitable; or if the situation be more regarded, it may be called, as it is rendered by the Septuagint, the western torrent or river. Though some [t] take this to be the river Bosor or Bezor, that parts the tribes of Judah and Simeon, and discharges itself into the Mediterranean between Gaza, or rather Majuma, and Anthedon. Though Kimchi takes this river to be the sea of the plain, the same with the Salt or Dead sea, Deut. iii. 17. which may seem likely, since Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, under whom Amos prophesied, had restored the coast of Israel, from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, 2 Kings xiv. 25. with which they were elevated, and of which they boasted; but now they should have affliction and distress in the same places, and which should extend as far.

CHAP. VII.

In this and the two following chapters are the visions of Amos, in number five; three of which are contained in this chapter, and with which it begins. The first is of the grashoppers or locusts eating up the after-grass of the land, which are stopped at the intercession of the prophet, ver. 1, 2, 3. the second is of fire the Lord called for to contend by, whose devouring flames are made to cease by the same interposition, ver. 4, 5, 6. and the other is of the plumb-line, signifying the utter destruction of the people of Israel, according to the righteous judgment of God, ver. 7, 8, 9. upon the delivery of which prophecies and visions, the priest of Beth-el forms a charge against the prophet to the king; and advises Amos to flee into Judea, and prophesy there, and not at Beth-el, being willing to be rid of him at any rate, ver. 10, 11, 12, 13. next follows the prophet's vindication of himself, shewing his divine call to the prophetic office, and his mission and express order he had from the Lord to prophesy unto Israel, ver. 14, 15. and concludes with a denunciation of divine judgments on the priest's family, and upon the whole land of Israel, ver. 16, 17.

Ver. 1. *Thus hath the Lord shewed unto me*, &c.] What follows in this and the two chapters, before the prophet delivered what he heard from the Lord; now what he saw, the same thing, the ruin of the ten tribes, is here expressed as before, but in a different form; before in prophecy, here in vision, the more to affect and work upon the hearts of the people: *and, behold, he formed grashoppers; or locusts* [u], as the word is rendered, Isa. xxxiii. 4. and so the Septuagint here, and other versions. Kimchi interprets it, and, behold, a collection or swarm of locusts; and the Targum, a creation of them. Though Aben Ezra takes the word to be a verb, and not a noun, and the sense to be, agreeably to our version, he shewed me the blessed God, who was forming locusts; it appeared to Amos, in the vision of prophecy, as if the Lord was making locusts, large and great ones, and many of them; not that this was really done, only visionally, and was an emblem of the Assyrian army, prepared and ready to devour the land of Israel: see Joel i. 4. Nah. iii. 17. And this was *in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and, lo, it was the latter growth after the king's mowings*; when the first grass was mowed down, and the first crop gathered in, for the use of the king's cattle; as the after-grass was just springing up, and promised a second crop, these grashoppers or locusts were forming, which threatened the destruction of it. This must be towards the close of the summer, and when autumn was coming on, at which time naturalists tell us that locusts breed. So Aristotle [w] says, they bring forth at the going out of the summer; and of one sort of them he says, their eggs perish in the waters of autumn, or when it is a wet autumn; but in a dry autumn there is a large increase of them: and so Pliny says [x], they breed in the autumn-season, and lie under the earth all the winter, and appear in the spring: and Columella observes [y], that locusts are most suitably and commodiously fed with grass in autumn; which is called *cordum*, or the latter grass, that comes or springs late in the year; such as this now was. The Mahometans speak [z] much of God being the Maker of locusts; they say he made them of the clay which was left at the formation of Adam; and represent him saying, I am God, nor is there any Lord of locusts besides me, who feed them, and send them for food to the people, or as a punishment to them, as I please: they call them the army of the most high God, and will not suffer any to kill them; see the note on Rev. ix. 3. whether all this is founded on this passage of Scripture, I cannot say; however, there is no reason from thence to make the locusts so peculiarly the workmanship of God as they do, since this was only in a visionary way; though it may be observed, that it is with great propriety, agreeable to the nature of these creatures, that God is represented as forming them at such a season of the year. Some, by *the king's mowings*, understand the carrying captive the ten tribes by Salmaneser king of Assyria; so Ribera; after which things were in a flourishing state, or at least began to be so, in the two tribes under Hezekiah, when they were threatened with ruin by the army of Sennacherib, from which there was a deliverance: but as this vision, and the rest, only respect the ten tribes of Israel, *the king's mowings* of the first crop may signify

[t] See the Universal History, vol. 2. p. 427, 428.

[u] יצר ecce fictor locustarum, Pagninus, Montanus; so Munster, Vatablus, Cocceius, Burkius.

[w] Hist. Animal. l. 5. c. 28, 29.

[x] Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 29.

[y] Apud Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 4. c. 6. col. 484.

[z] Vid. Bochart. ib. col. 486.

the distresses of the people of Israel, in the times of Jehoahaz king of Israel, by Hazael and Benhadad kings of Syria, 2 Kings xiii. 3, 4, 22. when things revived again, like the shooting up of the after-grass, in the reign of Joash, and especially of Jeroboam his son, who restored the coast of Israel, the Lord having compassion on them, 2 Kings xiii. 23. and xiv. 25, 26. but after his death things grew worse; his son reigned but six months, and he that slew him but one; and in the reign of Menahem, that succeeded him, an invasion of the land was made by Pul king of Assyria, 2 Kings xv. 19. which is generally thought to be intended here. Or else, as others, it may refer to the troubles in the interregnum, after the death of Jeroboam, to his son's mounting the throne, the space of eleven years, when, and afterwards, Israel was in a declining state.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass*, that *when they had made an end of eating the grass of the land*, &c.] That is, the grashoppers or locusts; when in the vision it seemed to the prophet that almost all the grass of the land was eaten up, and they were going to seize upon the corn, and other fruits of the earth: this signifies not Sennacherib's invasion of the land of Judea, but Pul's invasion of the land of Israel, whose army seemed like these locusts; and spreading themselves over the land, threatened it with desolation, as these locusts seemed to have wholly consumed all the grass of the land; then the prophet said what follows: *then I said, O Lord God, forgive, I beseech thee:* the sins of the people, as the Targum, which were the cause of these locusts coming, or of the Assyrian army invading the land; and the prophet prays that God would avert this judgment, signified in this vision, or remove it, which is often in Scripture meant by the forgiveness of sin, Exod. xxxii. 31, 32. Numb. xiv. 19. 1 Kings viii. 33, 34, 36, 37, 39. this is the business of the prophets and ministers of the Lord, to intercede for a people when ruin is near; and happy is that people, when they have such to stand up in the breach for them. The argument the prophet uses is, *by whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small;* or *little*[a]; like the first shooting up of the grass, after it has been mown: or, as Noldius[b] renders it, *how otherwise should Jacob stand?* and so Kimchi, how should there be a standing for him? that is, unless God forgives his sin, and turns away his wrath, how shall he stand up under the weight of his sins, which must lie upon him, unless forgiven? and how shall he bear the wrath and indignation of God for them? and so if any sinner is not forgiven, how shall he stand before God to serve and worship him now? or at his tribunal with confidence hereafter? or sustain his wrath and displeasure to all eternity? see Psal. cxxx. 3, 4: or, *who of or in Jacob shall stand*[c]? not one will be left; all must be cut off, if God forgive not; for all are sinners, there are none without sin: or, *who shall stand for Jacob*[d]? or intercede for him? it will be to no purpose, if God is inexorable: so the Targum, "who will stand and ask *pardon* for "their sins?" or, *who will raise up Jacob*[e]? from that low condition in which he is, or likely to be in, if God forgive not, and does not avert the judgment threatened, to a high and glorious state of prosperity and happiness; for, if all are cut off, there will be none left to be instruments of such a work: *for he is small*; few in number, and greatly weakened by one calamity or another; and, if this should take place, would be fewer and weaker still. So the church of Christ, which is often signified by Jacob, is sometimes in a very low estate; the number of converts few; has but a little strength to bear afflictions, perform duty, and withstand enemies; it is a day of small things with it, with respect to light and knowledge, and the exercise of grace, especially faith; when some like the prophet are concerned for it, by whom it shall arise; the God of Jacob can cause it to arise, and can raise up instruments for such service, and make his ministers, and the ministry of the word and ordinances, means of increasing the number, stature, spiritual light, knowledge, grace, and strength of his people.

Ver. 3. *The Lord repented for this*, &c.] He heard the prayer of the prophet, and at his intercession averted the threatened judgment; thus the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much, Jam. v. 16. this is spoken after the manner of men; as men, when they repent of a thing, desist from it, so the Lord desisted from going on with this judgment; he did not change his mind, but changed the dispensations of his providence according to his mind and will: *it shall not be, saith the Lord:* these grashoppers or locusts, the Assyrian army, shall not at this time destroy the land of Israel: Pul king of Assyria took a sum of money of the king of Israel, and so turned back, and stayed not in the land, 2 Kings xv. 19, 20.

Ver. 4. *Thus hath the Lord shewed unto me*, &c.] Another vision after this manner: *and, behold, the Lord God called to contend by fire;* gave out that he would have a controversy with his people Israel, and proclaimed the time when he would try the cause with them, and that by fire: or he called his family, as Jarchi; that is, his angels, as Kimchi, to cause fire to descend upon Israel, as upon Sodom and Gomorrah; so other Rabbins Kimchi mentions: or, as he interprets it, the scorching heat of the sun, like fire that restrained the rain, dried up the plants, and lessened the waters of the river, and so brought on a general drought, and in consequence famine: or rather a foreign army, involving them in war, burning their cities and towns; see ch. i. 4, 7, 10, 12, 14: *and it devoured the great deep:* it seemed as if it did; as the fire from heaven, in Elijah's time, licked up the water in the trench, 1 Kings xviii. 38. so this, coming at God's command, seemed to dry up the whole ocean: by which may be meant the multitude of people, nations, and kingdoms, subdued by the Assyrians; see Rev. xvii. 15: *and did eat up a part;* a part of a field, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra; of the king's field, ver. 1. as Kimchi; shewing, as he observes, that the reigning king was a bad king, and that this was for his sin:

[a] קטן parvulus, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; parvus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.

[b] מי יקום יעקב quomodo (alias) surgeret Jacob? Concord. Ebr. Part. p. 602. No. 1979; quomodo consistet? Livelens; quomodo surgat Jacob? Drusius.

[c] Quis staret, Jahacobo? Junius & Tremellius; quis remanent Jacobo? Piscator.

[d] Quis stabit pro Jacobo? Mercerus.

[e] Quis suscitabit Jahacob? V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus.

or rather a part of the land of Israel: and so refers, as is generally thought, to Tiglath-pileser's invasion of the land, who carried captive a part of it, 2 Kings xv. 29.

Ver. 5. *Then said I, O Lord God, cease, I beseech thee, &c.*] From destroying the land; suffer not this calamity to proceed any further; using the same argument as before: *by whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small:* see the note on ver 2.

Ver. 6. *The Lord repented for this, &c.*] He heard the prophet's prayer, and desisted from going on with the threatened destruction: *this also shall not be, saith the Lord God;* the whole land shall not be destroyed, only a part of it carried captive.

Ver. 7. *Thus he shewed me, &c.*] A third vision, which was in the following manner: *and, behold, the Lord stood upon a wall* made *by a plumb-line, with a plumb-line in his hand;* this *wall* was the people of Israel, who were built up as a wall, firm and strong; and so stood against their enemies, whilst supported by the Lord, and he stood by them. The Septuagint version is, *an adamantine wall.* In their constitution, both civil and ecclesiastic, they were formed according to the good and righteous laws of God, which may be signified by the plumb-line; and so the Targum renders it, *the wall of judgment.* And now the Lord appears standing upon this wall, to trample it down, and not to support it; and with a plumb-line in his hand, to examine and try whether this wall was as it was first erected; whether it did not bulge out, and vary from its former structure, and was not according to the line and rule of his divine word, which was a rule of righteousness.

Ver. 8. *And the Lord said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? &c.*] This question was put to him, the rather, since he was silent, and did not upon this vision, as the former, make any supplication to the Lord; as also, because this vision portended something of moment and importance, which he would have the prophet attend to: *and I said, a plumb-line;* the same word as before, and is differently rendered, as already observed. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, a *plasterer's* or *mason's trowel;* with which they lay their plaster and mortar on in building: the Septuagint, an *adamant:* and which, by Pliny [f], is called *anachites;* a word in sound near to this here used: the Targum renders it, *judgment:* but Jarchi and Aben Ezra observe, that in the Arabic tongue it signifies lead or tin, as it does [g]: and so a line with lead at the end of it. *Then said the Lord, behold, I will set a plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel:* take an exact account of their actions, and see how they agree or disagree with the rule of the word; and in the most strict and righteous manner deal with them for their sins and transgressions, *lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet,* Isa. xxviii. 17. *I will not again pass by them any more:* wink at their sins, and overlook their transgressions, by not correcting and punishing for them; or will not pardon them, but inflict punishment on them. So the Targum, "behold, I will exercise judgment in "the midst of my people Israel, and I will not add "any more to pardon them." Though some understand it of God's making such an utter end of them, that he should no more *pass through them* [h], to destroy them, having done it at once, and thoroughly.

Ver. 9. *And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate, &c.*] Such as the ten tribes of Israel, who descended from Isaac, built at Beer-sheba, in imitation of Isaac, and pleading his example; who worshipped there, though not idols, as they, but the true God; and in commemoration of his being bound upon an altar on Mount Moriah: but these, as the Septuagint version renders it, were *high places of laughter:* ridiculous in the eyes of the Lord, despised by him, and so should be made desolate: *and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste:* the temples built for the calves at Dan and Beth-el, and other places: *and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword:* or, as the Targum, "I will raise up against the house of Jeroboam those "that slay with the sword;" this was fulfilled by Shallum, who conspired against Zachariah the son of Jeroboam, and slew him, and reigned in his stead, which put an end to the family of Jeroboam, 2 Kings xv. 10.

Ver. 10. *Then Amaziah the priest of Beth-el, &c.*] The Targum calls him the prince or president of Beth-el; and the word used signifies both a prince and a priest; and very probably this man had the care of the civil as well as religious matters in Beth-el. Aben Ezra styles him the priest of Baal; he was one that succeeded the priests that Jeroboam the son of Nebat placed here, to offer sacrifices to the calf he set up in this place, 1 Kings xii. 32. who hearing the above three visions of Amos delivered, and fearing that he would alienate the people from the idolatrous worship he was at the head of, and frighten them from an attendance on it, which would lessen his esteem with the people, and also his worldly gain and profit; and observing that Amos did not make any intercession for the averting of the judgment threatened in the last vision, as in the other two, and which particularly concerned the king's family: he *sent to Jeroboam king of Israel;* either letters or messengers, or both; who, it seems, was not at this time at Beth-el, but at some other place; perhaps Samaria, which was not a great way from hence: *saying, Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the land of Israel:* he speaks of Amos as if he was well known to the king, and perhaps he might be, having long prophesied in the land of Israel, and near the court; and represents him as a seditious person, not as affecting the crown and kingdom himself, but as stirring up a spirit of rebellion among the people; taking off their affections from their prince, and them from their allegiance to him, by representing him as a wicked person that would in a little time be cut off; and this he did not privately, and in a corner, but publicly, in the midst of the land, and before all the people of Israel; and this was no new and unusual thing to represent good men, and especially ministers of the word, as enemies to the civil government, when none are

[f] Nat. Hist. l. 37. c. 4.

[g] آنك plumbum, sive nigrum, sive album puriusque, Camoos; plumbum & stannum, Ibn Maruph apud Golium, col. 176. Avicenna apud Castel. col. 151. Vid. Hottinger. Smegma Oriental. l. 1. c. 7. p. 129.

[h] לא אוסיף עוד עבור לו non adjiciam ultra pertransire eum, Montanus; non ultra per eum transibit, some in Mercerus.

truer friends to it, or more quiet under it: *the land is not able to bear all his words:* either to withstand the power of them; they'll have such an influence upon the people, if timely care is not taken, as to cause them both to reject the established religion and worship at Dan and Beth-el, and to rise up in arms against the civil government, and dethrone him the king; such terrible things he says to the people, as will frighten them, and put them upon taking such measures as these: or else the prophet's words were so intolerable, that his good subjects, the inhabitants of the land, could not bear them; and if he did not give orders himself to take away his life, they would rise up against him, and dispatch him themselves.

Ver. 11. *For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword*, &c.] Which was not saying truth; for Amos said not that Jeroboam should die by the sword, but that God would raise up the sword against his house or family; nor did Jeroboam die by the sword, but his son Zachariah did: *and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land;* this was true; Amos did say this, and he afterwards confirms it. This is the amount of the charge brought against the prophet, which has some truth and some falsehood mixed together; and by which method the priest hoped to gain his point, and get the prophet either banished or put to death.

Ver. 12. *Also Amaziah said unto Amos*, &c.] Either at the same time; or, it may be, after he had waited for the king's answer, and received none; or what did not come up to his expectations and wishes. We have no account of any answer the king returned; who either gave no heed to the representations of the priest, or had a better opinion of the prophet, and did not credit the things imputed to him; which the priest observing, took another way to get rid of the prophet, and that by flattery: *O thou seer:* that seest visions, and foretels things to come. This title, which of right belonged to him, and is given to the true prophets of God sometimes, is here given to Amos, either seriously or ironically: *go, flee thee away into the land of Judah:* to which he belonged, and where the temple stood, and the true worship of God was performed; and where the king, princes, and people, were on his side of the question; and where his prophecies would be received, and he caressed for them, being against the ten tribes, with whom they were at variance, and where also he would be safe: for he suggests, that, in giving this advice, he consulted his good and safety; for, if he stayed here long, King Jeroboam would certainly take away his life; and therefore he advised him to flee with all haste to his own country: *and there eat bread, and prophesy there:* he took him for a mercenary man like himself, and that he prophesied for bread; which he intimates he would never be able to get in the land of Israel, but in all probability might in the land of Judea.

Ver. 13. *But prophesy not again any more at Beth-el*, &c.] He might prophesy any where, if he did not there, for what the priest cared, that so his honour and interest were not hurt. The reasons he gave were, *for it is the king's chapel:* or *sanctuary*[i]; where a temple was built for the idol-calf, and where the king worshipped it, and attended all other religious service: *and it is the king's court;* or *the house of the kingdom*[k]; the seat of it, where the king had a royal palace, and sometimes resided here, and kept his court, as well as at Samaria; often coming hither to worship, it being nearer to him than Dan, where the other calf was placed; intimating hereby that the king would never suffer such a troublesome man as he to be so near him; and by prophesying to interrupt him, either in his religious or civil affairs; and therefore advises him by all means to depart, if he had any regard to his life or peace.

Ver. 14. *Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah*, &c.] With much freedom, boldness, and intrepidity, and yet with modesty and humility; not at all moved by his frowns or his flatteries: *I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son:* he was not a prophet originally, or from his youth, as Kimchi; he was not born and bred one; neither his father was a prophet, by whom he could get any instructions in the mystery of prophesying; nor was he a disciple of any of the prophets, or brought up in any of their schools, as some were; he was no prophet till the Lord called him immediately, at once, from his secular employment to this office; and therefore did not take it up to get a livelihood by. Jarchi and Aben Ezra interpret it, that he was not one of the false prophets that prophesied for hire, and took a reward: *but I was an herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit;* that is, originally: this was the employment he was brought up in from his youth, and was in it when he was called to be a prophet; he looked after cattle, both great and small; and at a certain time of the year used to gather sycamore fruit, which was a kind of figs; and by its name had the resemblance both of figs and mulberries. Some take it to be what were called Egyptian figs; these he gathered, either for the use of his masters, or for food for himself, or for the cattle, or both: or he was an *opener* of them, as the Septuagint; he cut them, and made incisions in them; for, as Pliny[l], Dioscorides[m], and Theophrastus[n] observe, this fruit must be cut or scratched, either with the nail, or with iron, or it will not ripen; but, four days after being scratched or cut, will become ripe. Mr. Norden[o], a late traveller in Egypt, has given us a very particular account of this tree and its fruit. "This sycamore (he says) is of the height of a beech, "and bears its fruit in a manner quite different from "other trees; it has them on the trunk itself, which "shoots out little sprigs in form of grape-stalks; at the "end of which grow the fruit close to one another, "almost like bunches of grapes. The tree is always "green, and bears fruit several times in the year, without observing any certain seasons: for I have seen "(says he) some sycamores that have given fruit two "months after others. The fruit has the figure and "smell of real figs, but is inferior to them in the taste, "having a disgustful sweetness. Its colour is a yellow,

[i] מקדש sanctuarium, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Mercerus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Coccelus.

[k] ובית ממלכה הוא & domus regni est, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Coccelus; domus regia, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[l] Nat. Hist. l. 13. c. 7.

[m] L. 1. c. 143.

[n] Hist. l. 4. c. 2.

[o] Travels in Egypt and Nubia, vol. 1. p. 79, 80.

"inclining to an ochre, shadowed by a flesh-colour. "In the inside it resembles the common figs, except-"ing that it has a blackish colouring with yellow spots. "This sort of tree is pretty common in Egypt; the "people for the greater part live upon its fruit, and think "themselves well regaled when they have a piece of "bread, a couple of sycamore figs, and a pitcher filled "with water from the Nile." This account in several things agrees with what Pliny [r] and Solinus [s] relate of this tree and its fruit; very likely there might be many of these trees in Judea; there seem to have been great numbers of them in Solomon's time, 1 Kings x. 27. and perhaps it was one of these that Zaccheus climbed, in order to see Christ, Luke xix. 4. for this sort of trees delight in vales and plains, such as were the plains of Jericho; and in the Talmud [t] we read of sycamore-trees in Jericho; and of the men of Jericho allowing the branches of them to be cut down for sacred uses. These also grew in lower Galilee, but not in upper Galilee; and that they were frequent in the land of Israel appears from the rules the Misnic doctors [u] give about the planting and cutting them down; and now in the opening of these trees, and making incisions in them, and in gathering the fruit of them, Amos might be concerned. Kimchi and Ben Melech say the word signifies to *mix*, and that his business was to mix these together with other fruit. Aben Ezra observes, that in the Arabic language it signifies to dry; and then his work was, after he had gathered them, to lay them a drying. Some render the word a *searcher* [w] of them; as if his employment was to look out for them, and seek them where they were to be got: however, be this as it will, the prophet suggests that he had been used to a low life, and to mean fare, with which he was contented, and did not take up this business of prophesying for bread, and could return to his former employment without any regret, to get a maintenance, if so was the will of God. The Targum gives it a different sense, "for I am a master of cattle, and have "sycamores in the fields;" and so Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, represent him as suggesting that he was rich, and had no need of bread to be given him, or to prophesy for that.

Ver. 15. *And the Lord took me as I followed the flock*, &c.] Or *from behind* it [x]; a description of a shepherd, such an one Amos was, and in this employ when the Lord called him, and took him to be a prophet; he did not seek after it, nor did he take this honour to himself; by which it appears that his mission was divine, and that he did not enter on this work with lucrative views: thus God took David in a like state of life, and made him king of Israel; and Elisha from the plough, and made him a prophet: and Christ took several of his disciples from being fishermen, and made them fishers of men, or ministers of the word; and so their call appeared more clear and manifest. *And the Lord said unto me*; in a vision or dream by night; or by an articulate voice he heard; or by an impulse upon his spirit, which comes from the spirit of God: *go, prophesy unto my people Israel*: for so they were by profession, and notwithstanding their apostacy; as yet they were not called *Lo-ammi*; to these the prophet was bid to go out of the land of Judea, where he was a herdsman, and prophesy in the name of the Lord to them; wherefore what he did was in obedience to the command of God, and he did but his duty; and what he in this and the preceding verse declares, is a sufficient vindication of himself, his character, and conduct; and having done this, he has something to say to the priest, as follows.

Ver. 16. *Now therefore hear thou the word of the Lord*, &c.] Which I have from him concerning thee, and which he has pronounced upon thee and thy family: *thou sayest, prophesy not against Israel*; when God has bid me prophesy: *and drop not thy word against the house of Isaac*; say nothing against it, though in ever so soft and gentle a manner: it designs the same thing as before, only in different words; and is a prohibition of the prophet to prophesy against the ten tribes that descended from Isaac, in the line of Jacob. So the Targum paraphrases it, "thou shalt not teach against "the house of Isaac;" or deliver out any prophecy or doctrine that is against them, or threatens them with any calamity. Jarchi says the phrase is expressive of prophecy; see Deut. xxxii. 2. Ezek. xxi. 2.

Ver. 17. *Therefore thus saith the Lord*, &c.] For withstanding the prophet of the Lord, and forbidding him to speak in his name against the idolatry of Israel, as well as for his own idolatry: *thy wife shall be an harlot in the city*; either of Beth-el or Samaria; either through force, being ravished by the soldiers upon taking and plundering the city; so Theodoret and others: or rather of choice; either, through poverty, to get bread, or through a vicious inclination, and that in a public manner: the meaning is, that she should be a common strumpet; which must be a great affliction to him, and a just punishment for his idolatry, or spiritual adultery; this must be before the siege and taking of Samaria, since by that time the priest's wife would be too old to be used as a harlot: *and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword*; either of Shallum, who smote Zachariah the son of Jeroboam with the sword, before the people, and very probably many of his friends with him, among whom this family was; or of Menahem, who slew Shallum, and destroyed many places that opened not to him, with their inhabitants, and ripped up the women with-child; or in the after-invasions by Pul, Tiglath-pileser, and Salmaneser, 2 Kings xv. 10, 14, 16, 19, 29. and xvii. 5, 6: *and thy land shall be divided by line*; either the whole land of Israel he lived in, or the land that was in the possession of this priest, and was his own property; this should be measured with a line, and be parted among foreigners, that should invade the land, and subdue it; a just punishment of the sins he had been guilty of, in getting large possessions in an ill manner: *and thou shalt die in a polluted land*; not in his own land, reckoned holy, but in a Heathen land,

[r] Nat. Hist. l. 13. c. 7.
[s] Polyhistor. c. 45.
[t] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 56. 1. & 57. 1. & Menachot, fol. 71. 1.
[u] Misn. Shevíith, c. 9. sect. 2. & Bava Bathra, c. 2. sect. 7.
[w] בולס disquirens, Montanus, Vatablus; perquirens, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; quærens, Cocceius, Burkius. So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 21. 2.
[x] מאחרי הצאן de post pecus, Montanus; de post gregem, Vatablus; a post gregem, Liveleus.

which was accounted defiled, because the inhabitants of it were uncircumcised and idolaters, and he was no better; perhaps the land of Assyria, whither he might with others be carried captive; or some other land he was forced to flee into: *and Israel shall surely go into captivity forth of his land*; as he had before prophesied, and here confirms it; and which was fulfilled in the times of Hoshea king of Israel, by Salmaneser king of Assyria, 2 Kings xvii. 6.

CHAP. VIII.

IN this chapter a fourth vision is delivered, the vision of a *basket of summer-fruit*; signifying the destruction of the ten tribes, for which they were ripe, and which would quickly come upon them, ver. 1, 2, 3. the rich are reproved for their oppression of the poor, their covetousness and earthly-mindedness, ver. 4, 5, 6. for which they are threatened with entire ruin, sudden calamities, and very mournful times, instead of light, joy, and gladness, ver. 7, 8, 9, 10. and particularly with a famine of hearing the word of God, ver. 11, 12. the consequence of which would be, a fainting of the young men and virgins for thirst, and the utter and irrecoverable ruin of all idolaters, ver. 13, 14.

Ver. 1. *Thus hath the Lord God shewed unto me*, &c.] Another vision, which is the fourth, and after the following manner: *and, behold, a basket of summer-fruit*; not of the first ripe fruit, but of such as were gathered at the close of the summer, when autumn began. So the Targum, " the last of the summer-fruit;" such as were fully ripe, and would not keep till winter; or, if kept, would rot; but must be eaten directly, as some sort of apples, grapes, &c.; denoting the people of Israel being ripe for destruction, and would be quickly devoured by their enemies; and that, as they had had a summer of prosperity, they would now have a sharp winter of adversity.

Ver. 2. *And he said, Amos, what seest thou?* &c.] To quicken his attention, who might disregard it as a common thing; and in order to lead him into the design of it, and shew him what it was an emblem of: *and I said, a basket of summer-fruit*; some render it *a hook*[w], such as they pull down branches with to gather the fruit; and the word so signifies in the Arabic language[x]; but the other is the more received sense of the word: *then said the Lord unto me*: by way of explanation of the vision: *the end is come upon my people Israel*: the end of the kingdom of Israel; of their commonwealth and church-state; of all their outward happiness and glory; their *summer* was *ended*, and they *not saved*, Jer. viii. 20. all their prosperity was over; and, as the Targum, their " final punishment was come," the last destruction threatened them[y]: *I will not again pass by them any more*: pass by their offences, and forgive their sins; or pass by their persons, without taking notice of them, so as to afflict and punish them for their iniquities: or, *pass through them any more*[z]; now making an utter end of them; see the note on ch. vii. 8.

Ver. 3. *And the songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord God*, &c.] Not the songs sung by the Levites in the temple of Jerusalem, for this prophecy respects the ten tribes only; but those in imitation of them, sung in the temple at Beth-el, and other idol-temples; or profane songs in the palaces of princes and nobles; that is, instead of these, there should be howlings for the calamities come upon them. So the Targum, " they shall howl, instead of a song, " in their houses then;" particularly because of the slain in them, as follows; see ch. v. 23: there shall be *many dead bodies in every place*: in all houses and palaces, in all towns and cities; and especially in Samaria, during the siege, and when taken, partly through the famine, and partly through the sword: *they shall cast them forth with silence*; they that have the care of burying the dead bodies shall either cast them out of the houses upon the bier or cart in which they are carried to the grave, or into the pit or grave without any funeral lamentation: or, *they shall cast them forth, and say, be silent*; that is, as Kimchi explains it, " one of them that casts them forth shall say to his " companion, be silent;" say not one word against God and his providence, since this is righteously come upon us; or say nothing of the number of the dead, lest the hearts of those that hear should become tender, and be discouraged, as Aben Ezra; or the enemy should be encouraged to go on with the siege.

Ver. 4. *Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy*, &c.] Like a man that pants after a draught of water when thirsty, and, when he has got it, greedily swallows it down at one gulp; so these rich men swallowed up the poor, their labours, gains, and profits, and persons too; got all into their own hands, and made them bondsmen and slaves to them; see ch. ii. 7. these are called upon to hear this dreadful calamity threatened, and to consider what then would become of them and their ill-got riches; and suggesting, that their oppression of the needy was one cause of this destruction of the land: *even to make the poor of the land to fail*; or *cease*[a]; to die for want of the necessaries of life, being obliged to such hard labour; so unmercifully used, their faces ground, and pinched with necessity; and so sadly paid for their work, that they could not live by it.

Ver. 5. *Saying, when will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn?* &c.] The first day of every month, on which it was forbid to sell any thing, or do any worldly business, being appointed and used for religious service; see 2 Kings iv. 23. and which these

[w] כלוב uncinus, V. L.

[x] كلب ferramentum incurvum, seu uncus ex quo de sella commeatum suspendit viator, Giggeius apud Golium, col. 2055.

[y] There is an elegant paronomasia in the words קיץ, summer, and קץ, the end.

[z] So Mercerus, Grotius.

[a] לשבות ad cessare faciendum, Mercerus; & facitis cessare, Munster, Drusius.

carnal earthly-minded men were weary of, and wanted to have over, that they might be selling their corn, and getting money, which they preferred to the worship of God. Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it of the month of harvest, when the poor found what to eat in the fields; when they gleaned there, and got a sufficiency of bread, and so had no need to buy corn; and hence these rich misers, that hoarded up the corn, are represented as wishing the harvest-month over, that they might sell their corn to the poor, having had, during that month, no demand for it; and so the Targum renders it the month of corn: or the month of intercalation, as Jarchi understands it; every three years a month was intercalated, to bring their feasts right to the season of the year; and that year was a month longer than the rest, and made provision dearer; and then the sense is, when will the year of intercalation come, that we may have a better price for our corn? but the first sense seems best. *And the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat;* in the shops or markets, for sale: or *open wheat*[a]; the granaries and treasures of it, to be seen and sold. Now the sabbath, or seventh day of the week, as no servile work was to be done on it, so no trade or commerce was to be carried on on that day; which made it a long and wearisome one to worldly men, who wished it over, that they might be about their worldly business. Kimchi and Ben Melech, by *sabbath*, understand a *week*, which these men put off the poor unto, when the price of corn would rise; and so from week to week refused to sell, and longed till the week came when it would be dearer. The Targum and Jarchi interpret it of the seventh-year sabbath, when there was no ploughing, nor sowing, nor reaping, and so no selling of corn, but the people lived upon what the earth brought forth of itself. But the first sense here is also best. *Making the ephah small;* a dry measure, that held three seahs, or about a bushel of ours, with which they measured their corn and their wheat; so that, besides the exorbitant price they required, they did not give due measure: *and the shekel great;* that is, the weight, or shekel-stone, with which they weighed the money the poor gave for their corn and wheat; this was made heavier than it should be, and so of course the money weighed against it was too light, and the poor were obliged to make it up with more; and thus they cheated them, both in their measure, and in their money: *and falsifying the balances by deceit?* contrary to the law in Deut. xxv. 13, 14, 15. Ezek. xlv. 10.

Ver. 6. *That we may buy the poor for silver,* &c.] Thus making them pay dear for their provisions, and using them in this fraudulent manner, by which they would not be able to support themselves and their families; they might purchase them and theirs for slaves, at so small a price as a piece of silver, or a single shekel, worth about half a crown; and this was their end and design in using them after this manner; see Lev. xxv. 39, 40: *and the needy for a pair of shoes:* see ch. ii. 6. *and sell the refuse of the wheat:* not only did they sell the poor corn and wheat at a dear rate, and in scanty measure, but the worst of it, and such as was not fit to make bread of, only to be given to the cattle; and, by reducing the poor to extreme poverty, they obliged them to take that of them at their own price. It may be rendered, *the fall of wheat*[c]; that which fell under the sieve, when the wheat was sifted, as Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, observe.

Ver. 7. *The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob,* &c.] Not by the ark, as R. Japhet; nor by the temple, as Kimchi; but by himself; which sense Kimchi also mentions, and Aben Ezra; the God of Jacob and his glory, the most excellent of all Jacob's enjoyments, and of whom he had reason to boast and glory; see ch. vi. 8: *surely I will never forget any of their works;* their wicked works, especially those now mentioned; God forgets when he forgives them, or suffers them to go unpunished; but though he had done so long, he would do so no more; on which they might depend, since he had not only said it, but swore to it.

Ver. 8. *Shall not the land tremble for this,* &c.] For this wickedness committed, in using the poor with so much inhumanity? may not an earthquake be expected? and which happened two years after Amos began to prophesy, ch. i. 1. or that the earth should gape and swallow up these men alive, guilty of such enormities? or shall not the inhabitants of the land tremble at such judgments, which the Lord hath sworn he will bring upon it? *and every one mourn that dwelleth therein?* at the hearing of them, and especially when they shall come upon them: as the calamity would be general, the mourning should be universal: *and it shall rise up wholly as a flood;* that is, the calamity threatened shall rise up at once like a flood of waters, like Noah's flood, and cover the whole land, and wash off and utterly destroy man and beast: *and it shall be cast out and drowned, as by the flood of Egypt;* or the river of Egypt, the Nile, which overflows at certain times, and casts up its waters and its mud, and drowns all the country; so that the whole country, during its continuance, looks like a sea: it overflows both its banks, both towards Lybia or Africa, and towards Arabia, and on each side about two days' journey, as Herodotus[d] relates; and this it does regularly every year, in the summer solstice, in the higher and middle Egypt, where it seldom rains, and its flood is necessary; but is not so large in the lower Egypt, where it more frequently rains, and the country needs it not. Strabo[e] says this flood remains more than forty days, and then it decreases by little and little, as it increased; and within sixty days the fields are seen and dried up; and the sooner that is, the sooner they plough and sow, and have the better harvests. Herodotus[f] says it continues a hundred days, and is near the same in returning; and he says, unless it rises to sixteen, or at least fifteen cubits, it will not overflow the country[g]: and, according to Pliny[h], the proper increase of the waters is sixteen

[a] ונפתחה בר & aperiemus frumentum, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; ut aperiamus frumenti *horrea*, Junius & Tremellius; ut aperiamus frumentum, Piscator, Coccejus; quo far aperiamus, Castalio.
[c] מפל בר labile frumenti, Montanus; deciduum frumenti, Coccejus; deciduum tritici, Drusius, Mercerus, Stockius, p. 690.

[d] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 19.
[e] Geograph. l. 17. p. 542.
[f] Ut supra.
[g] Ibid. c. 13.
[h] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 9.

cubits; if only they arise to twelve, it is a famine; if to thirteen, it is hunger; if to fourteen, it brings cheerfulness; if to fifteen, security; and if to sixteen, delights. But Strabo[i] relates, that the fertility by it is different at different times; before the times of Petronius, the greatest fertility was when the Nile arose to the fourteenth cubit; and when to the eighteenth, it was a famine; but when he was governor of that country, when it only reached the twelfth cubit, there was great fruitfulness; and when it came to the eighth (the eighteenth I suppose it should be) no famine was perceived. An Arabic writer[k] gives an account of the Nilometry, or measures of the Nile, from the year of Christ 622 to 1497; and he says, that, when the depth of the channel of the Nile is fourteen fathom, a harvest may be expected that will amount to one year's provision; but, if it increases to sixteen, the corn will be sufficient for two years; less than fourteen, a scarcity; and more than eighteen makes a famine. Upon the whole, it seems that sixteen cubits have been reckoned the standard that portends plenty, for many generations, to which no addition has appeared to have been made during the space of five hundred years. "This we learn (says Dr. Shaw)[l], not only "from the sixteen children that attend the statue "of the Nile, but from Pliny also; and likewise from "a medal of Hadrian in the great brass where we see "the figure of the Nile, with a boy upon it, pointing "to the number 16. Yet in the fourth century, "which it will be difficult to account for, fifteen "cubits only are recorded by the Emperor Julian[m] "as the height of the Nile's inundation; whereas, in "the middle of the sixth century, in the time of Justinian, Procopius[n] informs us that the rise of the "Nile exceeded eighteen cubits; in the seventh century, after Egypt was subdued by the Saracens, the "amount was sixteen or seventeen cubits; and at present, when the river rises to sixteen cubits, the "Egyptians make great rejoicings, and call out, *wafaa* "*Allah*, that is, *God has given them all they wanted*." The river begins to swell in May, yet no public notice is taken of it till the 28th or 29th of June; by which time it is usualy risen to the height of six or eight pikes (or cubits, [illegible], a Turkish measure of 26 inches); and then public criers proclaim it through the capital, and other cities, and continue in the same manner till it rises to sixteen pikes; then they cut down the dam of the great canal. If the water increases to the height of twenty-three or twenty-four pikes, it is judged most favourable; but, if it exceed that, it does a great deal of mischief, not only by overflowing houses, and drowning cattle, but also by engendering a great number of insects, which destroy the fruits of the earth[o]. And a late learned traveller[p] tells us, that "eighteen "pikes is an indifferent Nile (for so high it is risen "when they declare it but sixteen); twenty is middling; twenty-two is a good Nile, beyond which it "seldom rises; it is said, if it rises above twenty-four "pikes, it is looked on as an inundation, and is of bad "consequence." And to such a flood the allusion is here. Thus the land of Israel should be overwhelmed, and plunged into the utmost distress, and sink into utter ruin, by this judgment coming upon them; even the Assyrian army, like a flood, spreading themselves over all the land, and destroying it. So the Targum, "a king shall come up against it with his army, large "as the waters of a river, and shall cover it wholly, "and expel the inhabitants of it, and shall plunge as "the river of Egypt;" see Isa. viii. 7, 8.

Ver. 9. *And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, &c.*] When this deluge and desolation of the land shall be, now spoken of: *that I will cause the sun to go down at noon*; or to be so dark as if it was set; as at the time of our Lord's crucifixion, to which many of the ancient fathers refer this prophecy, though it has respect to other times and things. Jarchi interprets it of the kingdom of the house of David. It doubtless designs the kingdom of Israel, their whole policy, civil and ecclesiastic, and the destruction of it; particularly their king, princes, and nobles, that should be in great adversity, and that suddenly and unexpectedly; it being a fine sunshine morning with them, and they in great prosperity, and yet by noon their sun would be set, and they in the utmost darkness and distress. *And I will darken the earth in a clear day*: the land of Israel, the people of it, the common people, who should have their share in this calamity and affliction; and though it had been a clear day with them, and they promised themselves much and long felicity, yet on a sudden their light would be turned into darkness, and their joy into sadness and sorrow.

Ver. 10. *And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation, &c.*] Either their religious feasts, the feasts of pentecost, tabernacles, and passover; at which three feasts there were eclipses of the sun, a few years after this prophecy of Amos, as Bishop Usher[q] observes: the first was an eclipse of the sun, about ten digits, in the year of the Julian period 3923, June 24th, at the feast of pentecost; the next was almost twelve digits, about eleven years after, on November 8th, 3934, at the feast of the tabernacles; and the third was more than eleven digits in the following year, 3935, on May 5th, at the feast of the passover; which the prophecy may literally refer to, and which might occasion great sorrow and concern, and especially at what they might be thought to forebode; but particularly this was fulfilled when these feasts could not be observed any longer, nor the songs used at them sung any more; or else their feasts, and songs at them, in their own houses, in which they indulged themselves in mirth and jollity; but now, instead thereof, there would be mourning and lamentation for the loss of their friends, and being carried captive into a strange land. *And I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins*; of high and low, rich and poor; even those that used to be covered with silk and rich embroideries: sackcloth was a coarse cloth put on in times of mourning for the dead, or on account of public calamities: *and baldness upon every head*; the hair being either shaved off, or pulled off; both which were sometimes

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[i] Ut supra.
[k] Apud Calmet Dictionary, in the word *Nile*.
[l] Travels, p. 384. Ed. 2.
[m] Ecdicio, Ep. 50.
[n] De Rebus Gothicis, l. 2.
[o] Universal History, vol. 1. p. 413.
[p] Pocock's Description of the East, p. 200.
[q] Annales Vet. Test. ad A. M. 3213.

done, as a token of mourning: *and I will make it as the mourning of an only son*; as when parents mourn for an only son, which is generally carried to the greatest height, and continued longest, as well as is most sincere and passionate; the case being exceeding cutting and afflictive, as this is hereby represented to be: *and the end thereof as a bitter day*: a day of bitter calamity, and of bitter wailing and mourning, in the bitterness of their spirits; though the beginning of the day was bright and clear, a fine sunshine, yet the end of it dark and bitter, distressing and sorrowful, it being the end of the people of Israel, as in ver. 2.

Ver. 11. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, &c.*] Which Kimchi interprets of all the days of the second house or temple after Malachi, when prophecy ceased; but it rather has respect to the time of Salmaneser's carrying captive the ten tribes, when they had no more prophets nor prophecy among them, or any to tell how long their captivity should last, or when it would be better times with them, Psal. lxxiv. 9: *that I will send a famine in the land*; which, in a literal sense, is one of God's arrows he has in his quiver, and sends out when he pleases; or one of his sore judgments, which he sometimes orders to come upon a people for their sins: but here is meant, *not a famine of bread*, or through want of that, which is very dreadful; as was the famine of Samaria, when an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and a certain measure of dove's dung for five pieces of silver, 2 Kings vi. 25. and as were the famines of Jerusalem, when taken both by the Chaldeans and Romans, when delicate women boiled and ate their own children, Lam. iv. 8, 9, 10: *nor a thirst for water*; which is more distressing and tormenting than hunger; and to be slain with thirst is to be destroyed in the most afflictive manner, Hos. ii. 3. Lysimachus is said to part with his kingdom for a draught of water; and the torments of hell are set forth by a violent thirst for it, Luke xvi. 24. but something worse than either of these is here threatened: *but of hearing the words of the Lord*; the word of prophecy, and the preaching of the word, or explaining the Scriptures. Of this blessing the ten tribes were deprived at their captivity, and have been ever since; and the Jews, upon their rejection of Christ, have had the kingdom of God, the Gospel of the kingdom, the word and ordinances of God, taken from them, and remain so to this day: the seven churches of Asia have had their candlestick removed out of its place, and this famine continues in those parts to this time; and, by the symptoms upon us, we may justly fear it will be our case ere long. *The words of the Lord* are the Scriptures, which come from him, and are concerning him; the doctrines of grace contained in them, the wholesome words of Christ: *hearing* them signifies the preaching of them, Isa. liii. 1. Gal. iii. 2. by which hearing comes, and is a great blessing, and should be attended to, as being the means of conversion, regeneration, the knowledge of Christ, faith in him, and the joy of it. Now, to be deprived of hearing the Gospel is a spiritual famine, for that is food, bread, meat, milk, honey, yea, a feast: it is food that is savoury, wholesome, nourishing, satisfying, strengthening, and comforting; and when this is took away a famine ensues, as when a church-state is dissolved, ministers are ordered to preach no more in such a place, or are scattered by persecution, or removed by death, and none raised up in their stead; or when error prevails, to the suppressing of truth: all which is done, or suffered to be done, for indifference to the word of God, unfruitfulness under it, and contempt of it, and opposition to it; which is a dreadful case, when such a famine is; for the glory, riches, and light of a nation, are gone; bread for their souls is no more; and the means of conversion, knowledge, comfort, &c. cease; and people in course must die, for lack of these things; see Isa. iii. 1. Hos. iv. 6.

Ver. 12. *And they shall wander from sea to sea, &c.*] From the sea of Tiberias, or Galilee; or from the Dead sea, the lake Asphaltites; or from the Red sea, which was to the south of the land of Israel, to the great sea, which is to the west, as Aben Ezra: so the Targum, "from the sea to the west;" that is, to the Mediterranean sea: *and from the north even to the east*; proceeding from the south to the west, they shall turn from thence to the north, and so to the east, which describes the borders of the land of Canaan, Numb. xxxiv. 3—12. and the sense is, that *they shall go to and fro* throughout the whole land, and all over it, *to seek the word of the Lord*; not the written word, but the interpretation of it; doctrine from before the Lord, as the Targum; the preaching of the word, or ministers to instruct them in it; or the word of prophecy, and prophets to tell them when it would be better times, and how long their present distress should last: *and shall not find it*; there should be no ministry, no preaching, no prophesying; as never since among the ten tribes, so it has been the case of the Jews, the two tribes, upon the rejection of the Messiah; the Gospel was taken from them; no tidings could they hear of the Messiah, though they ran to and fro to find him, it being told them Lo, here, and Lo, there; see John vii. 34, 35, 36. Luke xvii. 22.

Ver. 13. *In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst.*] After the word, for want of that corn and wine, which make young men and maids cheerful, Zech. ix. 17. but, being destitute of them, should be covered with sorrow, overwhelmed with grief, and ready to sink and die away. These, according to some, design the congregation of Israel; who are like to beautiful virgins, as the Targum paraphrases it; and the principal men of it, the masters of the assemblies: or, as others, such who were trusting to their own righteousness, and seeking after that which they could never attain justification by, and did not hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ, and so perished.

Ver. 14. *They that swear by the sin of Samaria, &c.*] The calf at Beth-el, which was near Samaria, and which the Samaritans worshipped; and was set up by their kings, and the worship of it encouraged by their example, and which is called the calf of Samaria, Hos. viii. 5, 6. the making of it was the effect of sin, and the occasion of leading into it, and ought to have been had in detestation and abhorrence, as sin should; and yet by this the Israelites swore, as they had used to do by the living God; so setting up this idol on an equality with him: *and say, thy God, O Dan, liveth*: the other calf, which was set up in Dan; and to this

they gave the epithet of the living God, which only belonged to the God of Israel: *and the manner of Beer-sheba*: or, *the way of Beer-sheba*[r]; the long journey or pilgrimage of those at Beer-sheba; who chose to go to Dan, rather than Beth-el, to worship; imagining they shewed greater devotion and religion, by going from one extreme part of the land to the other, for the sake of it. Dan was on the northern border of the land of Judea, about four miles from Paneas, as you go to Tyre[s]; and Beer-sheba was on the southern border of the land, twenty miles from Hebron[t]; and the distance of these two places was about one hundred and sixty miles[u]. And by this religious peregrination men swore; or rather by the God of Beer-sheba, as the Septuagint render it; though the phrase may only intend the religion of Beer-sheba, the manner of worship there, it being a place where idolatry was practised; see ch. v. 5. The Targum is, "the fear "(*i. e.* the deity) which is in Dan liveth, and firm are "the laws of Beer-sheba." *Even they shall fall, and never rise up again*; that is, these idolatrous persons, that swear by the idols in the above places, shall fall into calamity, ruin, and destruction, by and for their sins, and never recover out of it; which was fulfilled in the captivity of the ten tribes, from whence they have never returned to this day.

CHAP. IX.

THIS chapter contains the fifth and last vision the prophet saw; which represents the certain desolation of the land, city, and temple, and the slaughter of all sorts of persons, high and low, none should escape it, ver. 1. be they where they would, they should be found out, whether in hell or heaven, on the tops of the highest mountains, or in the bottom of the sea, or in a foreign land, since the eyes of the Lord were upon them for evil, ver. 2, 3, 4. nor could they hope to escape, when they considered his greatness and his power, and what he could do, and had done: and how they had behaved towards him, even though they were the people he had brought out of Egypt, ver. 5, 6, 7. but though the sinful kingdom should be destroyed, yet not utterly, a remnant should be saved, ver. 8, 9, 10. and the chapter is concluded with gracious promises of raising up the tabernacle of David fallen down, and of the return of the people of Israel to their own land; and of their settlement and continuance in it, never more to depart from it, ver. 11—15.

Ver. 1. *And I saw the Lord standing upon the altar*, &c.] Either upon the altar of burnt-offerings in the temple of Jerusalem, whither he had removed from the cherubim; signifying his being about to depart, and that he was displeased, and would not be appeased by sacrifice: so the Targum, "said Amos the prophet, "I saw the glory of the Lord removing from the "cherub, and it dwelt upon the altar;" and the vision may refer to the destruction of the Jews, their city and temple, either by the Chaldeans, or by the Romans: or rather, since the prophecy in general, and this vision in particular, seems to respect the ten tribes only, it was upon the altar at Beth-el the Lord was seen standing, as offended at the sacrifices there offered, and to hinder them from sacrificing them, as well as to take vengeance on those that offered them, 1 Kings xiii. 1, 2: *and he said*: the Lord said, either to the prophet in vision, or to one of the angels, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi; or to the executioners of his vengeance, the enemies of the people of Israel: *smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake*: the upper lintel, on which pomegranates and flowers were carved, and therefore called *caphtor*, as Kimchi thinks: this was the lintel of the door, either of the temple at Jerusalem, as the Jewish writers generally suppose; or rather of the temple at Beth-el, see 1 Kings xii. 31. Amos vii. 10, 13. which was to be smitten with such force, that the posts thereof should shake; signifying the destruction of the whole building in a short time, and that none should be able to go in and out thereat: *and cut them in the head, all of them: and I will slay the last of them with the sword*; which shews that the lintel and door-posts are not to be taken literally, but figuratively, and that the smiting and cutting of them intend the destruction of men; by the *head*, the king, and the princes, and nobles, or the priests; and, by *the last of them*, the common people, the meaner sort, or those that were left of them, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi: *he that fleeth of them shall not flee away*: he that attempts to make his escape, and shall flee for his life, shall not get clear, but either be stopped, or pursued and taken: *and he that escapeth of them shall not be delivered*: he that does get out of the hands of those that destroy with the sword shall not be delivered from death, but shall die by famine or pestilence. The Targum is, "and he said, unless the "people of the house of Israel return to the law, the "candlestick shall be extinguished, King Josiah shall "be killed, and the house destroyed, and the courts "dissipated, and the vessels of the house of the sanc-"tuary shall go into captivity; and the rest of them "I will slay with the sword," *&c.* referring the whole to the Jews, and to the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem.

Ver. 2. *Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them*, &c.] That is, they that endeavour to make their escape from their enemies, though they seek for places of the greatest secrecy and privacy; not hell, the place of the damned; nor the grave, the repository of the dead; neither of which they chose to be in, but rather sought to escape them; but the deepest and darkest caverns, the utmost recesses of the earth, the very centre of it; which, could they get

[r] דרך באר־שבע via Beersebah, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Vatablus, Mercerus, Tigurine version; iter, peregrinatio, Drusius; Bersabanum iter, Castalio.

[s] Hieronymus de locis Heb. fol. 92. H.
[t] Ibid. fol. 89. F.
[u] Ib. Epist. ad Dardanum, fol. 22. I.

into, would not secure them from the power and providence of God, and from their enemies in pursuit of them, by his permission: *though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down:* the summit of the highest mountains, and get as near to heaven, and at as great a distance from men, as can be, and yet all in vain. The Targum is, "if they think to be hid as it "were in hell, from thence their enemies shall take "them by my word; and if they ascend the high "mountains, to the top of heaven, thence will I bring "them:" see Psal. cxxxix. 8.

Ver. 3. *And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel,* &c.] One of the highest mountains in the land of Israel; in the woods upon it, and caves in it: *I will search and take them out from thence:* by directing their enemies where to find them: so the Targum, "if they think to be hid in the tops of the "towers of castles, thither will I command the search-"ers, and they shall search them:" *and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea:* get into ships, going by sea to distant parts; or make their escape to isles upon the sea afar off, where they may think themselves safe: *thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them;* the dragon that is in the sea, Isa. xxvii. 1. the great whale in the sea, or the leviathan, so Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech; and is that kind of whale which is called the *Zugæna*, as Bochart[w] thinks; and which he, from various writers, describes as very monstrous, horrible, and terrible, having five rows of teeth, and very numerous; and which not only devours other large fishes, but men swimming it meets with; and, having such teeth, with great propriety may be said to bite. It appears from hence that there are sea-serpents, as well as land ones, to which the allusion is. Erick Pantoppidan, the present bishop of Bergen[x], speaks of a *see-ormen*, or sea-snake, in the northern seas, which he describes as very monstrous and very terrible to seafaring men, being of seven or eight folds, each fold a fathom distant; nay, of the length of a cable, a hundred fathom, or six hundred English feet; yea, of one as thick as a pipe of wine, with twenty-five folds. Some such terrible creature is here respected, though figuratively understood, and designs some crafty, powerful, and cruel enemy. The Targum paraphrases it, though hid "in the isles of the sea, thither will I command "the people strong like serpents, and they shall kill "them; see Psal. cxxxix. 9.

Ver. 4. *And though they go into captivity before their enemies,* &c.] Alluding to the manner in which captives are led, being put before their enemies, and so carried in triumph; see Lam. i. 5. though some think this refers to their going voluntarily into a foreign country, in order to escape danger, as Johanan the son of Kareah with the Jews went into Egypt, Jer. xliii. 5, 7. in whom Kimchi instances: *thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them:* or them that kill with the sword, as the Targum; so that though they thought by going into another country, or into an enemy's country of their own accord, to escape the sword of the enemy, or to curry favour with them, yet should not escape: *and I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good;* this is the true reason, why, let them be where they will, they cannot be safe, because the eyes of the omniscient God, which are everywhere, in heaven, earth, hell, and the sea, are set upon them, for their ruin and destruction; and there's no fleeing from his presence, or getting out of his sight, or escaping his hand. The Targum is, "my Word shall be against them."

Ver. 5. *And the Lord God of hosts is he that toucheth the land, and it shall melt,* &c.] Which is another reason why it is impossible to escape the hands of a sin-revenging God, because he is omnipotent as well as omniscient; he is the Lord of all the armies above and below; and if he but touch the land, any particular country, as the land of Israel, it shakes and trembles, and falls into a flow of water, or melts like wax; as when he toucheth the hills and mountains they smoke, being like fuel to fire; see Psal. civ. 32. and cxliv. 5: *and all that dwell therein shall mourn;* their houses destroyed, their substance consumed, and all that is near and dear to them swallowed up: *and it shall rise up wholly like a flood, and shall be drowned as by the flood of Egypt;* see the note on ch. viii. 8.

Ver. 6. It is *he that buildeth his stories in the heaven,* &c.] The three elements, according to Aben Ezra, fire, air, and water; the orbs, as Kimchi, one above another; a word near akin to this is rendered *his chambers*, which are the clouds, Psal. civ. 3, 13. perhaps the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, which are three stories high, may be meant; we read of the third heaven, 2 Cor. xii. 2. and particularly the throne of God is in the highest heaven; and the *ascents*[y] to it, as it may be rendered. The Targum is, "who causeth "to dwell in a high fortress the Shechinah of his "glory:" *and hath founded his troop in the earth;* this Kimchi interprets of the three above elements. So the words are translated in the Bishops' Bible in Queen Elizabeth's time, "he buildeth his spheres in the heaven, "and hath laid the foundation of his globe of elements "in the earth." Aben Ezra interprets it of animals; it may take in the whole compass of created beings on earth; so Jarchi explains it of the collection of his creatures: though he takes notice of another sense given, a collection of the righteous, which are the foundation of the earth, and for whose sake all things stand. Abarbinel interprets it of the whole of the tribe of Israel; and so the Targum paraphrases it of his congregation or church on earth: he beautifies his elect, which are *his bundle*[z], as it may be rendered; who are bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord their God, and are closely knit and united, as to God and Christ, so to one another; and perhaps is the best sense of the words[a]: *he that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth,*

[w] Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 5. c. 13. p. 747.

[x] Natural History of Norway, par. 2. p. 198, 199, 207.

[y] מעלותיו ascensiones suas, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Tigurine version; gradus suos, Vatablus, Drusius, Cocceius.

[z] אגדתו fasciculum suum, Montanus, Munster, Mercerus, Vatablus, Drusius, Burkius.

[a] Schultens in Observ. ad Genesin, p. 197, 198, observes, that أجد *agad*, with the Arabs, signifies primarily to *bind*, and is by them transferred to a building firmly bound, and compact together; and so may intend here in Amos the Lord's building, the church, which he hath founded in the earth; and so موجد with Golius and Castellus is a

the Lord is his name: either to drown it, as at the general deluge; or to water and refresh it, as he does by exhaling water from the sea, and then letting it down in plentiful showers upon the earth; see the note on ch. v. 8. now all these things are observed to shew the power of God, and that therefore there can be no hope of escaping out of his hands.

Ver. 7. *Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the Lord*, &c.] And therefore had no reason to think they should be delivered because they were the children of Israel, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; since they were no more to God than the children of the Ethiopians, having behaved like them; and were become as black as they through sin, and were idolaters like them; and so accustomed to sin, and hardened in it, that they could no more change their course and custom of sinning than the Ethiopian could change his skin, Jer. xiii. 23. The Ethiopians are represented by Diodorus Siculus[b] as very religious, that is, very idolatrous; and as the first that worshipped the gods, and offered sacrifice to them; hence they were very pleasing to them, and in high esteem with them; wherefore Homer[c] speaks of Jupiter, and the other gods, going to Ethiopia to an anniversary feast, and calls them the blameless Ethiopians; and so Lucian[d] speaks of the gods as gone abroad, perhaps to the other side of the ocean, to visit the honest Ethiopians; for they are often used to visit them, and, as he wittily observes, even sometimes without being invited. Jarchi suggests the sense to be, that they were as creatures upon the same foot, and of the same descent, with other nations; and paraphrases it thus, "from the sons of Noah ye came as the rest of "the nations." Kimchi takes the meaning to be this, "as the children of the Ethiopians are servants, so "should ye be unto me." The Targum is very foreign from the sense, "are ye not reckoned as beloved chil- "dren before me, O house of Israel?" the first sense is best: *have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt?* and therefore it was ungrateful in them to behave as they have done; nor can they have any dependence on this, or argue from hence that they shall be indulged with other favours, or be continued in their land, since the like has been done for other nations, as follows: *and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?* that is, have I not brought up the one from the one place, and the other from the other? the Philistines and Caphtorim are mentioned together as brethren, Gen. x. 14. and the Avim which dwelt in the land of Palestine in Hazerim unto Azzah were destroyed by the Caphtorim, who dwelt in their stead, Deut. ii. 23. from whom, it seems by this, the Philistines were delivered, who are called the remnant of the country of Caphtor, Jer. xlvii. 4. Aben Ezra understands it as if the Israelites were not only brought out of Egypt, but also from the Philistines, and from Caphtor: others take these two places, Caphtor and Kir, to be the original of the Philistines and Syrians, and not where they had been captives, but now delivered: so Japhet, "ye are the children of one father, "God, who brought you out of Egypt, and not as the "Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir, "who were mixed together;" and R. Joseph Kimchi thus, "from Caphtor came destroyers to the Philis- "tines, who destroyed them; and from Kir came "Tiglath-pileser, the destroyer, to the Syrians, who "carried them captive there." Of the captivity of the Philistines, and their deliverance from the Caphtorim, we nowhere read; the captivity of the Syrians in Kir Amos prophesied of, ch. i. 5. and if he speaks here of their deliverance from it, he must live at least to the times of Ahaz; for in his times it was they were carried captive thither, 2 Kings xvi. 9. Caphtor some take to be Cyprus, because it seems to be an island, Jer. xlvii. 4. but by it the Targum, Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, understand Cappadocia; and the Cappadocians used to be called by the Greeks and Persians Syrians, as Herodotus[e] and others, observe. Bochart[f] is of opinion that that part of Cappadocia is intended which is called Colchis; and the rather since he finds a city in that country called Side, which in the Greek tongue signifies a pomegranate, as Caphtor does in Hebrew; and he supposes the richness of the country led the Caphtorim thither, who, having stayed awhile, returned to Palestine, and there settled; which expedition he thinks is wrapped up in the fable of the Greek poets, concerning that of Typhon out of Egypt to Colchis, and from thence to Palestine: and indeed the Jewish Targumists[g] everywhere render Caphtorim by Cappadocians, and Caphtor by Cappadocia, or Caphutkia; but then by it they understand a place in Egypt, even Pelusium, now called Damiata; for the Jewish writers say[h] Caphutkia is Caphtor, in the Arabic language Damiata; so Benjamin of Tudela says[i], in two days I came to Damiata, this is Caphtor; and no doubt the Caphtorim were in Egypt originally, since they descended from Mizraim; but Calmet[k] will have it that the island of Crete is meant by Caphtor; and observes, that the Philistines were at first called strangers in Palestine, their proper name being Cherethites, or Cretians, as in Ezek. xxv. 16. Zeph. ii. 5. as the Septuagint render that name of theirs; and that the language, manners, arms, religion, and gods, of the Philistines and Cretians, are much the same; he finds a city in Crete called Aptera, which he thinks has a sensible relation to Caphtor; and that the city of Gaza in Palestine went by the name of Minoa, because of Minos king of Crete, who, coming into that country, called this ancient city by his own name. The Targum and Vulgate Latin version render Kir by Cyrene, by which must be meant, not Cyrene in Africa, but in Media; so Kir is mentioned along with Elam or Persia in Isa. xxii. 6. whither the people of Syria were carried cap-

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building firmly compacted together. אגדה is used for a bunch of hyssop, Exod xii. 27 and in the Misnic language for a handful or bundle of any thing; see Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud. rad. אגד.

[b] Bibliothec l. 3. p. 143, 144.

[c] Iliad. 1. l. 423.

[d] In Jupiter Tragœdus.

[e] Clio, sive l. 1 c. 72. Terpsichore, sive l. 5. c. 40. & Polymnia, sive l. 7. c. 72. Vid. Strabo. Geograph. l. 12. p. 374.

[f] Phaleg. l. 4. c. 32. col. 291, 292.

[g] Targum Onkelos, Jon. & Jerus. in Gen. x. 4. & Ben Uzziel in Jer. xlvii. 4. & in loc.

[h] Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Cetubot, c. 13. sect. 11.

[i] Itinerarium, p. 125.

[k] Dictionary, in the word *Caphtor*.

tive by Tiglath-pileser, as predicted in ch. i. 5. and, as the above writer observes[l], not certainly into the country of Cyrene near Egypt, where that prince was possessed of nothing; but to Iberia or Albania, where the river Kir or Cyrus runs, which discharges itself into the Caspian sea; and Josephus [m] says they were transported into Upper Media; and the above author thinks that the Prophet Amos, in this passage, probably intended to comprehend, under the word *Cyr* or *Kir*, the people beyond the Euphrates, and those of Mesopotamia, from whence the Aramæans in reality came, who were descended from Aram the son of Shem; and he adds, we have no certain knowledge of their coming in particular out of this country, where the river Cyrus flows; and, upon the whole, it is difficult to determine whether this is to be understood of the origin of these people, or of their deliverance from captivity; the latter may seem probable, since it is certain that the prophet speaks of the deliverance of Israel from the captivity of Egypt; and it is as certain that the Syrians were carried captive to Kir, and, no doubt, from thence delivered; though we have no account of the Philistines being captives to Caphtor, and of their deliverance from thence; however, doubtless these were things well known to Amos, and in his times, he here speaks of. In some of our English copies it is read Assyrians instead of Syrians, very wrongly; for *Aram*, and not *Ashur*, is the word here used.

Ver. 8. *Behold, the eyes of the Lord God* are *upon the sinful kingdom*, &c.] God is omniscient, and his eyes are everywhere, and upon all persons, good and bad, and upon all kingdoms, especially upon a sinful nation: *the sinning kingdom*[n], or *the kingdom of sin*[o], as it may be rendered; that is addicted to sin, where it prevails and reigns; every such kingdom, particularly the kingdom of Israel, Ephraim, or the ten tribes, given to idolatry, and other sins complained of in this prophecy; and that not for good, but for evil, as in ver. 4. in order to cut them off from being a people: *and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth* so that it shall be no more, at least as a kingdom; as the ten tribes have never been since their captivity by Salmaneser; though Japhet interprets this of all the kingdoms of the earth, being sinful, the eyes of God are upon them to destroy them, excepting the kingdom of Israel; so Abarbinel: *saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord*: and so it is, that though they have been destroyed as a kingdom, yet not utterly as a people; there were some of the ten tribes that mixed with the Jews, and others that were scattered about in the world; and a remnant among them, according to the election of grace, that were met with in the ministry of the apostles, and in the latter day all Israel shall be saved; see Jer. xxx. 11.

Ver. 9. *For, lo, I will command*, &c.] What follows; which is expressive of afflictive and trying dispensations of Providence, which are according to the will of God, by his appointment and order, and overruled for his glory, and the good of his people: *and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, as corn is sifted in a sieve*: this is to be understood of spiritual Israel, of those who are Israelites indeed, who are like to corns of wheat, first die before they live; die unto sin, and live unto righteousness; grow up gradually, and produce much fruit; or like to wheat for their choiceness and excellency, being the chosen of God and precious, and the excellent in the earth; and for their whiteness and purity, as clothed with Christ's righteousness, washed in his blood, and sanctified by his Spirit; and for their substance and fulness, being filled out of Christ's fulness, and with all the fulness of God, with the Spirit and his graces, and with all the fruits of righteousness; and for weight and solidity, not as chaff driven to and fro, but are firm and constant, settled and established, in divine things; and yet have the chaff of sin cleaving to them, and have need of the flail and fan of affliction; and this is the sieve the Lord takes into his hands, and sifts them with; whereby sometimes they are greatly unsettled, and tossed to and fro, have no rest and ease, but are greatly distressed on all sides, and are thoroughly searched and tried, and the chaff loosened and separated from them; and sometimes the Lord suffers them to be sifted by the temptations of Satan, whereby they are brought into doubts and fears, and are very wavering and uncomfortable, are sadly harassed and buffeted, and in great danger, were it not for the grace of God, and the intercession of the Mediator, Luke xxii. 31: *yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth*; or, *the least stone*[p]; which is in the spiritual building, and laid on the rock and foundation Christ; or the least corn of wheat, so called because of its weight, solidity, and substance. The meaning is, that the least true Israelite, or child of God, who is the least in the kingdom of heaven, and has the least share of grace and spiritual knowledge, that is even less than the least of all saints, shall not be lost and perish; though they fall in Adam, yet they are preserved in Christ; though they fall into actual sins and transgressions, and sometimes into gross ones, and from a degree of steadfastness in the faith, yet not totally and finally, or so as to perish for ever; no, not a hair of their head shall fall to the ground, or they be hurt and ruined; see 1 Sam. xiv. 45. 1 Kings i. 52. for they are beloved of God with an everlasting love, ordained by him to eternal life, adopted into his family, justified by his grace, and are kept by his power, according to his promise, which never fails; they are Christ's property, given him of his Father, to whom he stands in the relation of Head and Husband; are the purchase of his blood, closely united to him, and for whom he intercedes, and makes preparations in heaven. The Spirit of God is their sanctifier and sealer; he dwells in them as their earnest of heaven; and the glory of all the divine Persons is concerned in their salvation; hence it is that not one of them shall ever perish.

Ver. 10. *All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword*, &c.] By the sword of the Assyrians, and of others, into whose countries they shall flee for shelter,

[l] Dictionary, in the word Cyrene.
[m] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 12. sect. 3.
[n] ממלכה החטאה hoc regnum peccans, Vulg. Lat. Junius & Tremellius, Drusius, Mercerus; peccatrix, Piscator.
[o] Regnum peccati, Pagninus, Montanus.
[p] צרור lapillus, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Munster, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Cocceius; so Ben Melech.

ver. 1, 4. even all such who are notorious sinners, abandoned to their lusts, obstinate and incorrigible; live in sin, and continue therein; repent not of sin, disbelieve the prophets of the Lord, and defy his threatenings, and put away the evil day far from them: *which say, the evil shall not overtake nor prevent us;* the evil threatened by the prophet, the sword of the enemy, the desolation of their land, and captivity in a foreign land; these evils, if they came at all, which they gave little credit to, yet would not in their days; they would never come so near them, or so close to their heels as to overtake them, and seize them, or to get before them, and stop them fleeing from them; they promised themselves impunity, and were in no pain about the judgments threatened them; so daring and impudent, so irreligious and atheistical, were they in their thoughts, words, and actions; and therefore should all and every one of them be destroyed.

Ver. 11. *In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, &c.*] Not in the day of Israel's ruin, but in the famous Gospel day, so often spoken of by the prophets; and this prophecy is referred to the times of the Messiah by the ancient [q] Jews; and one of the names they give him is taken from hence, *Bar-naphli* [r], the Son of the fallen. R. Nachman said to R. Isaac, hast thou heard when Bar-naphli comes? to whom he said, who is Bar-naphli? he replied, the Messiah; you may call the Messiah Bar-naphli; for is it not written, *in that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen down?* and they call him so, not because the son of Adam; but because he was the son of David, and was to spring from his family, when fallen into a low and mean condition; yea, they sometimes seem by the tabernacle of David to understand the dead body of the Messiah to be raised, whose human nature is by the New-Testament writers called a tabernacle, Heb. viii. 2. and ix. 11. see John i. 14. for, having mentioned [s] that passage in Jer. xxx. 9, *they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their King, whom I will raise up unto them,* add, whom I will raise up out of the dust; as it is said, *I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen down;* but elsewhere [t] it is better interpreted of the Messiah's raising up Israel his people out of captivity; they say, "her husband shall come, and raise her out of the "dust; as it is said, *I will raise up the tabernacle of* "*David,* &c. in the day the King Messiah shall gather "the captivity from the ends of the world to the ends "of it, according to Deut. xxx. 4." and which they understand of their present captivity, and deliverance from it, as in ver. 14. Tobit [u] seems to have reference to this passage, when he thus exhorts Zion, "praise "the everlasting King, that his tabernacle may be "built again in thee;" and expresses [w] his faith in it, that so it would be, "afterwards they (the Jews) shall "return from all places of their captivity, and build "up Jerusalem gloriously; and the house of God shall "be built in it, as the prophets have spoken concerning it, for ever;" agreeably to which Jarchi paraphrases it, "in the day appointed for redemption;" and so the Apostle James quotes it, and applies it to the first times of the Gospel, Acts xv. 15, 16, 17. The Targum interprets this *tabernacle* of the kingdom of the house of David: this was in a low estate and condition when Jesus the Messiah came, he being the carpenter's son; but it is to be understood of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, the church; Christ is meant by David, whose son he is, and of whom David was an eminent type, and is often called by his name, Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. and xxxvii. 24, 25. Hos. iii. 5. and the church by his *tabernacle,* which is of his building, where he dwells, and keeps his court; and which in the present state is movable from place to place: and this at the time of Christ's coming was much fallen, and greatly decayed, through sad corruption in doctrine by the Pharisees and Sadducees; through neglect of worship, and formality in it, and the introduction of things into it God never commanded; through the wicked lives of professors, and the small number of truly godly persons; but God, according to this promise and prophecy, raised it up again by the ministry of John the Baptist, Christ and his apostles, and by the conversion of many of the Jews, and by bringing in great numbers of the Gentiles, who coalesced in one church-state, which made it flourishing, grand, and magnificent: and thus the prophecy was in part fulfilled, as the apostle has applied it in the above-mentioned place: but it will have a further and greater accomplishment still in the latter day, both in the spiritual and personal reign of Christ: and though this tabernacle or church of Christ is fallen to decay again, and is in a very ruinous condition; the doctrines of the Gospel being greatly departed from; the ordinances of it changed, or not attended to; great declensions as to the exercise of grace among the people of God; and many breaches and divisions among them; the outward conversation of many professors very bad, and few instances of conversion; yet the Lord will raise it up again, and make it very glorious: he will *close up the breaches thereof, and will raise up his ruins;* the doctrines of the Gospel will be revived and received; the ordinances of it will be administered in their purity, as they were first delivered: great numbers will be converted, both of Jews and Gentiles; and there will be much holiness, spirituality, and brotherly love, among the saints: *and I will build it as in the days of old;* religion shall flourish as in the days of David and Solomon; the Christian church will be restored to its pristine glory, as in the times of the apostles.

Ver. 12. *That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the Heathen, which are called by my name,* &c.] Or that these may be possessed; that is, by David or Christ, who shall have the Heathen given him for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, Psal. ii. 8. when the remnant, according to the election of grace, in those nations that have been the greatest enemies to Christ and his Gospel, signified by Edom, shall be converted, and call upon the name of the Lord, and worship him; and be called by his name, Christians, and so become his in-

[q] Zohar in Exod. fol. 96. 2.
[r] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 96. 2.
[s] Zohar in Gen. fol. 55. 2.
[t] Zohar in Exod. fol. 4. 2.
[u] Ch. xiii. 12.
[w] Ch. xiv. 7.

heritance and possession. The Targum understands, by the Heathen or people, all the people of the house of Israel; and Kimchi, Aben Ezra, and Ben Melech, think the words are to be inverted, thus, "that all "the people on whom my name is called may possess "the remnant of Edom;" and the former says, that all the Edomites shall be destroyed in the days of the Messiah, but Israel shall inherit their land; and Aben Ezra says, that if this prophecy is interpreted of the Messiah, the matter is clear; as it is in the sense we have given, and as the apostle explains it, Acts xv. 17. see the note there. Some render the words, *that the remnant of Edom, and of all the Heathen,* that are (*i. e.* shall be) *called by my name, may possess* me the Lord [x]. The truth and certainty of its performance is expressed in the following clause, *saith the Lord, that doeth this;* whose word is true, whose power is great, whose grace is efficacious, to accomplish all that is here promised and foretold.

Ver. 13. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord,* &c.] Or *are coming* [y]; and which will commence upon the accomplishment of the above things, when the church of Christ is raised up and established, the Jews converted, and the Gentiles brought in: *that the ploughman shall overtake the reaper,* or *meet the reaper* [z]; or come up to him, or touch him, as it may be rendered; and so the Targum; that is, before the reaper has well cut down the corn, or it is scarce gathered in, the ploughman shall be ready to plough up the ground again, that it may be sown, and produce another crop: *and the treaders of grapes him that soweth seed;* or *draweth seed* [a]; out of his basket, and scatters it in the land; signifying that there should be such an abundance of grapes in the vintage, that they would continue pressing till seed-time; and the whole denotes a great affluence of temporal good things, as an emblem of spiritual ones; see Lev. xxvi. 5, where something of the like nature is promised, and expressed in much the same manner: *and the mountains shall drop sweet wine;* or *new wine* [b]; intimating that there shall be abundance of vines grow upon the mountains, which will produce large quantities of wine, so that they shall seem to drop or flow with it: *and all the hills shall melt;* with liquors; either with wine or honey, or rather with milk, being covered with flocks and herds, which shall yield abundance of milk; by all which, plenty of spiritual things, as the word and ordinances, and rich supplies of grace, as well as of temporal things, is meant; see Joel iii. 18.

Ver. 14. *And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel,* &c.] Which is not to be understood of the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, and their return from thence, with whom some of the ten tribes of Israel were mixed; for they were not then so planted in their own land as no more to be pulled up again, as is here promised; for they afterwards were dispossessed of it by the Romans, and carried captive, and dispersed among the nations again; but the captivity both of Judah and Israel is meant, their present captivity, which will be brought back, and they will be delivered from it, and return to their own land, and possess it as long as it is a land; see Jer. xxx. 3, 10, 18. as well as be freed from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law, under which they have been detained some hundreds of years; but now shall be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God, of Christians, with which Christ has made them free: *and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit* them; literally the cities in Judea wasted by the Turks, and others; and mystically the churches of Christ, of which saints are fellow-citizens, and will be in a desolate condition before the conversion of the Jews, and the gathering in the fulness of the Gentiles; but by these means will be rebuilt, and be in a flourishing condition, and full of inhabitants: *and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them;* which, as before, will be literally true; and in a spiritual sense may signify the churches of Christ, compared to vineyards and gardens, which will be planted every where, and be set with pleasant and fruitful plants, and will turn to the advantage of those who have been instruments in planting them; see Cant. vi. 2. and vii. 12. and viii. 11, 12. 1 Cor. ix. 7.

Ver. 15. *And I will plant them upon their land,* &c.] The land of Israel, as trees are planted; and they shall take root and flourish, and abound with all good things, temporal and spiritual: *and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God;* by which it appears that this is a prophecy of things yet to come; since the Jews, upon their return to their own land after the Babylonish captivity, were pulled up again, and rooted out of it by the Romans, and remain so to this day; but, when they shall return again, they'll never more be removed from it; and of this they may be assured, because it is the land the Lord has *given* them, and it shall not be taken away from them any more; and, because he will now appear to be the *Lord their God,* the *lo-ammi* will be taken off from them; they'll be owned to be the Lord's people, and he'll be known by them to be their covenant God; which will ensure all the above blessings to them, of whatsoever kind; for this is either said to the prophet, *the Lord thy God,* or to Israel; and either way it serves to confirm the same thing.

[x] Ut possideant reliquias Edom, De Dieu. See Bishop Chandler's Defence of Christianity, p. 172.

[y] ימים באים dies venientes, Montanus, Burkius.

[z] נגש חורש בקוצר et, vel cum occurret arator messori, Vatablus, Drusius; attinget arator messorem, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; accedet arator ad messorem, Cocceius.

[a] מושך הזרע trahentem semen, Montanus, Liveleus, Drusius, Mercerus.

[b] עסיס mustum, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Mercerus; musto, Drusius, Cocceius.

O B A D I A H.

THE title of this Book, in the Hebrew copies, is usually *Sepher Obadiah*, the Book of Obadiah: the Vulgate Latin version calls it the Prophecy of Obadiah; and so the Arabic version: and in the Syriac version it is, the Prophecy of the Prophet Obadiah. His name signifies a *servant* or *worshipper of the Lord*. Who he was, what his parentage, and in what age he lived, are things uncertain. The Seder Olam Zuta [a] places him in the reign of Jehoshaphat; and he is thought by some to be that Obadiah that was one of the princes he sent to teach the people, 2 Chron. xvii. 7. The ancient Jewish Rabbins take him to be the same with him that lived in the times of Ahab, and in his court, who hid the prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them, 1 Kings xviii. 3, 4. to which Aben Ezra objects, because he is not called a prophet, only one that feared the Lord; whereas to be a prophet is something greater. They also say he was an Edomite by birth, but was proselyted to the Jewish religion, and so a fit person to be employed in prophesying against Edom: and it is a tradition with them that his widow is the woman whose cruse of oil Elisha multiplied, 2 Kings iv. 1. Some have been of opinion that he was the captain of the third fifty, whose life Elijah spared in the times of Ahaziah; and who upon that left the king's service, and followed the prophet, and became a disciple of his; so Pseudo-Epiphanius [b], and Isidorus Hispalensis [c], who say that he was of Sychem, a city of Samaria, and of the field of Beth-achamar, or Beth-accaron. Others would have him to be one of the overseers of the workmen in the house of the Lord, in the times of Josiah, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12. to which Mr. Lively [d] inclines; though others, going according to the order of the books in the canon of Scripture, which is not to be depended on, place him earlier, and make him cotemporary with Hosea, Joel, and Amos, as Grotius [e], Huetius [f], and Lightfoot [g]: but he seems rather to be cotemporary with Jeremiah and Ezekiel, with whose prophecies this agrees, as may be observed by comparing it with Jer. xlix. and Ezek. xxv. and to have lived and prophesied after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans; in which the Edomites, against whom he prophesies, had a concern; see ver. 11, 12, 13, 14. Psal. cxxxvii. 7. though Dr. Lightfoot thinks these prophecies refer either to the sacking of Jerusalem by Shishak king of Egypt, 1 Kings xiv. 25, or by the Philistines and Arabians, 2 Chron. xxi. 16, 17. or by Joash king of Israel, 2 Chron. xxv. 21. so that, upon the whole, it is not certain; and, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi own, it is not known in what age this prophet lived: Bishop Usher [h] places his prophecy in the 12th year of Jeconiah's captivity. However, there is no doubt to be made of the authenticity of the prophecy; as may be concluded, not only from the title of it, and the solemn manner in which it begins; but from the matter of it, and the accomplishment of what is contained in it; as well as from the testimony borne to it in the New Testament, in which not only the book of the minor prophets, in which this stands, is quoted, Acts vii. 42. but a passage in it, ver. 8. is referred to in 1 Cor. i. 19. as is thought by some learned men. I have only to observe, that, according to Pseudo-Epiphanius [i], he died in Beth-achamar, where he is said to be born, and was buried in the sepulchre of his ancestors; but, according to Jerom [k] and Isidore [l], his sepulchre is in Sebaste or Samaria; which remained to the times of Jerom, near those of the Prophet Elisha and John the Baptist. Monsieur Thevenot [m] says that John Baptist here lies buried between the Prophets Elisha and Abdias.

THIS prophecy of Obadiah is the least of the minor prophets, consisting but of one chapter; the subject of it is Edom, whose destruction is foretold, and is to be considered as a type of the enemies of Christ and his kingdom, and especially of the Roman antichrist. After the preface, the rumour of war, and preparation for it, which would issue in the ruin of Edom, are observed, ver. 1, 2. because of their pride, confidence, and security, ver. 3, 4. which should be complete and entire, ver. 5, 6. notwithstanding their allies, who would deceive them; and the wisdom of their wise men, which should be destroyed; and the strength of their mighty men, who would be dismayed, ver. 7, 8, 9. and this should come upon them, chiefly because of their ill usage of the Jews at the time of Jerusalem's destruction, which is enlarged upon, ver. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. and this would be when all the nations round about them would be destroyed, ver. 15, 16. and then deliverance is promised to the Jews, who should not only enjoy their own possessions, but the land of the Edomites, wasted by them, ver. 17, 18, 19, 20. and the book is concluded with a glorious prophecy of the kingdom of the Messiah, ver. 21.

Ver. 1. *The vision of Obadiah*, &c.] Or the prophecy, as the Targum; which was delivered unto him by the Lord in a vision; it was not what he fancied or

[a] P. 109.
[b] De Prophet. Vit. c. 12.
[c] De Vita & Mort. Sanct. c. 44.
[d] In loc.
[e] In loc.
[f] Demonstrat. Evangel. Prop. 4. p. 296.
[g] Works, vol 1. p. 96.
[h] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3417.
[i] Ut supra.
[k] Comment. in loc. & in Epitaph. Paulæ, fol. 59. M.
[l] Ut supra.
[m] Travels, par. 1. B. 1. ch. 56. p. 216.

dreamed of, but what he saw, what he had a clear discovery and revelation of made unto his mind; hence prophets are sometimes called *seers*. This was a single prophecy; though sometimes a book, consisting of various prophecies, is called a vision; as the prophecies of Isaiah are called the vision of Isaiah, ch. i. 1. *Thus saith the Lord God concerning Edom*: by the mouth of this prophet, who was divinely inspired by him; for Obadiah said not what follows of himself, but in the name of the Lord; and is a proof of the divine authority of this book; the subject-matter of which is Edom or Idumea, as in the Septuagint version; a neighbouring country to the Jews, and very troublesome to them, being their implacable enemies, though their brethren; and were a type of the enemies of the Christian church, those false brethren, the antichristian states; and particularly the head of them, the Romish antichrist, whose picture is here drawn, and whose destruction is prophesied of, under the name of Edom; for what has been literally fulfilled in Idumea will be mystically accomplished in antichrist. The Jews generally understand, by Edom, Rome, and the Christians in general; which, if applied only to the antichristians, is not amiss. *We have heard a rumour from the Lord*: or *a report*[n]; a message from him, brought by the spirit of God, as a spirit of prophecy; that is, I Obadiah, and Jeremiah, and other prophets, as Isaiah and Amos, who have had orders to prophesy against Edom; see Jer. xlix. 14. so the angels, or Gospel ministers, will have a rumour or message concerning the fall of antichrist, Rev. xiv. 6, 7, 8, 9: *and an ambassador is sent among the Heathen*: either by the Lord, as Jeremiah the prophet, according to some; or an angel, as others; or an impulse upon the minds of the Chaldeans, stirring them up to war against the Edomites: or else by Nebuchadnezzar to the nations in alliance with him, to join him in his expedition against them; or a herald sent by him to his own people, to summon them together to this war, and to encourage them in it: *arise ye, and let us rise up in battle against her*; come up from all parts, join together and invade the land of Idumea, and give battle to the inhabitants of it, and destroy them; so the kings of the earth will stir up one another to hate the whore of Rome, and make her desolate, Rom. xvii. 16.

Ver. 2. *Behold, I have made thee small among the Heathen*, &c.] Or *a little one*, or *thing*[o]: their number few, and their country not large, as Aben Ezra, especially in comparison of other nations; and therefore had no reason to be so proud, insolent, and secure, as they are afterwards said to be: or rather, *I will make thee*; the past for the future, after the prophetic manner, as Kimchi; that is, weak and feeble, as the Targum; reduce their numbers, destroy their towns and cities, and bring them into a low and miserable condition: or the sense is, that he would make them look little, mean, and abject, in the sight of their enemies; who would conclude, upon a view of them, that they should have no trouble in subduing them, and therefore should attack them without fear, and as sure of success: *thou art greatly despised*: in the eyes of the nations round about; by their enemies, who looked upon them with contempt, because of the smallness of their number, their defenceless state, and want of strength to support and defend themselves; see Jer. xlix. 15. and so the pope of Rome is little and despicable in the eyes of the monarchs of the earth; and the antichristian Edom will be more so at the time of its general ruin.

Ver. 3. *The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee*, &c.] The Edomites were proud of their wealth and riches, which they had by robberies amassed together; and of their military skill and courage, and of their friends and allies; and especially of their fortresses and fastnesses, both natural and artificial; and therefore thought themselves secure, and that no enemy could come at them to hurt them, and this deceived them: *thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock*; their country was called Arabia Petraea, the rocky; and their metropolis Petra, the rock: Jerom says that they that inhabited the southern part of the country dwelt in caves cut out of the rock, to screen them from the heat of the sun: or, *thou that dwellest in the circumferences of the rock*[p]; round about it, on the top of it, in a tower built there, as Kimchi and Ben Melech: Aben Ezra thinks that *caph*, the note of similitude, is wanting; and that the sense is, thou thoughtest that Mount Seir could secure thee, as they that dwell in the clefts of a rock: *whose habitation is high*; upon high rocks and mountains, such as Mount Seir was, where Esau dwelt, and his posterity after him. The Targum is, "thou art like to an eagle that dwells in "the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is in a high "place;" this they were proud of, thinking themselves safe, which deceived them; hence it follows: *that saith in his heart, who shall bring me down to the ground?* what enemy, ever so warlike and powerful, will venture to invade my land, or besiege me in my strong hold? or, if he should, he can never take it, or take me from hence, conquer and subdue me. Of the pride, confidence, and security of mystical Edom or antichrist, see Rev. xviii. 7.

Ver. 4. *Though thou exaltest thyself as the eagle*, &c.] That soars aloft, flies on high, even out of sight, higher than any other bird does: or, *exaltest thy habitation*; and makest it as high as the eagle's nest; see Jer. xlix. 16: *and though thou set thy nest among the stars*; even higher than the eagle's; an hyperbolical expression, supposing that which never was or can be done; yet, if it was possible, would not secure from danger: or should their castles and fortresses be built upon the top of the highest mountains, which seem to reach the heavens, and be among the stars: *thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord*: this is said in answer to the question put, or bold challenge made, in the preceding verse; if men cannot do it, God will; and, if he employs instruments to effect it, it shall be done by them; all seeming difficulties are easily surmounted by an omnipotent Being; what are the heights of mountains, or the strength of fortresses, to him? thus the whore of Rome sits upon seven mountains, and mystical Babylon reigns over the kings of

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[n] שמועה auditum, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus.
[o] קטן parvulum, V. L.
[p] בחגוי סלע in gyris, sive circuitionibus petræ, so some in Vatablus.

the earth; yet shall be thrown down and found no more, for the Lord is strong that judgeth her, Rev. xvii. 9, 18. and xviii. 8, 21.

Ver. 5. *If thieves came to thee, if robbers by night*, &c.] Whether the one came by day, and the other by night, or both by night, the same being meant by different words, whose intent is to plunder and steal, and carry off what they can; thy condition would not be worse, nor so bad as now it is: *for how art thou cut off!* from being a nation, wholly destroyed; thy people killed, or carried captive; thy fortresses demolished, towns and cities levelled with the ground, and all thy wealth and substance carried off, and nothing left: these are either the words of God, or of the prophet, setting forth their utter ruin, as if it was already; or of the nations round about, wondering at their sudden destruction. Some render it, *how silent art thou* [s]! that is, under all these calamities: or, *how art thou asleep!* or *stupified!* as the Targum and Jarchi; not to be upon thy guard against the incursions of the enemy, but careless, secure, and stupid, and now stripped of every thing: had common thieves and robbers broke in upon thee, *would they not have stolen till they had enough?* as much as they came for, or could carry off; they seldom strip a house into which they enter of every thing in it; they come for some particular things, and, meeting with them, they go off, and leave the rest: *if the grape-gatherers come to thee, would they not leave some grapes?* that is, if men should come into thy vineyards, and gather the grapes, and carry them off by force or stealth, would they take them all away? doubtless they would leave some behind; some would be hid under the boughs, and be left unobserved by them: or the allusion is to gatherers of grapes, who gather them for the owners, and at their direction, who were wont to leave some clusters for the poor to glean after them; but in the case of Edom 'tis suggested that nothing should be left, all should be clean carried off; the destruction would be complete and entire. The Targum is, "if spoilers as grape-"gatherers should come unto thee," &c.: see Jer. xlix. 9.

Ver. 6. *How are the things of Esau searched out!* &c.] Or how are the Esauites, the posterity of Esau, sought out! though they dwelt in the clefts of the rocks, and hid themselves in caves and dens, yet their enemies searched them, and found them, and plucked them out from thence, so that none escaped: how *are his hid things sought up!* his riches, wealth and treasure, hid in fortresses, in rocks and caves, where they were thought to be safe, and judged inaccessible; or that an enemy would not have ventured in search of them there; and yet these should be sought after and found by the greedy, and diligent, and venturous soldier, and carried off; which was the case of the Edomites by the Chaldeans, and will be of the antichristian states by the kings of the earth, Rev. xvii. 16. see Jer. xlix. 10.

Ver. 7. *All the men of thy confederacy have brought thee even to the border*, &c.] Or *of thy covenant* [t]; that are in league with thee; thine allies, even all of them, prove treacherous to thee, in whom thou trustedst; when they sent their ambassadors to them, they received them kindly, promised great things to them, dismissed them honourably, accompanied them to the borders of their country, but never stood to their engagements: or those allies came and joined their forces with the Edomites, and went out with them to meet the enemy, as if they would fight with them, and for them; but when they came to the border of the land they left them, and departed into their own country; or went over to the enemy: or these confederates were the instruments of expelling them out of their own land, and sending them to the border of it, and carrying them captive; or they followed them to the border of the land, when they were carried captive, as if they lamented their case, when they were assisting to the enemy, as Kimchi; so deceitful were they. The Targum is to the same purpose, "from the border "all thy confederates carried thee captive [u]:" *the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, and prevailed against thee*; outwitted them in their treaties of peace, and got the advantage of them: or they proved treacherous to them, and joined the enemy against them; or they persuaded them to declare themselves enemies to the Chaldeans, which proved their ruin; and so they prevailed against them: they that eat *thy bread*: so the Targum and Kimchi supply it; or it may be supplied from the preceding clause, *the men of thy bread*; who received subsidies from them, were maintained by them, and quartered among them: *have laid a wound under thee*: instead of supporting them, secretly did that which was wounding to them. The word signifies both a wound and a plaster; they pretended to lay a plaster to heal, but made a wound; or made the wound worse. The Targum is, "they "laid a stumbling-block under thee;" at which they stumbled and fell: or snares, as the Vulgate Latin version, whereby they brought them to ruin: *there is none understanding in him*: in Esau, or the Edomites; they were so stupid, that they could not see into the designs of their pretended friends, and prevent the execution of them, and their ill effects.

Ver. 8. *Shall I not in that day, saith the Lord, even destroy the wise men out of Edom*; &c.] When they shall be invaded by the enemy, and treacherously dealt with by their allies; so that there shall be no wise counsellors at court to give advice what proper methods should be taken at such a season; they should either be taken off by death, or their wisdom should be turned into folly, and they be rendered incapable of giving right counsel: *and understanding out of the mount of Esau?* that is, men of understanding, as the Targum, should be destroyed out of Edom or Idumea, which was a mountainous country; such as were well versed in politics, or understood military affairs, and how to conduct at such a critical time; to form schemes, and concert measures, and wisely put them in execution; and to be deprived of all such must be a great loss at such a time, and add to their distress and calamity; see Jer. xlix. 7.

[s] איך נדמיתה quomodo redacta es in silentium? Calvin; quomodo siles? some in Tarnovius; so Syr.

[t] אנשי בריתך viri fœderis tui, Vulg. Lat. Montanus, Vatablus, Burkius.

[u] So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 51. 2. and 52. 1.

Ver. 9. *And thy mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed, &c.*] Teman was one part of the country of Edom, so called from Teman, a son of Eliphaz, and grandson of Esau, Gen. xxxvi. 11. and which it seems had been famous for men of might and courage: it abounded with brave officers, and courageous soldiers, who should now be quite dispirited, and have no heart to go out against the enemy; and, instead of defending their country, should throw away their arms, and run away in a fright. The Targum and Vulgate Latin version render it, "thy mighty men that inhabit the south;" or are on the south, the southern part of Edom, and so lay furthest off from the Chaldeans, who came from the north; yet these should be at once intimidated upon the rumour of their approach and invasion: *that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter*; that so there might be none to resist and stop the enemy, or defend their country; but that all might fall by the sword of the enemy, and none be left, even every mighty man, as Jarchi interprets it, through the greatness of the slaughter that should be made.

Ver. 10. *For thy violence against thy brother Jacob, &c.*] Which is aggravated by being against Jacob, an honest plain-hearted man, and whom the Lord loved; his brother, his own brother, a twin-brother, yea, his only brother; yet this is to be understood, not so much of the violence of Esau against Jacob personally, though there is an allusion to that; as of the violence of the posterity of the one against the posterity of the other; and not singly of the violence shewn at the destruction of Jerusalem, but in general of the anger they bore, the wrath they shewed, and the injuries they did to their brethren the Jews, on all occasions, whenever they had an opportunity, of which the following is a notorious instance; and for which more especially, as well as for the above things, they are threatened with ruin: *shame shall cover thee*; as a garment; they shall be filled with blushing, and covered with confusion, when convicted of their sin, and punished for it: *and thou shalt be cut off for ever*; from being a nation; either by Nebuchadnezzar; or in the times of the Maccabees by Hyrcanus, when they were subdued by the Jews, and were incorporated among them, and never since was a separate people or kingdom.

Ver. 11. *In the day thou stoodest on the other side, &c.*] Aloof off, as a spectator of the ruin of Jerusalem, and that with delight and pleasure; when they should, as brethren and neighbours, have assisted against the common enemy; but instead of this they stood at a distance; or they went over to the other side, and joined the enemy, and stood in opposition to their brethren the Jews: *in the day that the strangers carried away captive his forces*; that is, at the time that the Chaldeans took Jerusalem, and carried captive as many of the forces of the Jews as fell into their hands; or when "the people spoiled his substance," as the Targum; plundered the city of all its wealth and riches: *and foreigners entered into his gates*; the gates of their cities, particularly Jerusalem; even such who came from a far country, the Babylonians, who were aliens and strangers from the commonwealth of Israel; whereas the Edomites were their near neighbours, and allied to them by blood, though not of the same religion; and by whom they helped against a foreign enemy, instead of being used by them as they were: *and cast lots upon Jerusalem*; either to know when they should make their attack upon it; or else, having taken it, the generals of the Chaldean army cast lots upon the captives, to divide them among them, so Kimchi; see Joel iii. 3. Nah. iii. 10. or rather, the soldiers cast lots for the division of the plunder of the city, as was usual at such times: *even thou wast as one of them*: the Edomites joined the Chaldeans, entered into the city with them, shewed as much wrath, spite, and malice, as they did, and were as busy in dividing the spoil. So Aben Ezra interprets these and the following verses of the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar; but Kimchi expounds them of the destruction of them by the Romans, at which he supposes many Edomites to be present, and rejoiced at it: could this be supported, the connexion would be more clear and close between these words and those that follow, which respect the Gospel dispensation, beginning at ver. 17. but the Edomites were not in being then; and that there were many of them in the Roman army, and that Titus himself was one, is all fabulous.

Ver. 12. *But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother, &c.*] The day of his calamity, distress, and destruction, as afterwards explained; that is, with delight and satisfaction, as pleased with it, and rejoicing at it; but rather should have grieved and mourned, and as fearing their turn would be next: or, *do not look*[x]; so some read it in the imperative, and in like manner all the following clauses: *in the day that he became a stranger*; were carried into a strange country, and became strangers to their own: or, *in the day of his alienation*[y]; from their country, city, houses, and the house and worship of God; and when strange, surprising, and unheard-of things were done unto them, and among them: *neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction*; the destruction of the Jews, of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, by the Chaldeans: this explains what is meant by the Edomites looking upon the day of the calamity of the Jews, that it was with pleasure and complacency, having had a good will to have destroyed them themselves, but it was not in the power of their hands; and now being done by a foreign enemy, they could not forbear expressing their joy on that occasion; which was very cruel and brutal; and this also shews that Obadiah prophesied after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar: *neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress*; or *magnified thy mouth*[z]; opened it wide in virulent scoffing, and insulting language; saying with the greatest fervour and vehemence, and as loud as it could be said, *rase it, rase it to the foundation thereof*, Psal. cxxxvii. 7.

Ver. 13. *Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate*

[x] ואל תרא ne aspicias, Junius & Tremellius; ne aspicito, Piscator; ne specter, Cocceius.

[y] ביום נכרו diem alienationis ejus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Mercerus; in die alienationis ejus, Calvin, Cocceius, Burkius.

[z] ואל תגדל פיך & non debebas magnificare os tuum, Pagninus; ne magnifices, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius; ne magnificato, Piscator; ne magno ore utaris, Cocceius.

of my people in the day of their calamity, &c.] Or *gates*, as the Targum; the gates of any of their cities, and particularly those of Jerusalem; into which the Edomites entered along with the Chaldeans, exulting over the Jews, and insulting them, and joining with the enemy in distressing and plundering them: *yea, thou shouldest not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity* which is repeated, as being exceeding cruel and inhuman, and what was highly resented by the Lord; that, instead of looking upon the affliction of his people and their brethren with an eye of pity and compassion, they looked upon it with the utmost pleasure and delight: *nor laid* hands *on their substance in the day of their calamity*; or *on their forces* [x]; they laid violent hands on their armed men, and either killed or took them captive: and they laid hands on their goods, their wealth and riches, and made a spoil of them. The phrase, *in the day of their calamity*, is three times used in this verse, to shew the greatness of it; and as an aggravation of the sin of the Edomites, in behaving and doing as they did at such a time.

Ver. 14. *Neither shouldest thou have stood in the cross-way*, &c.] In a place where two or more roads met, to stop the Jews that fled, let them take which road they would: or, *in the breach* [y]; that is, of the walls of the city, *to cut off those of his that did escape*: such of the Jews that escaped the sword of the Chaldeans in the city, and attempted to get away through the breaches of the walls of it, or that took different roads to make their escape; these were intercepted and stopped by the Edomites, who posted themselves at these breaches, or at places where two or more ways met, and cut them off; so that those that escaped the sword of the enemy fell by theirs; which was exceeding barbarous and cruel: *neither shouldest thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of their distress*: or *shut up* [z]; they shut them up in their houses, or stopped up all the avenues and ways by which they might escape, even such as remained of those that were killed or carried captive; these falling into the hands of the Edomites, some they cut off, and others they delivered up into the hands of the Chaldeans. Of the joy and rejoicing of the mystical Edomites, the Papists, those false brethren and antichristians, at the destruction of the faithful witnesses and true Christians, and of their cruelty and inhumanity to them, see Rev. xi. 7, 8, 9, 10.

Ver. 15. *For the day of the Lord is near upon all the Heathen*, &c.] That is, the time was at hand, fixed and determined by the Lord, and he had spoken of by his prophets, when he would punish all the Heathens round about for their sins; as the Egyptians, Philistines, Tyrians, Ammonites, Moabites, and others; and so the Edomites among the rest; for this is mentioned for their sakes, and to shew that their punishment was inevitable, and that they could not expect to escape in the general ruin; see Jer. xxv. 17—26. This destruction of Edom here prophesied of, and of all the Heathen, was accomplished about five years after the destruction of Jerusalem, so that it might be truly said to be near; and some time within this space Obadiah seems to have prophesied; and the day of the Lord is not far off upon the Pagans, Mahometans, and all the *antichristian* states, when mystical Edom or Rome will be destroyed; see Rev. xvi. 19. and xvii. 14. and xix. 19, 20, 21. *as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee; thy reward shall return upon thine own head*: this is particularly directed to Edom, upon whom the day of the Lord's vengeance shall come; when he punished the Heathens, then the Edomites should be retaliated in their own way; and as they had rejoiced at the destruction of the Jews, and had insulted them in their calamities, and barbarously used them, they should be treated in like manner; see Ezek. xxxv. 15. and thus will mystical Babylon, or the mystical Edomites, be dealt with, even after the same manner as they have dealt with the truly godly, the faithful professors of Christ, Rev. xviii. 6.

Ver. 16. *For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the Heathen drink continually*, &c.] Which is either spoken to the Edomites; and the sense be, according to the Targum, "as ye have re-"joiced at the blow (given unto or at the subversion "and destruction) of the mountain of my holiness, all "people shall drink the cup of their vengeance;" or punishment; and to the same sense Jarchi and Japhet interpret it; and so Kimchi, "as ye have made a feast, "rejoicing at the destruction of my holy mountain, so "thou and all nations shall drink of the cup of trem-"bling;" but Aben Ezra thinks the words are spoken to the Israelites, "as ye have drank the cup, so shall "all nations;" the cup of vengeance began with them, and so went round the nations, according to the prophecy in Jer. xxv. 17, 18, *&c.*: for, if judgment begins at the house and people of God, it may be expected it will reach to others; wherefore Edom had no reason to rejoice at the destruction of the Jews, since they might be assured by that the same would be their case ere long; and with this difference, that whereas the Jews only drank this cup for a while, during the seventy-years' captivity, these nations, and the Edomites among the rest, should be *continually* drinking it: *yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down*: not only drink of the cup, but drink it up; not only take it into their mouths, but swallow it down their throats; not only sip at it, but *sup it up* [a], as it may be rendered. The phrase denotes the fulness of their punishment, and their utter and entire ruin and destruction, which the next clause confirms: *and they shall be as though they had not been*; as now are the Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, and so the Edomites; their names are not heard of in the world, only as they are read in the Bible; and thus it shall be with mystical Babylon or Edom, it shall be thrown down, and found no more, Rev. xviii. 21.

Ver. 17. *But upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance*, &c.] Not only by Cyrus, at the end of the seventy-years' captivity; and by the Maccabees from the Idumeans, and other enemies; but by the Messiah; for not merely temporal deliverance is here intended, unless as

[x] בחילו in exercitum ejus, Drusius; in copias eorum, Castalio; in copiam ejus, Cocceius.

[y] על הפרק in diruptione, Junius & Tremellius, Tarnovius.

[z] ואל תסגר neque concludas, Montanus, Mercerus, Tigurine version, Tarnovius.

[a] ולעו & absorbebunt, Vulg. Lat. Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; deglutient, Montanus, Mercerus. Gussetius renders it absorbebantur.

a shadow, type, and figure; but spiritual deliverance from the law, sin, Satan, the world, death, hell, and wrath to come, by Christ; who is the Deliverer that should both come to Zion and out of Zion, and who has wrought the above deliverance for Zion, his church and people; and where it is preached and proclaimed, and where those who are delivered come and dwell: or, *upon Mount Zion shall be an escape*; or, *they that escape* [b]; the pollutions of the world, the vengeance of divine justice, the curses of the law, and the damnation of hell, by fleeing to Christ for refuge: *and there shall be holiness*: that is, on Mount Zion, on the church, which is the holy hill of God, and where only holy persons should dwell; and for whomsoever deliverance is wrought out, sooner or later there will be in them holiness, both of heart and life; and indeed, without this, complete deliverance and salvation, which will be in heaven, will not be enjoyed; hence those that are chosen to this salvation are chosen through sanctification of the Spirit; and such as are redeemed and delivered by Christ are purified to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works; and are, in consequence of such deliverance and redemption, called with a holy calling, and have principles of holiness implanted in them, and live holy lives and conversations; and such kind of holiness, as it appeared in Zion, in the churches of Christ in the first times of the Gospel, so it will be more conspicuous among them in the latter day; see Isa. iv. 3. and lii. 1. Zech. xiv. 20, 21. or, *there shall be an holy One*, or *thing* [c]; the holy Jesus, who is holy in both his natures, in all his offices, works, and words; the Lamb that should, and has been, seen on Mount Zion; and the Holy Spirit of God, who dwells and abides in his church, and among his people, to anoint and assist the ministers of the word; to accompany the word with power, and make it successful; and to sanctify and comfort the Lord's people in Zion; and there are the holy word of God, the doctrines of grace according to godliness preached, and the sacred ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper administered. The Targum is, "and they shall be holy;" the Lord's people: and so Kimchi interprets it of Israel being holy to the Lord. *And the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions*: that is, either the Israelites shall possess the possessions of the Heathens, particularly of the Edomites; so the Targum, "and they of the house of Jacob "shall possess the substance of the people that "possessed them;" see Amos ix. 11, 12. which was fulfilled spiritually in the first times of the Gospel, when the apostles, who were of the house of Jacob, and were Israelites indeed, preached the Gospel to the Gentiles, and were the means of converting many of them, and of bringing them into the Gospel church; which may be called the house of Jacob, when they and theirs become their possession, and Christ, the master of this house, had the Heathen given him for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, Psal. ii. 8. or else the sense is, that the people of God, true Christians, shall in Gospel times possess, their own possessions; God himself, who is their portion and inheritance, and shall enjoy communion with him; Christ, and all that are his, all spiritual blessings in him; the Spirit and his graces, as the earnest of a future and eternal inheritance; exceeding great and precious promises they are heirs of, and a kingdom and glory hereafter; of which the possessions in the land of Canaan, restored to the right owners of them in the year of jubilee, were a type. R. Moses says this prophecy has respect to the times of Hezekiah; in which he is followed by Grotius, very wrongly; R. Jeshuah, better, to the times of the second temple; but Japhet, best of all, to time to come, to the times of the Messiah, to which it no doubt belongs: here begin the prophecies concerning Christ, his church, and kingdom.

Ver. 18. *And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame*, &c.] The former may denote the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, the latter the ten tribes, which after the separation in Rehoboam's time were called Ephraim, and sometimes Joseph: though they may here signify one and the same, since all the tribes will be united, and become one people, at the time the prophecy refers to: the meaning is, that the people of Judah and Israel shall have strength and power to conquer and destroy their enemies, with as much ease as flames of fire consume chaff or stubble, or any such combustible matter they light upon, as it follows: *and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them*; that is, the Israelites shall fall upon the Edomites, who will be no more able to withstand them than stubble can stand before devouring flames of fire, and shall utterly waste and destroy them: *and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau*; they shall all be cut off by, or swallowed up among, the Jews; not so much as a torch-bearer left, one that carries the lights before an army, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions; which versions, and the custom alluded to, serve very much to illustrate the passage. It was a custom with the Greeks, as we are told [e], when armies were about to engage, that before the first ensigns stood a prophet or priest, bearing branches of laurels and garlands, who was called *pyrophorus*, or the torch-bearer, because he held a lamp or torch; and it was accounted a most criminal thing to do him any hurt, seeing he performed the office of an ambassador; for those sort of men were priests of Mars, and sacred to him, so that those that were conquerors always spared them: hence, when a total destruction of an army, place, or people, was hyperbolically expressed, it used to be said, not so much as a torch-bearer or fire-carrier escaped [d]; hence this phrase was proverbially used of the most entire defeat of an army, or ruin of a people. So Philo [f] the Jew, speaking of the destruction of Pharaoh and his host at the Red sea, says, there was not so much as a torch-bearer left, to declare the calamity to the Egyptians: and thus here, so general should be the destruction of the Edomites, that not one should be left, no, not a person in such a post and office as described. The Targum of the whole is, "and they of the house

[b] תהיה פליטה erit evasio, Vatablus, Piscator, Mercerus, Livelaus.
[c] תהיה קדש erit sanctum, V. L. Livelcus, Drusius.
[d] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 5. c. 3.

[e] Herodot. Urania, sive l. 8. c. 6.
[f] De Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 630.

"of Jacob shall be strong as fire, and they of the "house of Joseph strong like a flame, but they of the "house of Esau shall be weak as stubble; and they "shall have power over them, and kill them, and "there shall be none left of the house of Esau." This was fulfilled literally, either by Judas Maccabeus, when he went against the children of Esau in Idumea, and smote them, and took their spoil, 1 Maccab. v. 3. or rather by Hyrcanus, who took the cities of Idumea, subdued all the Edomites, but permitted them to live in their own country, provided they would be circumcised, and conform to the Jewish laws; which they did, as Josephus says [g], and coalesced and became one people with them, and were reckoned as Jews, and no more as Edomites. But this prophecy had its accomplishment spiritually, either in the first times of the Gospel, when the apostles, who were Jews and Israelites, went forth into the Gentile world, and among the enemies of Christ, preaching the word, which is like fire; and, when attended with the spirit of judgment and of burning, enlightens the consciences of men, melts their hearts, consumes their lusts, and is as a refiner's fire to them, for their purification; or, if not, it irritates, provokes, torments, and distresses, as fire does; and is either the savour of life unto life, or the savour of death unto death; see Isa. iv. 4. Jer. xxiii. 29. Rev. xi. 5. or rather it will have its full and final accomplishment in the destruction of antichrist, here signified by Esau and Edom, which will be by burning mystical Babylon, the whore of Rome; the beast and false prophet will be burnt with fire; the day of the Lord will burn like an oven, and all the wicked will be as stubble, which will be burnt by it, root and branch, so that none will remain; see Rev. xvii. 16. and xviii. 8. and xix. 20. Mal. iv. 2. compare with this Zech. xii. 6. Kimchi, on Amos ix. 12, says this shall be in the days of the Messiah, the Edomites shall be all consumed, and the Israelites shall inherit their land: *for the Lord hath spoken* it; and therefore it shall most certainly be accomplished; what God has said shall be done, he'll not alter the thing that is gone out of his lips; heaven and earth shall sooner pass away than one word of his.

Ver. 19. *And they of the south shall possess the land of Esau*, &c.] That is, those Jews that shall dwell in the southern part of the land of Judea shall seize upon the country of Idumea, lying contiguous to them; they shall enlarge their border, and take that into their possession: *and they of the plain the Philistines*; or of *Sephela*, they that shall inhabit the plain, or champaign country of Judea, as the parts of Lydda, Emmaus, and Sharon, were; these shall possess the country of the Philistines, lying near unto them, as Azotus, Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron: *and they shall possess the fields of Ephraim, and the fields of Samaria*; all the countries that the ten tribes inhabited, in the times of their idolatry, before their captivity, which the Jews shall now be restored unto: *and Benjamin* shall possess *Gilead*; that tribe shall be so enlarged as to take in the country of Gilead, which lay beyond Jordan, formerly possessed by the half-tribe of Manasseh. Some think this was fulfilled in the times of the Maccabees, when several of these places were taken by Judas, 1 Maccab. v. 17, 36, 38. but since the land of Judea, and the countries adjacent to it, were never as yet inhabited by the Jews in the form and manner here mentioned, it rather respects their settlement in their own land, in the latter day, when their borders will be greatly enlarged; see Ezek. xlviii. Zech. x. 10. or it may regard the enlargement of the church of Christ, either in the first times of the Gospel, when that was spread in those parts, and met with success; see Acts viii. 6, 8. and ix. 31, 35. or rather in the latter day, when Christ's kingdom will be from sea to sea, and his dominion from the river to the ends of the earth, Psal. lxxii. 8. and to which also the following words belong.

Ver. 20. *And the captivity of this host of the children of Israel* shall possess *that of the Canaanites, even unto Zarephath*, &c.] That is, the host or army, the great number of the children of Israel, that have been carried captive, upon their return shall possess that part of the land of Israel which was inhabited formerly by the Canaanites, even as far as to Zarephath, said to belong to Zidon, 1 Kings xvii. 10. and called Sarepta of Sidon; see Luke iv. 26. It is mentioned by Pliny [h] along with Sidon, where glass was made; and perhaps this place might have its name from the melting of glass in it, from צרף, which signifies to melt metals, glass, &c.; it is called by Josephus [i] Sarephtha; who says it was not far from Sidon and Tyre, and lay between them: according to an Arabic geographer [k], it was twenty miles from Tyre, and ten from Sidon. Here the Prophet Elijah dwelt for a time; and in the times of Jerom [l] was shewn a little tower, said to be his habitation, which travellers visited. Mr. Maundrell [m] speaks of this place as three hours' journey from Sidon, and is now called "Sarphan, supposed (he says) to be the "ancient Sarephath, or Sarepta, so famous for the "residence and miracles of the Prophet Elijah; the "place shewn us for this city consisted of only a few "houses on the tops of the mountains, within about "half a mile of the sea; but it is more probable the "principal part of the city stood below, in the space "between the hills and the sea, there being ruins still "to be seen in that place, of a considerable extent." It was once a place very famous for wine; the wine of Sarepta is often made mention of by writers [n]; perhaps vines might grow upon the hills and mountains about it; and this being a city of Phœnicia, on the northern border of the land of Israel, is very fitly observed as the limit of the possession of the Israelites this way. *And the captivity of Jerusalem, which is in Sepharad, shall possess the cities of the south*; the Jews, who were carried captive into Babylon, to Sepharad; some place, though unknown, perhaps in the land of Babylon. Calmet [o] conjectures it may be Sippara or Sipparat, in Mesopotamia, a little above the division of the

[g] Antiqu. l. 13. c. 9. sect. 1.
[h] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 19.
[i] Antiqu. l. 8. c. 13. sect. 2.
[k] Scherif Ibn Idris apud Reland. Palestina Illustrata, tom. 2. l. 3. p. 985.

[l] Epitaph. Paulæ, fol. 51. M.
[m] Journey from Aleppo, &c. p. 48. Ed. 7.
[n] Vid. Reland. ut supra.
[o] Dictionary, in the word *Sepharad*.

Euphrates: and the Septuagint version renders it Ephratha: which perhaps is a corruption of the Euphrates in the present copies: the Vulgate Latin version translates it Bosphorus; and so Jerom, who say that the Hebrew that taught him assured him that Bosphorus was called Sepharad; whither Adrian is said to carry the Jews captive. Kimchi and Aben Ezra interpret it of the present captivity of theirs by Titus, who upon their return to their land shall possess the southern part of it, which originally belonged to the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 20, 21. If Sepharad, in the Assyrian language, signifies a border, as Jerom says it does, it denotes, as some think, that part of Arabia which borders on the south of Judea, that shall be inhabited by the Jews. Some render the words, *the captivity of Jerusalem shall possess that which is in Sepharad, and the cities of the south;* but this is contrary to the accents, unless the words *shall possess* be repeated, and so two clauses made, *the captivity of Jerusalem* shall possess *that which is in Sepharad; they shall possess the cities of the south.* The Targum and Syriac version, instead of Sepharad, have Spain; and so the Jewish writers generally interpret it. By the Canaanites they think are meant the Germans, and the country of Germany; by Zarephath, France; and by Sepharad, Spain; so Aben Ezra, Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, fancying that they who are now captives in these countries shall one day possess them: but the prophecy only respects their settlement in their own land, and some parts adjacent to it; or rather the enlargement of the church of Christ in the world. A late learned writer [p] is of opinion that some respect may be had to this passage in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, in which the former makes mention of *five brethren* that he had, Luke xvi. 28. and are by the said writer thus reckoned: 1. the house of Jacob; 2. the house of Joseph, which are said to possess the south, with the mountains of Esau, and the plain; 3. Benjamin, which shall possess Gilead; 4. the captives from the Assyrian captivity; 5. the captives from the Jerusalem captivity, namely, by Titus Vespasian, who shall possess the cities of the south.

Ver. 21. *And saviours shall come upon Mount Zion, &c.*] Which, according to some, is to be understood literally, either of Zerobabel and Joshua, after the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, who were the restorers of their civil and church state; or rather of Judas Maccabeus and his brethren, who saved the people of the Jews from Antiochus and his generals, called *saviours*, as the judges of old were, Neh. ix. 27. but it is best to interpret these saviours of the apostles of Christ, and ministers of the word; and especially of the preachers of the Gospel in the latter days; called *saviours*, because they publish salvation, preach the Gospel of it, shew unto men the way of salvation; and so they, and the word preached by them, are the means and instruments of the salvation of men; otherwise Christ is the only Saviour of God's appointing and sending, and who came to effect salvation, and is become the author of it, nor is it in any other; see 1 Tim. iv. 16. Ezek. xxxiii. 9. Rom. i. 16. Jam. i. 19. these in great numbers, in the latter day, will appear on Mount Zion, or in the church of Christ, and shall openly and publicly, as on a mountain, declare the everlasting Gospel; these will be with Christ the Lamb, among the 144,000 upon Mount Zion, Rev. xiv. 1, 6. Kimchi and Ben Melech say, these are the King Messiah and his companions, the seven shepherds and eight principal men, Mic. v. 5. Aben Ezra says the words refer to time to come; according to Baal-hatturim on Gen. xxxii. 4. they will be fulfilled about the end of the sixth Millennium, when they expect the Messiah; and they are applied to the times of the Messiah both by ancient and more modern Jews. In their ancient book of Zohar [q] it is said, "when the Messiah shall arise, Jacob shall take "his portion above and below; and Esau shall be "utterly destroyed, and shall have no portion and inheritance in the world, according to ver. 18. but "Jacob shall inherit two worlds, this world and the "world to come; and of that time is it written, *and "saviours shall come upon Mount Zion*," &c. So, in the Jerusalem Talmud [r], "says R. Hona, we don't "find that Jacob our father went to Seir (see Gen. "xxxiii. 14): R. Joden, the son of Rabbi, says, in "future times (the world to come, the days of the "Messiah), is it not said, *and saviours shall come upon "Mount Zion, to judge the mount of Esau?*" And to much the same purpose it is said in one of their ancient Midrasses [s] or expositions, "we have turned "over all the Scripture, and we don't find that Jacob "stood with Esau on Seir; he (God) said, until now "it is with me to make judges and saviours stand, to "take vengeance on that man, as it is said, *and saviours shall come up*," &c. And the Cabalistic writers [t] thus paraphrase the words, "*and saviours "shall come up*; who are the Lord of hosts, and the "God of hosts: *on Mount Zion;* which is the mystery of the living God: *to judge the mount of Esau;* "which is Mount Seir." So Maimonides [u], quoting the passage in Numb. xxiv. 18. *Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies*, adds, by way of explanation, this is the King Messiah, of whom it is said, *and saviours shall come upon Mount Zion.* The work and business of these saviours will be, *to judge the mount of Esau;* to take vengeance on the Edomites, for their ill usage of the children of Judah, as the Jewish commentators generally interpret it: or rather, as Gospel ministers are these saviours, it expresses their business; which as it is to declare that whoever believes in Christ shall be saved, so that whoever does not shall be damned; and to convince impenitent and unbelieving sinners of their sin and danger, and their need of Christ, judging and condemning those that remain so: and moreover, as Esau and Edom signify antichrist, the sense is, that they shall publish and proclaim the judgment of God upon antichrist, declare it to be near, yea, to be done; and shall express their approbation of the justice of God in it, and shall call upon the saints to rejoice at it, Rev. xiv. 6, 7, 8, 9,

[p] Tremanni Specimen, & Explic. Parabol. p. 417.
[q] In Gen. fol. 85. 1.
[r] T. Hieros. Avoda Zara, fol. 40. 2.

[s] Debarim Rabba, fol. 234. 4.
[t] Kabala Denudata, par. 1. p. 283.
[u] Hilchot Melachim, c. 11. sect. 1.

and xvi. 5, 6, and xviii. 1, 20. yea, these saviours may include the Christian princes, that shall pour out the vials of God's wrath upon the antichristian states. *And the kingdom shall be the Lord's:* the Lord Christ's, who is the one Jehovah with the Father and Spirit; meaning not the government of the world, to which he has a natural right as Creator, and which is generally ascribed to Jehovah the Father; nor the government of the church in this present state, which is Christ's already, and ever was: but the government of it in the latter day, when he will take to himself his great power, and reign; when his kingdom will be more visible, spiritual, glorious, and extensive; when the kingdoms of this world will become his, the Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan kingdoms, even all the kingdoms and nations of the earth; he'll be King over all the earth; there will be but one Lord and King, and whose kingdom is an everlasting one; it shall never come into other hands; this will continue till the personal reign takes place, and that will issue in the ultimate glory; see Rev. xi. 15, 17. and xv. 3, 4. Zech. xiv. 9. Psal. lxxii. 8, 9, 10.

J O N A H.

THIS book, in the Hebrew copies, is called *Sepher Jonah*, the Book of Jonah; by the Vulgate Latin version *the Prophecy of Jonah:* and in the Syriac version *the Prophecy of the Prophet Jonah.* His name signifies *a dove*, derived from a root which signifies to oppress; because it is a creature liable to oppression, and to become the prey of others. Hillerus[a] derives the word from a root which signifies to be *fair* and *beautiful*, as this creature is. This name is very suitable to a prophet and minister of the Lord, who ought to be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves; and who mourn over their own sins, and the sins of others. Jonah did not always in his conduct answer to his name, particularly when he was so angry at the Lord's sparing the Ninevites, and so impatient for the loss of his gourd. His father's name was Amittai, as in ch. i. 1. and in 2 Kings xiv. 25. from whence it also appears that he was of Geth-hepher, a town in the tribe of Zebulun, Josh. xix. 13. and was a part of Galilee, Isa. ix. 1. and so R. Jochanan, in Abendana, affirms, that he was of the tribe of Zebulun, and of Gethhepher, which was in that tribe; which confutes that notion of the Pharisees in the times of Christ, that no prophet came out of Galilee, John vii. 52. The Jews[b] have a tradition that his mother was the widow of Sarepta, whose son Elijah raised from the dead, which was this prophet; and who is said to be the son of Amittai, that is, *truth*: because his mother thereby knew and believed that the word of the Lord in the mouth of Elijah was truth, 1 Kings xvii. 23, 24. but his being a Hebrew contradicts this, ch. i. 9. for Sarepta was a city of Sidon, and he must have been a Sidonian if born of her, and not a Hebrew; but, be this as it will, it is certain he was a prophet of the Lord; and this book, which bears his name, and very probably was written by him, its divine authority is confirmed by the testimony of Christ, of whom Jonah was a type; see Matt. xii. 39, 40, 41. and indeed the principal design of this book is to set forth in himself the type of the death and resurrection of Christ, by his being three days in the whale's belly, and then delivered from it; and to declare the grace and mercy of God to repenting sinners, and to signify the calling of the Gentiles after the death and resurrection of Christ; and is a very profitable book to instruct us about the power and goodness of God; the nature of repentance, and the effects of it; the imperfection and infirmities of the best of men in this life; and the call and mission of the ministers of the word, and the necessity of their conformity and attendance to it. Cyprian the martyr was converted from idolatry by hearing this prophecy read and explained by Cæcilius. If this prophet was the son of the widow of Sarepta, or the person Elisha sent to anoint Jehu, according to the tradition of the Jews[c], he was born in the times of Ahab, and lived in the reigns of Joram and Jehu; and, according to Bishop Lloyd[d], he prophesied in the latter end of Jehu's reign; where Mr. Whiston[e] also places him, about 860 years before Christ; or in the beginning of the reign of Jehoahaz, when Israel was greatly oppressed by Hazael king of Syria, 2 Kings xiii. 22. at which time he might prophesy of the victories and success of Jeroboam the second, and grandson of Jehoahaz, 2 Kings xiv. 25. and, if so, he is more ancient than Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, Joel, and Micah, whose cotemporary he is generally thought to be. Pseudo-Epiphanius[f], as he gives a wrong account of the place of the birth of this prophet, so of the place of his burial; which he makes to be in the land of Saar, and in the cave of Kenan, the father of Caleb and Othniel; but it is more likely that he died and was buried at Geth, where he was born; and where Jerom[g] says his grave was shewn in his time, about two miles from Zippore, in the way to Tiberias; with which account Isidore[h] agrees; and so Benjamin Tudelensis[i] says, his se-

[a] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 469.
[b] Hieron. Proem. in Jon.
[c] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 18. p. 45.
[d] Chronological Tables.
[e] Chron. Tables, cent. 7.
[f] De Prophet. Vit. c. 16.
[g] Ut supra.
[h] De Vita & Morte Sanct. c. 45.
[i] Itinerar. p. 52.

pulchre was on a hill near Zippore. Monsieur Thevenot[k] says, not far from Nazareth the tomb of Jonas is now to be seen, to which the Turks bear a great respect.

CHAP. I.

THIS chapter gives an account of the call and mission of Jonah to go to Nineveh, and prophesy there, and the reason of it, ver. 1, 2. his disobedience to it, ver. 3. God's resentment of it, by sending a storm into the sea, where he was, which terrified the mariners, and put the ship in danger of being lost, ver. 4, 5. The discovery of Jonah and his disobedience as the cause of the tempest, and how it was made, ver. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. The casting of him into the sea at his own motion, and with his own consent, though with great reluctance in the mariners, ver. 11—16. The preparation of a fish for him, which swallowed him up, and in which he lived three days and three nights, ver. 17.

Ver. 1. *Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai*, &c.] Or, *and the word of the Lord was*[l]; not that this is to be considered as connected with something the prophet had on his mind and in his thoughts when he began to write this book; or as a part detached from a prophecy not now extant; for it is no unusual thing with the Hebrews to begin books after this manner, especially historical ones, of which kind this chiefly is, as the books of Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, and Esther; besides, the ו, *vau*, is here not copulative, but conversive; doing its office by changing the future tense into the past; which otherwise must have been rendered, *the word of the Lord shall be*, or *shall come*: which would not only give another, but a wrong sense. *The word of the Lord* often signifies a prophecy from the Lord; and so the Targum renders it, "the word of prophecy from the Lord:" and it may be so interpreted, since Jonah, under a spirit of prophecy, foretold that Nineveh should be destroyed within forty days; though the phrase here rather signifies the order and command of the Lord to the prophet to do as is expressed in the next verse, whose name was Jonah *the son of Amittai*; of whom see the *argument* of the *book*. Who his father Amittai was is not known: if the rule of the Jews would hold good, that when a prophet mentions his own name, and the name of his father, he is a prophet, the son of a prophet, then Amittai was one; but this is not to be depended on. The Syriac version calls him the son of Mathai, or Matthew; though the Arabians have a notion that Mathai is his mother's name; and observe that none are called after their mothers but Jonas and Jesus Christ: but the right name is Amittai, and signifies *my truth*; and to be sons of truth is an agreeable character of the prophets and ministers of the word, who should be given to truth, possessed of it, and publish it: *saying*: as follows:

Ver. 2. *Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city*, &c.] That is, arise from the place where he was, and leave the business he was about, and prepare for a long journey to the place mentioned, and be as expeditious in it as possible. Nineveh was the metropolis of the Assyrian empire at this time; it was an ancient city built by Ashur, not by Nimrod; though he by some is said to go into Ashur or Assyria, and build it, Gen. x. 11. and called it after the name of his son Ninus; for it signifies the mansion or palace of Ninus; and by most profane writers is called Ninus; according to Diodorus Siculus[m], and Strabo[n], it was built by Ninus himself in Assyria, in that part of it called by him Adiabena. It is said to be a great city, as it must, to be three days' journey in compass, and to have in it six score thousand infants, besides men and women, ch. iii. 3. and iv. 11. It is allowed by Strabo[o] to be larger than Babylon. Diodorus[p] says that it was in compass four hundred and fourscore furlongs, which make sixty miles; and had a wall a hundred feet high, and so broad that three chariots or carriages might go abreast upon it; and it had fifteen hundred towers, two hundred feet high. Aben Ezra calls it the royal city of Assyria, which is at this day destroyed; and the wise men of Israel, in the country of Greece, say it is called Urtia; but, whether so or no, he knew not: *and cry against it*: or prophesy against it, as the Targum; he was to lift up his voice, and cry aloud, as he passed along in it, that the inhabitants might hear him; and the more to affect them, and to shew that he was in earnest, and what he delivered was interesting to them, and of the greatest moment and importance: what he was to cry, preach, or publish, see ch. iii. 2, 4: *for their wickedness is come up before me*: it was come to a very great height; it reached to the heavens; it was not only seen and known by the Lord, as all things are; but the cry of it was come up to him; it called aloud for vengeance, for immediate vengeance; the measure of it being filled up, and the inhabitants ripe for destruction; it was committed openly and boldly, with much impudence, in the sight of the Lord, as well as against him; and was no more to be suffered and connived at: it intends and includes their idolatry, bloodshed, oppression, rapine, fraud, and lying: see ch. iii. 8. and Nah. iii. 1.

Ver. 3. *But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord*, &c.] He was not obedient to the heavenly vision; he rose up, but not to go to Nineveh, but to Tarshish, the reverse of it; to the sea, as the Targum, the Mediterranean sea, which lay west, as Nineveh was to the east. Tarshish sometimes is used for the sea; see Psal. xlviii. 7. he determined to go to sea; he did not care where, or to what place he might find a ship bound: or to Tarsus in Cilicia, the birthplace of the Apostle Paul, Acts xxii. 3. so Josephus[q]

[k] Travels, par. 1. B. 2. ch. 55. p. 213.
[l] ויהי & fuit, Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius; factum fuit, Piscator.
[m] Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 92.
[n] Geograph. l. 16. p. 507.
[o] Ut supra.
[p] Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 92.
[q] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 10. sect. 2.

and Saadiah Gaon; or to Tunis in Africa, as R. Melasser in Aben Ezra; or to Carthage, as Theodoret, and others; or Tartessus in Spain, as others. Among this difference of interpreters, it is hard to say what place it was: it seems best to understand it of Tarsus. The prophet had better knowledge of God, and of the perfections of his nature, than to imagine he could flee from his general presence, which is everywhere, and from which there is no fleeing, Psal. cxxxix. 7. but his view was to flee out of that land where he granted his special presence to his people; and from that place where were the symbols of his presence, the ark, the mercy-seat, and cherubim, and in which he stood, and ministered before the Lord; but now upon this order quitted his post, and deserted his station. The reasons given of his conduct are various. The Jewish writers suppose that he consulted more the glory of Israel than the glory of God; that he was fearful, should he do as he was bid, the word of the Lord would be carried from Judea into the Gentile world, and there remain; that he was of opinion that the Heathens would repent of their sins at his preaching, though Israel did not, which would turn to the reproach and condemnation of the latter; see Matt. xii. 41. and that he knew that the spirit of prophecy did not dwell upon any out of the land of Israel, and therefore got as fast as he could out of it, that he might not be further urged with such a message; which notion is confuted by the instances of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel; to this sense the Targum inclines, which adds, "lest he "should prophesy in the name of the Lord:" but there is no need to seek for reasons, and which are given by others; such as going out of his own country into a foreign one; the length of the journey; the opposition and difficulties he might expect to meet with; and the risk he should run of his life, by prophesying in and against the metropolis of the Assyrian empire, where the king's court and palace were; and he not only a Heathen, but a sovereign and arbitrary prince; when the true reasons are suggested by the prophet himself; as that he supposed the people would repent; he knew that God was gracious and merciful, and upon their repentance would not inflict the punishment pronounced; and he should be reckoned a false prophet, ch. iv. 2: *and went down to Joppa;* a sea-port town in the tribe of Dan, upon the Mediterranean sea, where was a haven of ships, formerly called Japho, Josh. xix. 16. at this time Joppa, as it was in the times of the apostles: here Peter raised Dorcas to life, and from hence he was sent for by Cornelius, Acts ix. 36. and x. 5. it is now called Jaffa; of which Monsieur Thevenot [r] says, "it is a town built upon the top of a "rock, whereof there remains no more at present but "some towers; and the port of it was at the foot of "the said rock.—It is at present a place of few in-"habitants; and all that is to be seen of it is a little "castle with two towers, one round, and another square; "and a great tower separate from it on one side. There "are no houses by the sea-side, but five grots cut in "the rock, of which the fourth is in a place of retreat "for Christians.—There is a harbour still in the same "place where it was formerly; but there is so little "water in it, that none but small barks can enter." It was a very ancient city, said [s] to be older than the flood; and built on a hill so high, that Strabo says [t] Jerusalem might be seen from thence, which was forty miles from it. It had its name from Jope the daughter of Æolus, the wife of Cepheus, the founder of it [u]. Jonah went thither, either from Jerusalem, or from Geth-hepher, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe: if from the former, it was forty miles to Joppa, as Jerom says; and if from the latter, it is supposed to be about fifty: a journey of this length must be some time in performing, which shews with what deliberation and resolution he sinned in disobeying the divine command: *and he found a ship going to Tarshish;* just ready to put to sea, and bound for this place: Providence seemed to favour him, and answer to his wishes; from whence it may be observed, that the goodness of an action, and its acceptableness to God, are not to be concluded from its wished-for success: *so he paid the fare thereof;* the freight of the ship; the whole of it, according to Jarchi; that haste and a quicker dispatch might be made, and no stay for passengers or goods; but that it might be put under sail directly, and he be the sooner out of the land; which, if true, would shew him to be a man of substance; and agrees with a notion of the Jews, and serves to illustrate and confirm it, that the spirit of prophecy does not dwell upon any but a rich man; for which reason the above interpreter catches at it; but Aben Ezra more truly observes, that he paid his part, what came to his share, what was usual to be paid for a passage to such a place: and whereas it might be usual then, as now, not to pay till they were arrived at port, and went out of the ship; he paid his fare at entrance, to secure his passage, lest through any pretence he should not be took in upon sailing; so determined was he to fly from God, and disobey his orders: *and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord;* having paid his fare, he entered the ship directly, lest he should be left behind; and went down into the cabin perhaps, to go along with the mariners and merchants, all Heathens, to Tarshish, whither they were bound, in order to be clear of any fresh order from the Lord, to go and prophesy against Nineveh: here again the Targum adds, "lest he should prophesy in the name of the Lord."

Ver. 4. *But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, &c.*] He took a wind out of his treasures, and hurled it, as the word [w] signifies, into the sea: *into that sea* [x]; that part of it where the ship was Jonah was in. Winds are at the command of God, which he raises at his pleasure, and fulfil his will, and are servants of his that obey his orders: this here was sent in pursuit of Jonah, to stop him in his voyage, when he thought he had got clear off, and was safe enough. The Jews say [y] this was done when he had been one day's voyage; *and there was a great tempest in the sea;* which caused the waves to rise and roar, and become very tumultuous: this wind was an extraordinary one, like

[r] Travels, par. 1. B. 2. ch. 52. p. 208.
[s] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 13.
[t] Geograph. l. 16. p. 522.
[u] Stephanus apud Reland. Palestina Illustrata, tom. 2. p. 865.

[w] הטיל projecit, Mercerus, Drusius; conjecit, Coccejus.
[x] בים in mare illud, Mercerus.
[y] Pirke Eliezer, c. 10. fol. 10. 1.

that *lælaps* or storm of wind which came down into the sea when the disciples of Christ were on it in a ship; or like the *Euroclydon*, in which the Apostle Paul was: *so that the ship was like to be broken*; it was in danger of it; it seemed as if it would, the waves of the sea were so strong, and beat so hard upon it. It is, in the original text, *the ship thought* it should *be broken*[z]; that is, the men in it; they that had the management of it thought nothing less but that it would be dashed to pieces, and all their goods and lives lost; so great was the hurricane occasioned by the wind the Lord sent. It may be rendered, *that ship*[a] *was like*, &c. The Jews[b] have a notion that other ships passed to and fro in great tranquillity, and this only was in distress.

Ver. 5. *Then the mariners were afraid*, &c.] Perceiving that the storm was not an ordinary, but a preternatural one; and that the ship and all in it were in extreme danger, and no probability of being saved. This shews that the storm must be very violent, to frighten such men who were used to the sea, and to storms, and were naturally bold and intrepid. The word used signifies *salters*, so called from the salt sea they used, as they are by us *mariners*, from *mare*, the sea; though R. Japhet in Aben Ezra thinks the commodity they carried in their vessel was salt: *and cried every man to his god*: to help them, and save them out of their distress. In the ship it seems were men of different nations, and who worshipped different gods. It was a notion of the Jews, and which Jarchi mentions as his own, that there were men of the seventy nations of the earth in it; and as each of them had a different god, they separately called upon them. The polytheism of the Pagans is to be condemned, and shews the great uncertainty of their religion; yet this appears to be agreeable to the light of nature that there is a God, and that God is to be prayed unto, and called upon, especially in time of trouble: *and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten* it *of them*; or, *the vessels*[c], a word the Hebrews use for all sorts of goods, utensils, *&c.*; it includes, with others, their military weapons they had to defend themselves, their provisions, the ship's stores or goods it was freighted with; finding their prayers to their gods were ineffectual, they betook themselves to this prudential method to lighten the ship, that they might be able to keep its head above water. So the Targum, "when they saw "there was no profit in them;" that is, in the gods they called upon, then they did this; the other was a matter of religion, this a point of prudence; such a step the mariners took that belonged to the ship in which the Apostle Paul was, Acts xxvii. 18, 19, 38: *but Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship*; into one of its sides, into a cabin there; the lowest side, as the Targum: *and he lay, and was fast asleep*; even snored, as some versions have it: it may seem strange he should, when the wind was so strong and boisterous; the sea roaring; the waves beating; the ship rolling about; the mariners hurrying from place to place, and calling to each other to do their duty; and the passengers crying; and, above all, that he should fall into so sound a sleep, and continue in it, when he had such a guilty conscience. This shews that he was asleep in a spiritual as well as in a corporeal sense.

Ver. 6. *So the shipmaster came to him*, &c.] The master of the vessel, who had the command of it; or the governor of it, as Jarchi; though Josephus[d] distinguishes between the governor and the shipmaster: *the master of the ropers*[e], as it may be rendered; of the sailors, whose business it was to draw the ropes, to loose or gather the sails, at his command: missing him, very probably, he sought after him, and found him in the hold, in the bottom of the ship, on one side of it, fast asleep: *and said unto him, what meanest thou, O sleeper?* this is not a time to sleep, when the ship is like to be broke to pieces, all lives lost, and thine own too: thus the prophet, who was sent to rebuke the greatest monarch in the world, is himself rebuked by a shipmaster, and a Heathen man. Such an expostulation as this is proper enough to be used with professors of religion that are gotten in a spiritual sense into a sleepy and drowsy frame of spirit; it being an aggravation of it, especially when the nation they are of, the church of Christ they belong to, and their own persons also, are in danger; see Rom. xiii. 11. Ephes. v. 14: *arise, call upon thy God*: the gods of this shipmaster and his men were insufficient to help them; they had ears, but they heard not; nor could they answer them, or relieve them; he is therefore desirous the prophet would pray to his God, though he was unknown to him; or at least it suggests that it would better become him to awake, and be up, and praying to his God, than to lie sleeping there; and the manner in which the words are expressed, without a copulative, shew the hurry of his spirit, the ardour of his mind, and the haste he was in to have that done he advises to: every good man has a God to pray unto, a covenant God and Father, and who is a prayer-hearing God; is able to help in time of need, and willing to do it; and it is the duty and interest of such to call upon him in a time of trouble; yea, they should arise and stir up themselves to this service; and it may be observed, that the best of men may sometimes be in such a condition and circumstances as to need to be stirred up to it by others; see Luke xxii. 46: *if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not*: the supreme God; for the gods they had prayed to they looked upon as mediators with the true God they knew not. The shipmaster saw, that, to all human probability, they were all lost men, just ready to perish; that if they were saved, (as who knew but they might, upon Jonah's praying to his God?) it must be owing to the kind thoughts of God towards them; to the serenity of his countenance, and gracious acceptance of prayer, and his being propitious and merciful through that means; all which seems to be the import of the word used: so the saving of sinners in a lost and perishing condition, in which all men are, though all are not sensible of it, is owing to God's thoughts of peace, to his good will,

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[z] חשבה putabat, Montanus; cogitavit, Vatablus, Burkius; cogitabat, Drusius, Cocceius.

[a] האניה navem illam, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[b] Pirke Eliezer, c. 10. fol. 10. 1. So Aben Ezra, Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abendana in loc.

[c] את הכלים vasa, Vulg. Lat. Vatablus, Grotius.

[d] Ut supra.

[e] רב החבל magister funalis, Munster; magister funicularierum—so some in Mercer; magister funis, Calvin.

free favour, and rich grace in Christ Jesus, and through him, as the propitiatory sacrifice. The Targum is, "if so be mercy may be granted from the Lord, and "we perish not."

Ver. 7. *And they said every one to his fellow,* &c.] That Jonah awoke and rose up, upon the shipmaster's calling to him, is certain; but whether or no he called upon his God is not; perhaps he did: and when his prayer was over, and the storm still continuing, the sailors said one to another, *come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil* is *upon us;* for, observing something very uncommon and extraordinary in the tempest, and all means, both natural and religious, failing to help them; and though they might know that they were every one of them sinners, yet they supposed there must be some one notorious sinner among them, that had committed some very enormous crime, which had drawn the divine resentment upon them to such a degree; and therefore they proposed to cast a lot, which was an appeal to the divine Being, in order to find out the guilty person. That the Heathens used the lot upon occasion is not only manifest from profane writers, but from the sacred Scriptures; as Haman, and other enemies of God's people; and the soldiers that attended the cross of Christ, Esth. ix. 24. Joel iii. 3. Obad. ver. 11. Nah. iii. 10. Matt. xxvii. 35. Drusius reports, from Xaverius, of some Heathens sailing to Japan, and other places in the East Indies, that they used to carry an idol with them, and by lots inquire of it whither they should go; and whether they should have prosperous winds, &c.: *so they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah;* through the overruling providence and disposing hand of God, which attended this affair; for, not to inquire whether the use of the lot was lawful or no, or whether performed in that serious and solemn manner as it should be, if used at all; it pleased God to interfere in this matter, to direct it to fall on Jonah, with whom he had a particular concern, being a prophet of his, and having disobeyed his will; see Prov. xvi. 33. The Syriac version renders it, *the lot of Jonah came up;* that is, the piece of paper, or whatever it was, on which his name was written, was taken up first out of the vessel in which the lots were put.

Ver. 8. *Then they said unto him, tell us, we pray thee,* &c.] They did not fall upon him at once in an outrageous manner, and throw him overboard; as it might be thought such men would have done, considering what they had suffered and lost by means of him; but they use him with great respect, tenderness, and lenity: and entreat him to tell them *for whose cause this evil* was *upon them:* or rather, as the Targum, "for what "this evil is upon us;" and so Noldius[f] renders the words; for their inquiry was not about the person for whose cause it was; that was determined by the lot; but on what account it was; what sin it was he had been guilty of, which was the cause of it; for they supposed some great sin must be committed, that had brought down the vengeance of God in such a manner: *what is thine occupation?* trade or business? this question they put, to know whether he had any, or was an idle man; or rather, whether it was an honest and lawful employment; whether it was by fraud or violence, by thieving and stealing, he got his livelihood; or by conjuring, and using the magic art: or else the inquiry was about his present business, what he was going about; what he was to do at Tarshish when he came there; whether he was not upon some ill design, and sent on an unlawful errand, and going to do some ill thing, for which vengeance pursued him, and stopped him: *and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou?* which questions seem to relate to the same thing, what nation he was of; and put by different persons, who were eager to learn what countryman he was, that they might know who was the God he worshipped, and guess at the crime he had been guilty of.

Ver. 9. *And he said unto them, I* am *an Hebrew,* &c.] He does not say a Jew, as the Targum wrongly renders it; for that would have been false, since he was of the tribe of Zebulun, which was in the kingdom of Israel, and not of Judah; nor does he say an Israelite, lest he should be thought to be in the idolatry of that people; but a Hebrew, which was common to both; and, besides, it not only declared what nation he was of, but what religion he professed, and who was his God: *and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land;* this answers to the other question, what was his occupation or business? he was one that feared the Lord, that served and worshipped him; a prophet of the great God, as Josephus[g] expresses it, and so Kimchi; the mighty Jehovah, that made the *heavens,* and dwells in them; and from whence that storm of wind came, which had so much distressed the ship, and still continued; and who made the *sea,* which was now so boisterous and raging, and threatened them with ruin; and *the dry land,* where they would be glad to have been at that instant. By this description of God, as the prophet designed to set him forth in his nature and works, so to distinguish him from the gods of Heathens, who had only particular parts of the universe assigned to them, when his Jehovah was Lord of all; but where was the prophet's fear and reverence of God when he fled from him, and disobeyed him? it was not lost, though not in exercise.

Ver. 10. *Then were the men exceedingly afraid,* &c.] When they found he was a Hebrew, and that it was the God of the Hebrews that was angry; of whom they had heard much, and what great and wonderful things had been done by him, and now had an experience of his power and providence, and that it was for fleeing from his presence that all this was: and therefore, since they had been guilty of greater sins than this, as they might imagine, what would be done to them? and particularly it might fill them with dread and terror, when they heard of the destruction of Nineveh, the prophet was sent to denounce; of which no doubt he had told them, and they might from hence conclude it would certainly be: *and said unto him, why hast thou done this?* they wonder he should act such a foolish part as to flee from such a God he had described to them, who was Lord of heaven, earth, and sea; and therefore could meet with him, and seize him, be he where he would; and they reprove him for

[f] Concordant. Part. Ebr. p. 182. No. 822.

[g] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 10. sect. 2.

it, and the rather as it had involved them in so much distress and danger: *for the men knew that he had fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them*; not when he first entered into the ship, but now, though not before mentioned; for no doubt Jonah told the whole story at length, though the whole is not recorded; how that he was sent by the Lord with a message to Nineveh, to denounce destruction to it; and that he refused to go, and fled from his face; and this was the true reason of the storm.

Ver. 11. *Then said they unto him, what shall we do unto thee*, &c.] Though, both by the lot and his own confession, they knew he was the guilty person, for whose sake this storm was; yet were unwilling to do any thing to him without his will and consent, his counsel and advice; perceiving that he was a prophet of the God of the Hebrews, whom he had offended, and knew the mind and will of his God, and the nature of his offence against him, and what only would appease him, they desire him to tell what they ought to do; fearing that, though they had found out the man, they should make a mistake in their manner of dealing with him, and so continue the distress they were in, or increase it; their great concern being to be rid of the storm: *that the sea may be calm unto us?* or *silent*[h]? for the waves thereof made a hideous roaring, and lifted up themselves so high, as was terrible to behold; and dashed with such vehemence against the ship, as threatened it every moment with destruction: (*for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous*); or, *it went and swelled*[i]; it was agitated to and fro, and was in a great ferment, and grew more and more stormy and tempestuous. Jonah's confession of his sin, and true repentance for it, were not sufficient; more must be done to appease an angry God; and what that was the sailors desired to know. These words are inserted in a parenthesis with us, as if put by the writer of the book, pointing out the reason of the men's request; but, according to Kimchi, they are their own words, giving a reason why they were so pressing upon him to know what they should do with him, *seeing the sea was going and stormy*[k]; or more and more stormy; which seems right.

Ver. 12. *And he said unto them, take me up, and cast me forth into the sea*, &c.] This he said not as choosing rather to die than to go to Nineveh; or as having overheard the men say that they would cast him into the sea, as Aben Ezra suggests, greatly to the prejudice of the prophet's character; but as being truly sensible of his sin, and that he righteously deserved to die such a death; and in love to the lives of innocent men, that they might be saved, and not perish, through his default; and as a prophet, knowing this to be the mind and will of God, he cheerfully and in faith submits to it, with a presence of mind and courage suitable to his character. It was not fit he should leap into the sea and destroy himself; but that he should die by the hand of justice, of which the shipmaster and the ship's crew were the proper executioners: *so shall the sea be calm unto you*: or *silent*, as before; it will cease from its roaring, and do no further hurt and damage: *for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you*: for the sin he had committed in fleeing from God, this storm was raised and continued; nor could it go off till they had done what he had directed them to; there was no other way of being clear of it. In this Jonah was a type of Christ, who willingly gave himself to suffer and die, that he might appease divine wrath, satisfy justice, and save men; only with this difference, Jonah suffered for his own sins, Christ for the sins of others: Jonah to lay a storm he himself had raised by his sins, Christ to lay a storm others had raised by their sins.

Ver. 13. *Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to bring it to the land, but they could not*, &c.] Or, *they digged*[l]; that is, the waters of the sea with their oars; not by casting anchor, as Abendana; they used all their skill, and exerted all their strength; they laboured with all their might and main, as a man digs in a pit; they ploughed the ocean, and furrowed the sea, as the Latins speak, but all in vain; they rowed against wind and tide; God, his purposes and providence, were against them; and it was not possible for them to make land, and get the ship ashore, which they were desirous of, to save the life of Jonah, as well as their own; for, seeing him penitent, they had compassion on him; his character and profession as a prophet, the gravity of the man, the sedateness of his countenance, his openness of mind, and his willingness to die, wrought greatly upon the men, that they would fain have saved him if they could; and perhaps being Heathens, and not knowing thoroughly the nature of his offence, might think he did not deserve to die; but all their endeavours to save him were to no purpose: *for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them*; it grew more and more so; the storm beat right against them, and drove them back faster than they came; so that it was impossible to stand against it.

Ver. 14. *Wherefore they cried unto the Lord*, &c.] Not unto their gods, but unto the true Jehovah, the God of Jonah, and of the Hebrews; whom they now, by this providence, and Jonah's discourse, had some convictions and knowledge of as the true God; and therefore direct their prayer to him, before they cast the prophet into the sea: *and said, we beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee*: which repetition shews the ardour, vehemence, and earnestness of their minds in prayer: *let us not perish for this man's life*: they were in the utmost perplexity of mind, not knowing well what to do; they saw they must perish by the storm, if they saved his life; and they were afraid they should perish, if they took it away; and which yet they were obliged to do; and therefore had no other way left but to pray to the Lord they might not perish for it; or it be reckoned as their crime, and imputed to them, as follows: *and lay not upon us innocent blood*; for so it was to them; he had done no hurt to them since he had been with them, except in being the cause of the storm, whereby they had suffered the loss of their goods; however, had not been guilty of any thing worthy of death, as they could observe; and as for his

[h] וישתק ut sileat, Pagninus, Vatablus, Mercerus, Drusius; & sileat, Montanus; ut conticescat, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Burkius.
[i] הולך וסער ibat & intumescebat, Pagninus, Vatablus, Drusius.

[k] Vadens & turbinans, Montanus; magis ac magis procellosum erat, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; inhorrescebat, Cocceius.
[l] ויחתרו & fodiebant, Montanus, Calvin, Piscator, Tarnovius; foderunt, Vatablus, Liveleus.

offence against God, they were not sufficient judges of, and must leave it with him: the light of nature teaches men to be tender of the lives of fellow-creatures, and to avoid shedding of innocent blood: *for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee;* it appeared to them to be the will of God that he should be cast into the sea; from the storm that was raised on his account; from the determination of the lot; from the confession of Jonah, and his declaration of the will of God in this matter, as a prophet of his: they did not pretend to account for it; it was a secret to them why it should be; but it was no other than what he would have done; and therefore they hoped no blame would be laid on them.

Ver. 15. *So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea,* &c.] They took him out of the hold or cabin where he was, and brought him upon deck; they took him, not against his will, but with his full consent, and according to the direction and advice he gave them: *they,* for there were more than one employed in this affair; one or more very probably took him by the legs, and others put their hands under his arm-holes, and so threw him into the sea: *and the sea ceased from her raging;* immediately, and became a calm; and the wind also ceased from blowing, which is supposed; the end being answered by the storm, and the person found and obtained, what was sought after by it, it was still and quiet. The story the Jews [m] tell of his being let down into the sea to his knees, upon which the sea was calm, but became raging again upon his being taken up; and so, at the second time, to his navel; and the third time to his neck; is all fabulous; but he being wholly thrown in, it raged no more.

Ver. 16. *Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly,* &c.] This was not a natural fear, as before, but a religious one; and not a servile fear, or a fear of punishment, but a reverential godly fear; for they feared him, not only because they saw his power in raising and stilling the tempest, but his goodness to them in saving them: *and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord:* a spiritual sacrifice; the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for a safe deliverance from the storm; for other sort of sacrifice they seemed not to have materials for; since they had thrown overboard what they had in the ship to lighten it, unless there might be any thing left fit for this purpose; but rather, if it is to be understood of a ceremonial sacrifice, it was offered when they went out of the ship, according to the gloss of Aben Ezra; or they solemnly declared they would, as soon as they came to land; to which sense is the Targum, "and they said they would offer a sacrifice:" and agreeably to this the words may be rendered, with what follows, thus, *and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord,* that is, *they made vows;* they vowed that they would offer a sacrifice [n] when arrived in their own country, or should return to Judea, and come to Jerusalem. So the Hebrew ו, *vau,* is often used [o], as exegetical and explanative; though many interpreters understand the vows as distinct from the sacrifice; and that they vowed that the God of the Hebrews should be their God, and that they would for the future serve and worship him only; that they would become proselytes, as Jarchi; or give alms to the poor, as Kimchi; as an evidence of their sense of gratitude to God, the author of their mercies. If these men were truly converted, as it seems as if they were, they were great gainers by this providence; for though they lost their worldly goods, they found what was infinitely better, God to be their God and portion, and all spiritual good things with him; and it may be observed of the wise and wonderful providence of God, that though Jonah refused to go and preach to the Gentiles at Nineveh, for which he was corrected; yet God made this dispensation a means of converting other Gentiles.

Ver. 17. *Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah,* &c.] Not from the creation of the world, as say the Jews [p]; for this is to be understood, not of the formation or making of it; but of the ordering and disposition of it by the providence of God to be near the ship, and its mouth open to receive Jonah, as soon as he was cast forth from thence: and a *great* one it must be, to take him at once into its mouth, and swallow him down its throat, and retain him whole in its belly; and such great fishes there are in the sea, particularly the *carcharias,* or dog-fish; the same with Triton's dog, said to swallow Hercules, in which he was three days; and which fable perhaps took its rise from hence. In Matt. xii. 40, it is said to be a *whale:* but then that must be understood, not as the proper name of a fish, but as common to all great fishes; otherwise the whale, properly so called, it is said, has not a swallow large enough to take down a man; though some deny this, and assert they are capable of it. Of the *balæna,* which is one kind of whale, it is reported [q], that when it apprehends its young ones in danger, will take them, and hide them within itself; and then afterwards throw them out again; and certain it is that the whale is a very great fish, if not the greatest. Pliny [r] speaks of whales six hundred feet long, and three hundred and sixty broad; and of the bones of a fish, which were brought to Rome from Joppa, and there shewn as a miracle, which were forty feet long; and said to be the bones of the monstrous fish to which Andromede at Joppa was exposed [s]; which story seems to be hammered out of this history of Jonah; and the same is reported by Solinus [t]; however, it is out of doubt that there are fishes capable of swallowing a man. Nierembergius [u] speaks of a fish taken near Valencia in Spain, so large that a man on horseback could stand in its mouth; the cavity of the brain held seven men; its jaw-bones, which were kept in the Escurial, were seventeen feet long; and two carcasses were found in its stomach: he says it was called *piscis mularis;* but some learned men took it to be the dog-fish before mentioned; and such a large devouring creature is the shark, of which the present bishop of Bergen [w], and others, interpret this fish here; in which sometimes has been found the body of a man,

[m] Pirke Eliezer, c. 10. fol. 10. 2.
[n] So Drusius.
[o] Vid. Nold. Ebr. Part. Concord. p. 280.
[p] Pirke Eliezer, c. 10. fol. 10. 2.
[q] Philostrat. Vit. Apollonii, l. 1. c. 7.
[r] Nat. Hist. l. 32. c. 1.
[s] Nat. Hist. l. 9. c. 5.
[t] Polyhistor. c. 47.
[u] Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 62. apud Schotti Physica Curiosa, par. 2. l. 16. c. 10. sect. 9.
[w] Pantoppidan's History of Norway, par. 2. p. 114. 116.

and even of a man in armour, as many writers [x] have observed. Some [y] think it was a crocodile, which, though a river-fish, yet, for the most part, is at the entrance of rivers, and sometimes goes into the sea many miles, and is capable of swallowing a man; some are above thirty feet long; and in the belly of one of them, in the Indies, was found a woman with all her clothes on [z]: *and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights*: that is, one whole natural day, consisting of twenty-four hours, and part of two others; the Jews having no other way of expressing a natural day but by day and night; and to this the antitype answers; namely, our Lord's being so long in the grave; of whose death, burial, and resurrection, this was a type, as appears from Matt. xii. 40. for which reason Jonah was so miraculously preserved; and a miracle it was that he should not in this time be digested in the stomach of the creature; that he was not suffocated in it, but breathed and lived; and that he was able to bear the stench of the creature's maw; and that he should have his senses, and be in such a frame of mind as both to pray and praise; but what is it that the power of God cannot do? Here some begin the second chapter, and not amiss.

CHAP. II.

THIS chapter contains the prayer of Jonah, when in the fish's belly; the time when he prayed, the person he prayed unto, and the place where, are suggested in ver. 1. and the latter described as a place of great straitness and distress, and even as hell itself, ver. 2. The condition he was in, when cast into the sea, and when in the belly of the fish, which is observed, the more to heighten the greatness of the deliverance, ver. 3, 5, 6. The different frame of mind he was in, sometimes almost in despair, and ready to faint; and presently exercising faith and hope, remembering the goodness of the Lord, and resolving to look again to him, ver. 4, 7. The gracious regards of God to him, in receiving, hearing, and answering his prayer, and bringing up his life from corruption, ver. 2, 6, 7. His resolution, let others do what they would, to praise the Lord, and give him the glory of his salvation, ver. 8, 9. and the chapter is concluded with the order for his deliverance, and the manner of it, ver. 10.

Ver. 1. *Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly.*] Though Jonah had been a praying man, being a good man, and a prophet of the Lord, yet it seems he had not prayed for some time; being disobedient to the will of God, he restrained prayer before him; all the while he was going to Joppa he prayed not; and how indeed could he have the face to pray to him, from whose face he was fleeing? and as soon as he was in the ship he fell asleep, and there lay till he was waked by the shipmaster, who called upon him to arise, and pray to his God; but whether he did or no is not said; and though it is very probable he might, when convicted of his sin, and before he was cast into the sea, and as he was casting into it, it is not recorded; but when he was in the fish's belly, *then* he *prayed*; where it is marvellous he should, or could; it was strange he should be able to breathe, and more strange to breathe spiritually; it was very wonderful he should have the exercise of his reason, and more that he should have the exercise of grace, as faith and hope, as it appears by the following prayer he had. Prayer may be performed any where, on a mountain, in a desert, in the caves and dens of the earth, and in a prison, as it has been; but this is the only time it ever was performed in such a place. Jonah is the only man that ever prayed in a fish's belly: and he prayed unto the Lord as *his God*, not merely by creation, and as the God of nature and providence, the God of his life, and of his mercies; but as his covenant God and Father; for though he had sinned against the Lord, and had been sorely chastised by him, yet he did not take his lovingkindness from him, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail, or break his covenant with him; covenant-interest and relation still continued; and Jonah had knowledge of it, and faith in it; and as this is an argument the Lord makes use of to engage backsliders to return unto him, it is a great encouragement to them so to do, Jer. iii. 14, 22. In this Jonah was a type of Christ, who, amidst his agonies, sorrows, and sufferings, prayed to his Father, and claimed his interest in him as his God, Heb. v. 7. Matt. xxvii. 46. What follows contains the sum and substance of the prophet's thoughts, and the ejaculations of his mind, when in the fish's belly; but were not put up in this form, but were reduced by him into it after he was delivered; as many of David's psalms were put into the form and order they are after his deliverance from troubles, suitable to his thoughts of things when he was in them; and indeed the following account is an historical narration of facts, which were before and after his prayer, as well as of that itself.

Ver. 2. *And said*, &c.] Not unto the Lord in prayer, but to others, to whom he communicated what passed between God and him in this time of distress; how he prayed to him, and was heard by him; what a condition he had been in, and how he was delivered out of it; what was his frame of mind whilst in it, sometimes despairing, and sometimes hoping; and how thankful he was for this salvation, and was determined to praise the Lord for it: *I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me*: or, *out of my strait* [a]; being straitened in his body, and as it were in a prison in the fish's belly; and straitened in his soul, being between hope and despair, and under the apprehensions of the divine displeasure. A time of affliction is a time for prayer; it brings those to it

[x] Vid. Lipen. Jonæ Diaplus, c. 2. th. 6. in Dissert. Theolog. Philol. tom. 1. p. 987.

[y] Vid. Texelii Phœnix, l. 2, c. 6. p. 242, 243.

[z] Mandelsloe in Harris's Voyages and Travels, vol. 1. B. 1. c. 2. p. 759.

[a] מצרה ex angustia mea, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; ex arcto mihi, Cocceius.

that have disused it; it made Jonah cry to his God, if not with a loud voice, yet inwardly; and his cry was powerful and piercing, it reached the heavens, and entered into the ears of the Lord of hosts, though out of the depths, and out of the belly of a fish, in the midst of the sea: *out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice*: or, *out of the belly of the grave*[w]; out of the midst of it: that is, out of the belly of the fish, which was as a grave to him, as Jarchi observes; where he lay as out of the land of the living, as one dead, and being given up for dead: and it may also respect the frame of his mind, the horror and terror he was in, arising from a sense of his sins, and the apprehensions he had of the wrath of God, which were as a hell in his conscience; and amidst all this he cried to God, and he heard him; and not only delivered him from the fish's belly, but from those dreadful apprehensions he had of his state and condition; and spoke peace and pardon to him. This is a proof that this prayer or thanksgiving, be it called which it will, was composed, as to the form and order of it, after his deliverance; and these words are an appeal to God for the truth of what he had said in the preceding clause, and not a repetition of it in prayer; or expressing the same thing in different words.

Ver. 3. *For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas*, &c.] Though the mariners did this, yet Jonah ascribes it to the Lord; he knew it was he, whom he had sinned against and offended; that he was he that sent the storm after him into the sea; that determined the lot to fall upon him; that it was not only by his permission, but according to his will, that he should be cast into it, and overcame the reluctance of the men to it, and so worked upon them that they did it; and therefore Jonah imputes it to him, and not to them; nor does he complain of it, or murmur at it; or censure it as an unrighteous action, or as hard, cruel, and severe; but rather mentions it to set off the greatness of his deliverance: and by this it appears, that it was far from shore when Jonah was cast into the sea, it was the great deep; and which also is confirmed by the large fish which swallowed him, which could not swim but in deep waters; and because of the multitude of the waters, called *seas*, and *in the heart*[x] of them, as it may be rendered; and agreeably Christ the antitype of Jonah lay in the heart of the earth, Matt. xii. 40: *and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me*; which was his case as soon as cast into the sea, before the fish had swallowed him, as well as after: this was literally true of Jonah, what David says figuratively concerning his afflictions, and from whom the prophet seems to borrow the expressions, Psal. xlii. 7. and indeed he might use them also in a metaphorical sense, with a view to the afflictions of body, and sorrows of death, that compassed him; and to the billows and waves of divine wrath, which in his apprehension lay upon him, and rolled over him.

Ver. 4. *Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight*, &c.] Or, *from before thine eyes*[y]; the Targum, from before thy Word; as David also said in his distress, Psal. xxxi. 22. not but that he knew he was in the reach and under the eye of his omniscience, which saw him in the fish's belly, in the depths of the sea, for nothing can hide from that; but he thought he was no longer under the eye of his providence; and that he would no more care for him, but leave him in this forlorn condition, and not deliver him; and especially he concluded that he would no more look upon him with an eye of love, grace, and mercy, pity and compassion: these are the words of one in despair, or near unto it; and yet a beam of light, a ray of hope, breaks in, and a holy resolution is formed, as follows: *yet I will look again toward thy holy temple*: not the temple at Jerusalem, towards which men used to look when they prayed, being at a distance from it, 1 Kings viii. 29. though there may be an allusion to such a practice; for it can hardly be thought that Jonah, in the fish's belly, could tell which way the temple stood, and look towards that; but he looked upwards and heavenwards; he looked up to God in his holy temple in heaven; and though he was afraid he would not look down upon him in a way of grace and mercy, he was resolved to look up to God in the way of prayer and supplication; and particularly, for the further encouragement of his faith and hope, he looked to the Messiah, the antitype of the temple, ark, and mercy-seat, and for whose sake he might hope his prayers would be heard and answered.

Ver. 5. *The waters compassed me about, even to the soul*, &c.] Either when he was first cast into the sea, which almost suffocated him, and just ready to take away his life, could not breathe for them, as is the case of a man drowning; or these were the waters the fish drew into its belly, in such large quantities, that they compassed him about, even to the endangering of his life there. So the Targum, "the waters surrounded me unto death." In this Jonah was a type of Christ in his afflictions and sorrows, which were so many and heavy, that he is said to be *exceeding sorrowful*, or surrounded with sorrow, *even unto death*, Matt. xxvi. 38. see also Psal. lxix. 1. *The depth closed me round about*; the great deep, the waters of the sea, both when he fell into it, and while in the belly of the fish: thus also Christ his antitype came into deep waters, where there was no standing, and where floods of sin, and of ungodly men, and of divine wrath, overflowed him; see Psal. xviii. 4, 5. and lxix. 2. *The weeds were wrapped about my head*: the sea-weeds, of which there are great quantities in it, which grow at the bottom of it, to which Jonah came, and from whence he rose up again, before swallowed by the fish; or these weeds were drawn into the belly of the fish, along with the water which it took in, and were wrapped about the head of the prophet as he lay there; or the fish went down with him into the bottom of the sea, and lay among those weeds; and so they may be said to be wrapped about him, he being there, as follows. The Targum is, "the sea of Suph being over my head;" the same with the Red sea, which

[w] מבטן שאול e ventre sepulchri, Calvin, Piscator, Liveleus; e ventre sepulchrali, Junius & Tremellius.

[x] בלבב in corde, V. L. Cocceius; in cor, Montanus, Drusius.

[y] מנגד עיניך e regione oculorum tuorum, Montanus, Piscator; e coram oculis tuis, Drusius, Burkius.

is so called, Psal. cvi. 9. and elsewhere, and that from the weeds that were in it; and R. Japhet, as Aben Ezra observes, says the sea of Suph is mixed with the sea of Joppa; that is, as a learned man[e] observes, by means of the river Rhinocorura, through which the lake of Sirbon mingles with the great sea; and which lake itself is so called from the weeds in it: yea, was anciently called Suph, and the sea of Suph, or *mare Scirpeum*, hence Sirbon: and the same writer thinks that the father of Andromede, said to be devoured by a whale about Joppa, had his name of Cepheus from hence.

Ver. 6. *I went down to the bottom of the mountains*, &c.] Which are in the midst of the sea, whither the fish carried him, and where the waters are deep; or the bottom of rocks and promontories on the shore of the sea; and such vast rocks hanging over the sea, whose bottoms were in it, it seems are on the shore of Joppa, near to which Jonah was cast into the sea, as Egesippus[f] relates: *the earth with her bars* were *about me for ever*; that is, the earth with its cliffs and rocks on the sea-shore, which are as bars to the sea, that it cannot overflow it; these were such bars to Jonah, that could he have got clear of the fish's belly, and attempted to swim to shore, he could never get to it, or over these bars, the rocks and cliffs, which were so steep and high: *yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God*: notwithstanding these difficulties, which were insuperable by human power, and these seeming impossibilities of deliverance; yet the Lord brought him out of the fish's belly, as out of a grave, the pit of corruption, and where he must otherwise have lain and rotted, and freed his soul from those terrors which would have destroyed him; and by this also we learn, that this form of words was composed after he came to dry land: herein likewise he was a type of Christ, who, though laid in the grave, was not left there so long as to see corruption, Psal. xvi. 10.

Ver. 7. *When my soul fainted within me*, &c.] Covered with grief; overwhelmed with sorrow; ready to faint and sink at the sight of his sins; and under a sense of the wrath and displeasure of God, and being forsaken by him: *I remembered the Lord*; his covenant and promises, his former mercies and loving-kindness, the gracious experiences he had had of these in times past; he remembered he was a God gracious and merciful, and ready to forgive, healed the backslidings of his people, and still loved them freely, and tenderly received and embraced them, when they returned to him: *and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple*; into heaven itself, the habitation of God's holiness, the temple where he dwells, and is worshipped by holy angels and glorified saints; the prayer the prophet put up in the fish's belly, encouraged to it by remembering the mercy and goodness of God, ascended from thence, and reached the ears of the Lord of hosts in the highest heavens, and met with a kind reception, and had a gracious answer; see Psal. iii. 4. and xxii. 6.

Ver. 8. *They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy*, &c.] They that worship idols, who are nothing, mere vanity and lies, and deceive those that serve them, these forsake the God of their lives, and of their mercies; and so do all such who serve divers lusts and pleasures, and pursue the vanities of this life; and also those who follow the dictates of carnal sense and reason, to the neglect of the will of God, and obedience to his commands; which was Jonah's case, and is, I think, chiefly intended. The Targum, Syriac version, and so Jarchi, and most interpreters, understand it of worshippers of idols in general; and Kimchi of the mariners of the ship Jonah had been in; who promised to relinquish their idols, but did not; and vowed to serve the Lord, and sacrifice to him, but did not perform what they promised. But I rather think Jonah reflects upon himself in particular, as well as leaves this as a general instruction to others; that should they do as he had done, give way to an evil heart of unbelief, and attend to the suggestions of a vain mind, and consult with flesh and blood, and be directed thereby, to the disregard of God and his will; they will find, as he had done to his cost, that they forsake that God that has been gracious and merciful to them, and who is all goodness and mercy, Psal. cxliv. 3. which to do is very ungrateful to him, and injurious to themselves; and now he being sensible of his folly, and influenced by the grace and goodness of God to him, resolves to do as follows:

Ver. 9. *But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving*, &c.] Not only offer up a legal sacrifice in a ceremonial way, when he came to Jerusalem; but along with it the spiritual sacrifice of praise, which he knew was more acceptable unto God; and thus Christ, his antitype, upon his deliverance from his enemies, Psal. xxii. 22, 25. and lxix. 30, 31: *I will pay that I vowed*; when he was in distress; as that he would sacrifice after the above manner, or behave in a better manner for the future than he had done; and particularly would go to Nineveh, if the Lord thought fit to send him again: *salvation is of the Lord*; this was the ground of the faith and hope of Jonah when at the worst, and the matter of his present praise and thanksgiving. There is one letter more in the word rendered *salvation*[g] than usual, which increases the sense; and denotes, that all kind of salvation is of the Lord, temporal, spiritual, and eternal; not only this salvation from the devouring waves of the sea, and from the grave of the fish's belly, was of the Lord; but his deliverance from the terrors of the Lord, and the sense he had of his wrath, and the peace and pardon he now partook of, were from the Lord, as well as eternal salvation in the world to come, and the hope of it. All temporal salvations and deliverances are from the Lord, and to him the glory of them belongs; and his name should be praised on account of them; which Jonah resolved to do for himself: and so is spiritual and eternal salvation; it is of Jehovah the Father, as to the original spring and motive of it, which is his grace, and not men's works, and is owing to his wisdom, and not men's, for the plan and form of it; it is of Jehovah the Son, as to the impetration of it, who only

[e] Texelius, Phœnix, l. 3. c. 6. p. 242, 243, 244, 228, 229.
[f] De excidio Urb. Hieros. l. 3. c. 20.

[g] ישועתה.

has wrought it out; and it is of Jehovah the Spirit, as to the application of it to particular persons; and therefore the glory of it belongs to all the three Persons, and should be given them. This is the epiphonema or conclusion of the prayer or thanksgiving; which shews that it was, as before observed, put into this form or order, after the salvation was wrought; though that is related afterwards, as it is proper it should, and as the order of the narration required.

Ver. 10. *And the Lord spake unto the fish*, &c.] Or gave orders to it; he that made it could command it; all creatures are the servants of God, and do his will; what he says is done; he so ordered it by his providence, that this fish should come near the shore, and be so wrought upon by his power, that it could not retain Jonah any longer in its belly. It may be rendered [h], *then the Lord spake*, &c. after Jonah had finished his prayer, or put up those ejaculations, the substance of which is contained in the above narrative: *and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land;* not upon the shore of the Red sea, as some; much less upon the shore of Nineveh, which was not built upon the seashore, but upon the river Tigris; and the fish must have carried him all round Africa, and part of Asia, to have brought him to the banks of the Tigris; which could not have been done in three days' time, nor in much greater. Josephus [i] says it was upon the shore of the Euxine sea; but the nearest part of it to Nineveh was 1600 miles from Tarsus, which the whale, very slow in swimming, cannot be thought to go in three days; besides, no very large fish swim in the Euxine sea, because of the straits of the Propontis, through which they cannot pass, as Bochart [k] from various writers has proved. It is more likely, as others, that it was on the Syrian shore, or in the bay of Issus, now called the gulf of Lajazzo; or near Alexandria, or Alexandretta, now Scanderoon. But why not on the shore of Palestine? and, indeed, why not near the place from whence they sailed? Huetius [l] and others think it probable that this case of Jonah gave rise to the story of Arion, who was cast into the sea by the mariners, took up by a dolphin, and carried to Corinth. Jonah's deliverance was a type of our Lord's resurrection from the dead on the third day, Matt. xii. 40. and a pledge of ours; for, after this instance of divine power, why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should raise the dead?

CHAP. III.

THIS chapter gives an account of the renewal of Jonah's message to Nineveh, and of his faithful execution of it, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, and of the fruit and effect of it, the conversion of the Ninevites, their faith in God, repentance of their sins, and reformation from them, ver. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. and of God's approbation thereof, by revoking the sentence he had pronounced upon them, ver. 10.

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time*, &c.] Jonah having been scourged by the Lord for his stubbornness and disobedience, and being humbled under the mighty hand of God, is tried a second time, whether he would go on the Lord's errand, and do his business; and his commission is renewed, as it was necessary it should; for it would have been unsafe and dangerous for him to have proceeded upon the former without a fresh warrant; as the Israelites, when they resufed entering into the land of Canaan to possess it, upon the report of the spies, and afterwards reflecting upon their sin, would go up without the word of the Lord, and contrary to the advice of Moses, many of them perished in the attempt, being cut off by the Amalekites, Numb. xiv. 1, 3, 40—45. and this renewal of Jonah's commission shews that he was still continued in his office as a prophet, notwithstanding his failings; as the apostles were in theirs, though they all forsook Christ, and Peter denied him, Matt. xxvi. 56, 75. and xxviii. 19. John xxi. 15, 16, 17. and that the Lord had heard his prayer, and graciously received him, and took away his iniquity from him, employing him again in his service, being more fitted for it: *saying;* as follows:

Ver. 2. *Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city*, &c.] So it is called, ch. i. 2. see the note there. The order runs in the same words as before; and the same discouragements are presented to Jonah, taken from the greatness of the city, the number of its inhabitants, its being the metropolis of the Assyrian empire, and the seat of the greatest monarch on earth, to try his faith; but these had not the like effect as before; for he had now another spirit given him, not of fear, but of a sound mind; he considered he was sent by a greater King, and that more were they that were on his side than the inhabitants of this place, who might possibly be against him: *and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee;* that he had bid him before, declaring and exposing their wickedness, and telling them that in a short time their city would be destroyed. Jonah must not be gratified with any alteration in the message; but he must go with it as it had before been given, or what he now bid, or should bid him; the word of the Lord must be spoken just as it is delivered; nothing must be added to it, or taken from it; the whole counsel of God must be declared; prophets and ministers must preach, not as men bid them, but as God bids them. The Targum is, "prophesy against it the prophecy which I speak with thee."

Ver. 3. *So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord*, &c.] He was no longer disobedient to the heavenly vision; being taught by the

[h] So ו is sometimes used, and is so rendered Psal. lxxviii. 34. Job x. 10. See Noldius, p. 308, 309.
[i] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 10. sect. 2.
[k] Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 5. c. 12. col. 744.
[l] Demonstr. Evangel. prop. 4. p. 294.

rod, he acts according to the word; he's now made willing to go on the Lord's errand, and do his business, under the influence of his power and grace; he stands not consulting with the flesh, but immediately arises and sets forward on his journey, as directed and commanded, being rid of that timorous spirit, and those fears, he was before possessed of; his afflictions had been greatly sanctified to him, to restore his straying soul, and cause him to keep and observe the word of the Lord; and his going to Nineveh, and preaching to a Heathen people, after his deliverance out of the fish's belly, was a type of the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles by the apostles, according to the commission of Christ renewed unto them, after his resurrection from the dead, Acts xxvi. 23. and after many failings of theirs. *Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city*: or *a city great to God*[m]; not dear to him, for it was full of wickedness; not great in his esteem, with whom the whole earth is as nothing; but known by him to be what it was; and the name of God is often used of things, to express the superlative nature and greatness of them, as trees of God, mountains of God, the flame of God, *&c.* Psal. xxxvi. 7. and lxxx. 10. Cant. viii. 6. it was a greater city than Babylon, of which see the note on ch. i. 2: *of three days' journey* in compass, being sixty miles, as Diodorus Siculus[n] relates; and allowing twenty miles for a day's journey on foot, as this was, and which is as much as a man can ordinarily do to hold it, was just three days' journey; and so Herodotus[o] reckons a day's journey at 150 furlongs, which make about nineteen miles; but, according to the Jewish writers, a middling day's journey is ten parsas[p], and every parsa makes four miles, so that with them it is forty miles: or else it was three days' journey in the length of it, as Kimchi thinks, from end to end. This is observed to shew the greatness of the city, which was the greatest in the whole world, as well as to lead on to the following account.

Ver. 4. *And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey*, &c.] As soon as he came to it, he did not go into an inn, to refresh himself after his wearisome journey; or spend his time in gazing upon the city, and to observe its structure, and the curiosities of it; but immediately sets about his work, and proclaims what he was bid to do; and before he could finish one day's journey, he had no need to proceed any further, the whole city was alarmed with his preaching, was terrified with it, and brought to repentance by it: *and he cried*; as he went along; he lifted up his voice like a trumpet, that every one might hear; he did not mutter it out, as if afraid to deliver his message, but cried aloud in the hearing of all; and very probably now and then made a stop in the streets, where there was a concourse of people, or where more streets met, and there, as a herald, proclaimed what he had to say: *and said, yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown*: not by a foreign army besieging and taking it, which was not probable to be done in such a space of time, but by the immediate power of God; either by fire from heaven, as he overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, their works being like theirs, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe, or by an earthquake; that is, within forty days, or at the end of forty days, as the Targum; not exceeding such a space, which was granted for their repentance, which is implied, though not expressed; and must be understood with this proviso, except it repented, for otherwise why is any time fixed? and why have they warning given them, or the prophet sent to them? and why were they not destroyed at once, as Sodom and Gomorrah, without any notice? doubtless, so it would have been, had not this been the case. The Septuagint version very wrongly reads, *yet three days*, &c.; and as wrongly does Josephus[q] make Jonah to say, that in a short time they would lose the empire of Asia, when only the destruction of Nineveh is threatened; though, indeed, that loss followed upon it.

Ver. 5. *So the people of Nineveh believed God*, &c.] Or *in God*[r]: in the word of the Lord, as the Targum; they believed there was a God, and that he, in whose name Jonah came, was the true God; they believed the word the prophet spake was not the word of man, but the word of God; faith came by hearing the word, which is the spring of true repentance, and the root of all good works. Kimchi and R. Jeshuah, in Aben Ezra, suppose that the men of the ship, in which Jonah had been, were at Nineveh; and these testified that they had cast him into the sea, and declared the whole affair concerning him; and this served greatly to engage their attention to him, and believe what he said: but this is not certain; and, besides, their faith was the effect of the divine power that went along with the preaching of Jonah, and not owing to the persuasion of men. *And proclaimed a fast*; not of themselves, but by the order of their king, as follows; though Kimchi thinks this was before that: *and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them*; both with respect to rank and age, so universal were their fasting and mourning; in token of which they stripped themselves of their common and rich apparel, and clothed themselves with sackcloth; as was usual in extraordinary cases of mourning, not only with the Jews, but other nations.

Ver. 6. *For word came unto the king of Nineveh*, &c.] Who was not Sardanapalus, a very dissolute prince, and abandoned to his lusts; but rather Pul, the same that came against Menahem king of Israel, 2 Kings xv. 19. as Bishop Usher[s] thinks; to him news were brought that there was such a prophet come into the city, and published such and such things, which met with credit among the people; and that these, of all ranks and degrees, age and sex, were affected with it, and thrown into the utmost concern about it; so very swiftly did the ministry of Jonah spread in the city; and what he delivered was so quickly carried from one to another, that in one day's time it reached the palace, and the royal ear: *and he arose from his throne*; where he sat in great majesty and splendour, encircled by his

[m] גדולה לאלהים magna Deo, Montanus, Vatablus, Tigurine version, Mercerus, Drusius, Cocceius.
[n] Biblioth. l. 2. p. 92.
[o] Terpsichore, sive l. 5. c. 53.
[p] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 94. 2.
[q] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 10. sect. 2.
[r] באלהים in Deum, V. L.
[s] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3233. Vid. Rollin's Ancient History, vol. 2. p. 30.

nobles, receiving their caresses and compliments; or, it may be, giving audience to foreign ambassadors, sent to court his friendship and alliance; or hearing causes, and redressing the grievances of his subjects; for he appears to be one that did not indulge himself in hunting, and such-like exercises, or in his lusts and pleasures: *and he laid his robe from him;* his royal apparel, his imperial robe, and garments of his glory, as the Targum; or his glorious garments, with which he was richly and most magnificently arrayed; he put off these, and left his throne, in token of his concern at hearing such dismal tidings as the overthrow of his capital city, and of his humiliation and abasement: *and covered* him *with sackcloth;* which was very rough and coarse, and must be very disagreeable to a person so tender and delicate, and was what the meanest of his subjects wore on this occasion: *and sat in ashes;* or *in the* or *that ashes*[*]; used in such times of mourning, which were either strewed under him, or put upon his head; and this, with the other, were done to afflict the body; and affect the mind with a sense of sin, and the misery threatened for sin, and to shew deep humiliation for it.

Ver. 7. *And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh, &c.*] By a herald or heralds, sent into the several parts of the city: *by the decree of the king and his nobles;* with whom he consulted, and whose advice he took; and who were equally concerned at this news, and very probably were present when word was brought to the king concerning it: *let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing;* a very strict and general fast this: abstinence from all food was enjoined; not only men of every rank and age, but the cattle likewise, horses and camels, they used either for their pleasure or business; their oxen, cows, and calves, of their herd; their sheep, goats, lambs, and kids, of their flocks: *let them not feed, nor drink water;* no food were to be put into their mangers or folds; nor were they to be suffered to graze in their pastures, or to be allowed the least quantity of food or drink; this was ordered, to make the mourning the greater; thus Virgil[*] describes the mourning for the death of Cæsar by the oxen not coming to the rivers to drink, nor touching the grass of the field; and to afflict their minds the more, and for their greater mortification, since these creatures were for their use and pleasure. Fasting was used by the Heathens, as well as the Jews, in some cases; particularly the Egyptians, as Herodotus[*] observes, from whom the Assyrians might take it.

Ver. 8. *But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, &c.*] As the king was, and the people also were; and this order enjoined the same to the beasts, horses, and camels, whose rich trappings were to be taken off, and sackcloth put upon them, for the greater solemnity of the mourning; as at this day, at the funerals of great persons, not only the horses which draw the hearse and mourning-coaches are covered with black velvet, to make the solemnity more awful, but others are led, clothed in like manner: *and cry mightily unto God;* which clause stands so closely connected with the former, as if it respected beasts as well as men, who sometimes are said to cry for food in times of drought and distress, Joel i. 20. and who here might purposely be kept from food and drink, that they might cry, and so the more affect the minds of the Ninevites, in their humiliation and abasement; but men are principally meant, at least who were to cry unto God intensely and earnestly, with great ardour, fervency, and importunity; not only aloud, and with a strong voice, but with their whole heart, as Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it; heartily, sincerely, and devoutly, for the averting divine wrath, and the pardon of their sins, and the sparing of their city: *yea, let them turn every one from his evil way;* as well knowing that fasting and prayer would be of no avail, without leaving every one their sinful courses, and reforming their life and manners: *and from the violence that is in their hands;* their rapine and oppression, their thefts and robberies, and preying upon the substance of others; which seem to be the reigning vices of this city, in doing which many murders were committed also; see Nah. iii. 1. the Jewish writers interpret this of making restitution for rapine and violence, which is a genuine fruit of repentance; see Luke xix. 8. The Septuagint version understands this, not as a direction from the king to the men of Nineveh what they should do, but as a narrative of what they did; and no doubt but they did these things, put on sackcloth, fast, pray, and turn from their evil ways; yet they are the instructions of the king unto them, and the orders he gave them.

Ver. 9. *Who can tell, &c.*] The Septuagint and Arabic versions prefix to this the word *saying*, and take them to be, not the words of the king, but of the Ninevites; though very wrongly: or *who is he that knows;* which some connect with the next word, *he will return;* that is, that knows the ways of repentance, he will return, as Kimchi and Ben Melech; or that knows that he has sinned, as Aben Ezra: or that knows the transgressions he is guilty of, will return, as Jarchi: and so the Targum, "whosoever knows that "sins are in his hands, he will return, or let him return, from them:" but they are the words of the king, with respect to God, encouraging his subjects to the above things, from the consideration of the probability, or at least possibility, of God's being merciful to them: if *God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce wrath, that we perish not?* he speaks here not as despairing, nor as absolutely doubting, but as between hope and fear; for, by the light of nature, it is not certain that God will pardon men upon repentance; 'tis only probable or possible he may: neither the light of nature nor the law of Moses connect repentance and remission of sins, 'tis the Gospel does this; and it is only by the Gospel revelation that any can be assured that God will forgive, even penitent sinners; however, this Heathen prince encourages his subjects not to despair of, but to hope for, the mercy of God, though they could not be sure of it; and it may be observed,

* באפר in [illegible] illo, Vatablus, Tarnovius.

* Non ulli pastos, illis egere diebus,
Frigida Daphni boves, ad flumina; nulla neque amnem
Libavit quadrupes, nec graminis attigit herbam.
Bucolic. Eclog. 5. l. 24, &c.

* L. 2. c. 4. & l. 4. c. 186.

that he does not put their hope of not perishing, or of salvation, upon their fasting, praying, and reformation, but upon the will, mercy, and goodness of God.

Ver. 10. *And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way*, &c.] Not their outward works, in putting on sackcloth and ashes, and fasting; but their inward works, their faith in him, and repentance towards him; and which were attended with fruits and works meet for repentance, in that they forsook their former course of life, and refrained from it; and these he saw not barely with his eye of omniscience, as he sees all persons and things, good and bad, but so as to like them, approve of them, and accept them, in which sense the word is used, Gen. i. 4, 31. and iv. 4. and so the repentance of these men is spoken of with commendation by Christ, and as what would rise up in judgment, and condemn the men of that generation, Matt. xii. 41: *and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them, and he did it not*; this is spoken after the manner of men, as Aben Ezra observes; and is to be understood, not of any such affection in God as repentance; but of an effect done by him, which carries in it a shew of repentance, or resembles what is done by men when they repent; then they change their course and conduct; so the Lord, though he never changes his will, nor repents of or revokes his decrees, or alters his purposes; yet he sometimes wills a change, and makes an alteration in the dispensations of his providence, according to his unchangeable will. God, in this case, did not repent of his decrees concerning the Ninevites, but of what he had said or threatened respecting the overthrow of Nineveh, in case of their impenitence; it was his will that they should be told of their sin and danger, and by this means be brought to repentance, and the wrath threatened them be averted; so that here was a change, not of his mind and will concerning them, but of his outward dispensations towards them; see Jer. xviii. 7, 8, 9, 10.

CHAP. IV.

THIS chapter gives us an account of Jonah's displeasure at the repentance of the Ninevites, and at the Lord's shewing mercy unto them, ver. 1. the angry prayer of Jonah upon it, ver. 2, 3. the Lord's gentle reproof of him for it, ver. 4. his conduct upon that, ver. 5. the gourd prepared for him; its rise, usefulness, and destruction, which raised different passions in Jonah, ver. 6, 7, 8. the improvement the Lord made of this to rebuke Jonah, for his displicency at the mercy he shewed to the Ninevites, and to convict him of his folly, ver. 9, 10, 11.

Ver. 1. *But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry*, &c.] Jonah was *mirabilis homo*, as one calls him, an amazing man; the strangest, oddest, and most out-of-the-way man, for a good man and a prophet, as one shall ever hear or read of. Displeased he was at that, which one would have thought he would have exceedingly rejoiced at, the success of his ministry, as all good men, prophets, and ministers of the word, do; nothing grieves them more than the hardness of men's hearts, and the unsuccessfulness of their labours; and nothing more rejoices them than the conversion of sinners by them; but Jonah is displeased at the repentance of the Ninevites through his preaching, and at the mercy of God shewed unto them: displeased at that, on account of which there is joy in heaven among the divine Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, and among the holy angels, even over one repenting sinner; and much more over many thousands, as in this case: displeased at that which is the grudge, the envy, and spite of devils, and which they do all they can to hinder: and the more strange it is that Jonah should act such a part at this time, when he himself had just received mercy of the Lord in so extraordinary a manner as to be delivered out of the fish's belly, even out of the belly of hell; which one would think would have warmed his heart with love, not only to God, but to the souls of men, and caused him to have rejoiced that others were sharers with him in the same grace and mercy. The reasons of this strange conduct, if they may be called reasons, are supposed to be these: one reason was, his own honour, which he thought lay at stake, and that he should be reckoned a false prophet if Nineveh was not destroyed at the time he had fixed; but the proviso implied, though not expressed, "except ye repent," secured his character; which was the sense of the divine Being, and so the Ninevites understood it, or at least hoped this was the case, and therefore repented, and which the mercy shewn them confirmed: nor had Jonah any reason to fear they would have reproached him with such an imputation to his character; but, on the contrary, would have caressed him as the most welcome person that ever came to their city, and had been the instrument of shewing them their sin and danger, and of bringing them to repentance, and so of saving them from threatened ruin; and they did him honour by believing at once what he said, and by repenting at his preaching; and which is testified by Christ, and stands recorded to his honour, and will be transmitted to the latest posterity: another reason was, his prejudice to the Gentiles, which was unreasonable; for, though this was the foible of the Jewish nation, grudging that any favours should be bestowed upon the Gentiles, or prophesied of them; see Rom. x. 19, 20. yet a prophet should have divested himself of such prejudices, as Isaiah and others did; and, especially when he found his ministry was so blessed among them, he should have been silent, and glorified God for his mercy, and said, as the converted Jews did in Peter's time, *then God hath granted unto the Gentiles repentance unto life*: to do otherwise, and as Jonah did, was to act like the unbelieving Jews, who *forbid* the apostles to *preach to the Gentiles, that they might be saved*. A third reason supposed is the honour of his own countrymen, which he thought would be reflected on, and might issue in their ruin, they not returning from their evil ways, when the Heathens did: a poor weak reason this! with what advantage might he have re-

turned to his own country? with what force of argument might he have accosted them, and upbraided them with their impenitence and unbelief; that Gentiles at one sermon should repent in sackcloth and ashes, when they had the prophets one after another sent them, and without effect? and who knows what might have been the issue of this? lastly, the glory of God might be pretended; that he would be reckoned a liar, and his word a falsehood, and be derided as such by atheists and unbelievers; but here was no danger of this from these penitent ones; and, besides, the proviso before mentioned secured the truth and veracity of God; and who was honoured by these persons, by their immediate faith in him, and repentance towards him; and his grace and mercy were as much glorified in the salvation of them as his justice would have been in their destruction.

Ver. 2. *And he prayed unto the Lord*, &c.] But in a very different manner from his praying in the fish's belly: this was a very disorderly prayer, put up in the hurry of his spirit, and in the heat of passion: prayer should be fervent indeed, but not like that of a man in a fever; there should be a warmth and ardour of affection in it, but it should be without wrath, as well as without doubting: this is called a prayer, because Jonah thought it to be so, and put it up to the Lord as one. It begins in the form of a prayer; and it ends with a petition, though an unlawful one; and has nothing of true and right prayer in it; no celebration of the divine Being, and his perfections; no confession of sin, or a petition for any blessing of providence or grace; but mere wrangling, contending, and quarrelling with God: *and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country?* in Judea, or in Galilee, at Geth-hepher; was not this what I thought and said within myself, and to thee, that this would be the issue and consequence of going to the Ninevites; they would repent of their sins, and thou wouldst forgive them; and so thou wouldst be reckoned a liar, and I a false prophet? and now things are come to pass just as I thought and said they would: and thus he suggests that he had a greater or better foresight of things than God himself; and that it would have been better if his saying had been attended unto, and not the order of him to Nineveh; how audacious and insolent was this! *therefore I fled before unto Tarshish*: before he could have a second order to Nineveh: here he justifies his flight to Tarshish, as if he had good reason for it; and that it would have been better if he had not been stopped in his flight, and had gone to Tarshish, and not have gone to Nineveh. This is amazing, after such severe corrections for his flight, and after such success at Nineveh: *for I know that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil*: this he knew from his own experience, for which he had reason to be thankful, and from the proclamation of God, in Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7, which he seems to have respect unto; and a glorious one it is, though Jonah seems to twit and upbraid the Lord with his grace and mercy to men, as if it was a weakness and infirmity in him, whereas it is his highest glory, Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19. he seems to speak of him, and represent him, as if he was all mercy, and nothing else; which is a wrong representation of him; for he is righteous as well as merciful; and in the same place where he proclaims himself to be so, he declares that he will *by no means clear the guilty*: but here we see that good men, and prophets, and ministers of the word, are men of like passions with others, and some of greater passions; and here we have an instance of the prevailing corruptions of good men, and how they break out again, even after they have been scourged for them; for afflictions, though they are corrections for sin, and do restrain it, and humble for it, and both purge and prevent it, yet do not wholly remove it.

Ver. 3. *Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me*, &c.] Or, *my soul*[x]. This, as Drusius remarks, may be observed against those that think the soul is not immortal; for by this it appears that it may be taken from the body, and that it exists separate from it, and does not die with it; and since the body dies upon its removal, for *the body without the spirit is dead*, as James says; death is expressed by this phrase, Job xxvii. 8. Acts viii. 33. here Jonah allows that God is the God of life, the author and giver of it, and is the sole disposer of it; it is in his own power to take it away, and not man's: so far Jonah was right, that he did not in his passion attempt to take away his own life; only desires the Lord to do it, though in that he is not to be justified: for though it may be lawful for good men to desire to die, with submission to the will of God; that they might be free from sin, and serve him without it, and be with Christ, and in the enjoyment of the divine Presence, as the Apostle Paul and others did, 2 Cor. v. 6, 8. Phil. i. 21, 23. but not through discontent, as Elijah, 1 Kings xix. 4. or merely to be rid of troubles, and to be free from pain and afflictions, as Job, ch. vi. 1, 2, 3, 8, 9. and much less in a pet and passion, as Jonah here, giving this reason for it, *for it is better for me to die than to live*; not being able to bear the reproach of being a false prophet, which he imagined would be cast upon him; or, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi, that he might not see the evil come upon Israel, which he feared the repentance of the Ninevites would be the occasion of. Jonah was in a very poor frame of spirit to die in; this would not have been dying in faith and hope in God; which graces cannot be thought to be in lively exercise in him when he was quarrelling with God; neither in love to God, with whom he was angry; nor in love to men, at whose repentance, and finding mercy with the Lord, he was displeased.

Ver. 4. *Then said the Lord, dost thou well to be angry?*] A mild and gentle reproof this; which shews him to be a God gracious and merciful, and slow to anger; he might have answered Jonah's passionate wish, and struck him dead at once, as Ananias and Sapphira were; but he only puts this question, and leaves it with him to consider of. Some render it, *is doing good displeasing to thee*[y]? art thou angry at that, because I do good to whom I will? so R. Japhet, as Aben Ezra observes, though he disapproves of it:

[x] את נפשי animam meam, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Cocceius.

[y] ההיטב חרה לך num benefacere ira est tibi? Montanus.

according to this the sense is, is doing good to the Ninevites, shewing mercy to them upon their repentance, such an eyesore to thee? is thine eye evil, because mine is good? so the Scribes and Pharisees indeed were displeased with Christ for conversing with publicans and sinners, which was for the good of their souls; and the elder brother was angry with his father for receiving the prodigal; and of the same cast Jonah seems to be, at least at this time, being under the power of his corruptions. There seems to be an emphasis upon the word *thou*; dost *thou* well to be angry? what, *thou*, a creature, be angry with his Creator; a worm, a potsherd of the earth, with the God of heaven and earth? what, *thou*, that hast received mercy thyself in such an extraordinary manner, and so lately, and be angry at mercy shewn to others? what, *thou*, a prophet of the Lord, that should have at heart the good of immortal souls, and be displeased that thy ministry has been the means of the conversion and repentance of so many thousands? is there any just cause for all this anger? no, it is a causeless one; and this is put to the conscience of Jonah; he himself is made judge in his own cause; and it looks as if, upon self-reflection and reconsideration, when his passions cooled and subsided, that he was self-convicted and self-condemned, since no answer is returned. The Targum is, "art thou exceeding angry?" and so other interpreters, Jewish and Christian [z], understand it of the vehemency of his anger.

Ver. 5. *So Jonah went out of the city*, &c.] Had not the inhabitants of it repented, he had done right to go out of it, and shake the dust of his feet against it; or, in such a case, had he gone out of it, as Lot out of Sodom, when just going to be overthrown; but Jonah went out in a sullen fit, because it was to be spared; though some render the words, *now Jonah had gone out of the city* [a]; that is, before all this passed, recorded in the preceding verses; and so Aben Ezra observes, that the Scripture returns here to make mention of the affairs of Jonah, and what happened before the accomplishment of the forty days: *and sat on the east side of the city*: where he might have very probably a good sight of it; and which lay the reverse of the road to his own country; that, if the inhabitants should pursue him, they would miss of him; which some suppose he might be in fear of, should their city be destroyed: *and there made him a booth*; of the boughs of trees, which he erected, not to continue in, but for a short time, expecting in a few days the issue of his prediction: *and sat under it in the shadow*; to shelter him from the heat of the sun: *till he might see what would become of the city*; or, *what would be done in it*, or *with it* [b]; if this was after he knew that the Lord had repented of the evil he threatened, and was disposed to shew mercy to the city; and which, as Kimchi thinks, was revealed to him by the spirit of prophecy; then he sat here, expecting the repentance of the Ninevites would be a shortlived one; be like the goodness of Ephraim and Judah, as the morning cloud, and early dew that passes away; and that then God would change his dispensations towards them again, as he had done; or however he might expect, that though the city was not totally overthrown, yet that there would be something done; some lesser judgment fall upon them, as a token of the divine displeasure, and which might save his credit as a prophet.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord God prepared a gourd*, &c.] So the Septuagint render the word; but some say that a worm will not touch that; Jerom renders it an *ivy*; but neither the gourd nor that rise upwards without some props to support them. The Hebrew word is *kikaion*, the same with the *kiki*, or *cici*, of Herodotus [c], Dioscorides [d], Strabo [e], and Pliny [f]; a plant frequent in Egypt, of which the Egyptians made an oil; hence the Talmudists [g] make mention of the oil of *kik*, which Resh-lakish says is the *kikaion* of Jonah; and which is the same that the Arabians call *alcheroa* or *alcherva*, according to Samuel ben Hophni [h], Maimonides [i], Bartenora [k], and Jerom [l]; and which is well known to be the *ricinus*, or *palma Christi*; and which, by the description of it, according to all the above writers, bids fairest [m] to be here intended; it rising up to the height of a tree, an olive-tree, having very large broad leaves, like those of vines, or of plantain; and springing up suddenly, as Pliny says it does in Spain; and Clusius affirms he saw at the straits of Gibraltar a ricinus of the thickness of a man, and of the height of three men; and Bellonius, who travelled through Syria and Palestine, saw one in Crete of the bigness of a tree; and Dietericus [n], who relates the above, says he saw himself, in a garden at Leyden, well furnished and enriched with exotic plants, an American ricinus, the stalk of which was hollow, weak, and soft, and the leaves almost a foot and a half; and which Adolphus Vorstius, he adds, took to be the same which Jonah had for a shade; with which agrees what Dioscorides [o] says, that there is a sort of it which grows large like a tree, and as high as a fig-tree; the leaves of it are like those of a palm-tree, though broader, smoother, and blacker; the branches and trunk of it are hollow like a reed: and what may seem more to confirm this is, that a certain number of grains of the seed of the ricinus very much provoke vomiting; which, if true, as Marinus [p] observes, the word here used may be derived from קיא, which signifies to vomit; from whence is the word קיא, vomiting; and the first radical being here doubled may increase the signification, and shew

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[z] Nonne vehemens ira est tibi? Pagninus; numquid vehementer indignaris, multumne (valdene) iratus es? Vatablus; so Kimchi and R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol 47. 2.

[a] ויצא exierat autem, Mercerus; exivit, Cocceius.

[b] מה יהיה בעיר quid casui futurum in civitate, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Tarnovius; quid fieret in ea urbe, Vatablus.

[c] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 94.

[d] L. 4. c. 164.

[e] Geograph. l. 17. p. 566.

[f] Nat. Hist. l. 15. c. 7.

[g] Misn. Sabbat, c. 2. sect. 1. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 21. 2.

[h] In Kimchi in loc.

[i] In Misna Sabbat, c. 2. sect. 1.

[k] In ib.

[l] In loc.

[m] Vid. Weidlingt. Dissert. de Kikaion, apud Thesaur. Theolog. Phil. Dissert. vol. 1. p. 989. & Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 2. c. 24. p. 293, 294. & l. 4. c. 27. p. 623. & Geograph. par. 1. col. 918, 919. & Lyreleum in loc.

[n] Antiqu. Bibl. par. 1. p. 82.

[o] Apud Calmet's Dictionary, in the word Kikaion.

[p] Area Noæ, tom. 2. fol. 135.

it to be a great emetic; and the like virtue of the ricinus is observed by others [s]. Jerom allegorizes it of the ceremonial law, under the shadow of which Israel dwelt for a while; and then was abrogated by Christ, who says he was a worm, and no man: but it is better to apply it to outward mercies and earthly enjoyments, which like this plant spring out of the earth, and have their root in it, and are of the nature of it, and therefore minded by earthly and carnal men above all others; they are thin, slight, and slender things; there's no solidity and substance in them, like the kiki, whose stalk is hollow as a reed, as Dioscorides says; they are light and empty things, vanity and vexation of spirit; spring up suddenly sometimes, and are gone as soon; some men come to riches and honour at once, and rise up to a very great pitch of both, and quickly fall into poverty and disgrace again; for these are very uncertain perishing things, like this herb or plant, or even as grass, which soon withers away. They are indeed of God, who is the Father of mercies, and are the gifts of his providence, and not the merit of men; they are disposed of according to his will, and *prepared* by him in his purposes, and given forth according to them, and in his covenant to his own special people, and are to them blessings indeed: *and made it to come up over Jonah;* over his head, as follows; and it may be over the booth he had built, which was become in a manner useless; the leaves of the boughs of which it was made being withered with the heat of the sun; it came over him so as to cover him all over; which may denote both the necessity of outward mercies, as food and raiment, which the Lord knows his people have need of; and the sufficiency of them he grants, with which they should be content: *that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief;* either from the vexation of mind at the repentance of the Ninevites, and the mercy shewn them; this being a refreshment unto him, and which he might take as a new token of the Lord's favourable regard to him, after the offence he had given him, and gentle reproof for it; or from the head-ach, with which he was thought to have been afflicted, through his vexation; or by the heat of the sun; or rather it was to shelter him from the heat of the sun, and the distress that gave him: so outward mercies, like a reviving and refreshing shadow, exhilarate the spirits, and are a defence against the injuries and insults of men, and a preservative from the grief and distress which poverty brings with it: *so Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd:* or, *rejoiced with a great joy* [t]; he was excessively and above measure glad of it, because of its usefulness to him: outward mercies are what we should be thankful for; and it is good for men to rejoice in their labours, and enjoy the good of them; to eat their bread with a merry heart and cheerfulness; but should not be elevated with them beyond measure, lifted up with pride, and boast and glory of them, and rejoice in such boastings, which is evil; or rejoice in them as their portion, placing their happiness therein, which is to rejoice in a thing of nought; or to overrate mercies, and shew more affection for them than for God himself, the giver of them, who only should be our *exceeding joy:* and, when this is the case, it is much if they are not quickly taken away, as Jonah's gourd was, as follows:

Ver. 7. *But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day,* &c.] That God that prepared this plant to rise so suddenly, almost as soon prepared a worm to destroy it; for it rose up one night, continued one whole day, to the great delight of Jonah; and by the morning of the following day this worm or grub was prepared in it, or sent to it, to the root of it: this shews that God is the Creator of the least as well as the largest of creatures, of worms as well as whales, contrary to the notion of Valentinus, Marcion, and Apelles; who, as Jerom [u] says, introduce another creator of ants, worms, fleas, locusts, &c. and another of the heavens, earth, sea, and angels: but it is much that Arnobius [v], an orthodox ancient Christian father, should deny such creatures to be the work of God, and profess his ignorance of the Maker of them. His words are, "should we deny flies, beetles, worms, " mice, weasels, and moths, to be the work of the " King omnipotent, it does not follow that it should " be required of us to say who made and formed them; " for we may without blame be ignorant who gave " them their original;" whereas, in the miracle of the lice, the magicians of Egypt themselves owned that the finger of God was there, and were out of their power to effect; and to the Prophet Amos the great God was represented in a vision as making locusts or grasshoppers, ch. vii. 1. and indeed the smallest insect or reptile is a display of the wisdom and power of God, and not at all below his dignity and greatness to produce; and for which there are wise reasons in nature and providence, as here for the production of this worm: the same God that prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah, and a gourd to shadow him, and an east wind to blow upon him, prepared this worm to destroy his shade, and try his patience: *and it smote the gourd, that it withered;* it bit its root, and its moisture dried up, and it withered away at once, and became useless: that same hand that gives mercies can take them away, and that very suddenly, in a trice, in a few hours, as in the case of Job; and sometimes very secretly and invisibly, that men are not aware of; their substance wastes, and they fall to decay, and they can scarcely tell the reason of it; there is a worm at the root of their enjoyments, which kills them; God is as a moth and rottenness unto them; and he does this sometimes by small means, by little instruments, as he plagued Pharaoh and the Egyptians with lice and flies.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass when the sun did arise,* &c.] After that the gourd was smitten and withered; when it was not only risen, but shone out with great force and heat: *that God prepared a vehement east wind;* or, *a deafening east wind* [w]; which blowed so strong, and so loud, as, R. Marinus in Aben Ezra and Kimchi say, made people deaf that heard it: or, a *silencing east wind;* which when it blew, all other

[s] Hillerus in Hierophytico, par. 1. p. 453. apud Burkium in loc.
[t] וישמח־שמחה גדולה & lætatus est—magna lætitia, Pagninus, Montanus; & lætabaturque lætitia magna, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; gavisus est gaudio magno, Burkius.

[u] Proœm. in Philemon. ad Paulam & Eustochium.
[v] Adv. Gentes, l. 2. p. 95.
[w] חרישית surdefacientem, Munster; ex surdentem, Montanus; surdum, Drusius.

winds were silent, as Jarchi: or it made men silent, not being to be heard for it: or, *a silent* [w], that is, a still quiet wind, as the Targum; which blew so gently and slowly, that it increased the heat, instead of lessening it: or rather *a ploughing east wind* [x]; such as are frequent [y] in the eastern countries, which plough up the dry land, cause the sand to arise and cover men and camels, and bury them in it. Of these winds Monsieur Thevenot [z] speaks more than once; in sandy deserts, between Cairo and Suez, he says, "it blew so "furiously, that I thought all the tents would have "been carried away with the wind; which drove "before it such clouds of sand, that we were almost "buried under it; for seeing nobody could stay abroad, "without having mouth and eyes immediately filled "with sand, we lay under the tents, where the wind "drove in the sand above a foot deep round about us;" and in another place he observes [a], "from Suez to "Cairo, for a day's time or more, we had so hot a "wind, that we were forced to turn our backs to it, to "take a little breath, and so soon as we opened our "mouths they were full of sand;" such an one was here raised, which blew the sand and dust into the face of Jonah, and almost suffocated him; which, with the heat of the sun, was very afflictive to him: *and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted:* the boughs of trees, of which the booth was made, being withered, and his gourd, or whatever plant it was, also, he had nothing to shelter him from the heat of the sun; but the beams of it darted directly upon him, so that he was not able to sustain them; they quite overwhelmed him, and caused him to faint, and just ready to die away: *and wished in himself to die;* or, *desired his soul might die* [b]; not his rational soul, which was immortal; but his animal or sensitive soul, which he had in common with animals; he wished his animal life might be taken from him, because the distress through the wind and sun was intolerable to him: *and said, it is better for me to die than to live;* in so much pain and misery; see ver. 3.

Ver. 9. *And God said to Jonah, dost thou well to be angry for the gourd?* &c.] Or, *art thou very angry for it?* as the Targum: no mention is made of the blustering wind and scorching sun, because the gourd or plant raised up over him would have protected him from the injuries of both, had it continued; and it was for the loss of that that Jonah was so displeased, and in such a passion. This question is put in order to draw out the following answer, and so give an opportunity of improving this affair to the end for which it was designed: *and he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death;* or, *I am very angry unto death*, as the Targum; I am so very angry that I cannot live under it for fretting and vexing; and it is right for me to be so, though I die with the passion of it: how ungovernable are the passions of men, and to what insolence do they rise when under the power of them!

Ver. 10. *Then said the Lord, thou hast had pity on the gourd,* &c.] Or, *hast spared it* [c]; that is, would have spared it, had it lain in his power, though but a weed, and worthless thing: *for the which thou hast not laboured;* in digging the ground, and by sowing or planting it; it being raised up at once by the Lord himself, and not by any human art and industry, nor by any of his: *neither madest it grow;* by dunging the earth about it, or by watering and pruning it: *which came up in a night, and perished in a night;* not in the same night; for it sprung up one night, continued a whole day, and then perished the next night. The Targum is more explicit, "which was in this (or one) night, "and perished in another night;" by all which the Lord suggests to Jonah the vast difference between the gourd he would have spared, and for the loss of which he was so angry, and the city of Nineveh the Lord spared, which so highly displeased him; the one was but an herb, a plant, the other a great city; that a single plant, but the city consisted of thousands of persons; the plant was not the effect of his toil and labour, but the inhabitants of this city were the works of God's hands. In the building of this city, according to historians [d], a million and a half of men were employed eight years together; the plant was like a mushroom, it sprung up in a night, and perished in one; whereas this was a very ancient city, that had stood ever since the days of Nimrod.

Ver. 11. *And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city?* &c.] See ch. i. 2. and iii. 3. what is such a gourd or plant to that? *wherein are more than six score thousand persons;* or twelve myriads; that is, twelve times ten thousand, or a hundred and twenty thousand; meaning not all the inhabitants of Nineveh; for then it would not have appeared to be so great a city; but infants only, as next described: *that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand;* don't know one from another; can't distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong; are not come to years of maturity and discretion; and therefore there were room and reason for pity and sparing mercy; especially since they had not been guilty of actual transgressions, at least not very manifest; and yet must have perished with their parents had Nineveh been overthrown. The number of infants in this city is a proof of the greatness of it, though not so as to render the account incredible; for, admitting these to be a fifth part of its inhabitants, as they usually are of any place, as Bochart [e] observes, it makes the number of its inhabitants to be but six or seven hundred thousand; and as many there were in Seleucia and Thebes, as Pliny [f] relates of the one, and Tacitus [g] of the other: *and also much cattle;* and these more valuable than goods, as animals are preferable to, and more useful than, vegetables; and yet these must have perished in the common calamity. Jarchi understands by these grown-up persons, whose knowledge is like the beasts that know

[w] Silentem, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Mercerus, Grotius, Tarnovius; so Stockius, p. 297. and Burkius.
[x] Arantorium, Hyde.
[y] Vid. Peritsol. Itinera Mundi, p. 146. & Hyde, Not. in ib.
[z] Travels, par. 1. B. 2. p. 162.
[a] Travels, par. 1. B. 2. ch. 34. p. 177.
[b] נפשו את animæ suæ, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius; animam suam, Burkius.

[c] חסת pepercisti, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Burkius; pepercisses, Piscator.
[d] Eustathius in Dionys. Perieg. p. 192.
[e] Phaleg. l. 4. c. 20. p. 252.
[f] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 26.
[g] Annal. l. 2. c. 60.

not their Creator. No answer being returned, it may be reasonably supposed Jonah was convinced of his sin and folly; and, to shew his repentance for it, penned this narrative, which records his infirmities and weaknesses, for the good of the church, and the instruction of saints in succeeding ages.

MICAH.

THIS book is called, in the Hebrew copies, *Sepher Micah*, the Book of Micah; in the Vulgate Latin version *the Prophecy of Micah*; and in the Syriac version *the Prophecy of the Prophet Micah*. This prophet is not the same with Micaiah the son of Imlah, who lived in the times of Ahab and Jehoshaphat, 1 Kings xxii. 8. for, as Aben Ezra observes, there were many generations between them, at least many reigns of kings, as Jehoram, Ahaziah, Joash, Amaziah, and Uzziah, all which made up a hundred and thirty years; their names indeed seem to be the same, since he that is called Micaiah, 1 Kings xxii. 8, is called Micah, 2 Chron. xviii. 14. and this our prophet is named Micaiah in Jer. xxvi. 18. which is with some of the same signification with Michael. So Abarbinel interprets it, *who is as God*; see ch. vii. 18. which Hillerus[a] confutes, and renders it, *the contrition, attrition, attenuation, and depauperation, of the Lord*; deriving it from מכך, which signifies to be depressed, humbled, weakened, and impoverished, as others do; which name, some think, was given him by his parents, because of their low estate, their meanness and poverty; but of them we have no account: however, this is much more probable than the reason Cornelius à Lapide gives of his name, that he was so called because he prophesied of Christ, who was poor, and that he should be born in a poor country-village. As for his country, and the place of his birth, and the time in which he lived, they may be gathered from ch. i. 1. by which it will appear that he was not of the tribe of Ephraim, as Pseudo-Epiphanius[b] says, but of the tribe of Judah; whose kings' reigns in which he prophesies are only made mention of; though his prophecies concerned both Israel and Judah, and he reproves both for their sins, and foretels their several captivities; and, for the comfort of God's people, says many things concerning the Messiah, his incarnation, the place of his birth, which no prophet so clearly points at as he, the execution of his offices, prophetic, priestly, and kingly; the blessings of grace that came by him, pardon of sin, atonement, &c.; and the happiness and glory of his church in the latter day. The authority of this book is confirmed both by the elders of Judah in the times of Jeremiah, who quote a passage out of it, ch. iii. 12. which they improve in favour of that prophet, Jer. xxvi. 17, 18, 19. and by the chief priests and Scribes in the time of Herod, who refer that prince to a prophecy in this book for the place of the Messiah's birth, ch. v. 2. see Matt. ii. 4, 5, 6. He is thought to have prophesied thirty or forty years. Bishop Usher[c] places him in the year of the world 3291, and of the Julian period 4001, and before Christ 713; but, according to Mr. Whiston[d], he prophesied 750 years before the era of Christ, and so Mr. Bedford[e], and three after the building of the city of Rome; and he foretels the captivity of the ten tribes thirty years, and the coming of Sennacherib forty years, before they came to pass; but when and where he died, and was buried, no certain proof can be given. Pseudo-Epiphanius, confounding him with Micaiah in Ahab's time, says[f] he was killed by his son Joram, who cast him down from a precipice, and was buried at Morathi, his native place, near the burying-ground of Enakeim, and his grave was well known to that day. And, according to Jerom[g], the grave of this our prophet was at Morasthi, and in his time turned into a church or temple. Sozomen[h] reports, that, in the times of Theodosius the elder, the body of Micah was found by Zebennus bishop of Eleutheropolis at Berathsalia, ten furlongs from the city, near which was the grave of Micah, called by the common people the faithful monument, and in their country language Nephsameemana.

CHAP. I.

THIS chapter treats of the judgments of God on Israel and Judah for their idolatry. It begins with the title of the whole book, in which is given an account of the prophet, the time of his prophesying, and of the persons against whom he prophesied, ver. 1. next a preface to this chapter, requiring attention to what was about to be delivered, urged from the consideration of the awful appearance of God, which it

[a] Onomast. Sacr. p. 14, 466, 494, 242.
[b] De Prophet. Vit. & Inter. c. 18.
[c] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3291.
[d] Chronological Tables, cent. 8.
[e] Scripture Chronology, p. 662.
[f] De Prophet. Vit. & Inter. c. 13.
[g] Epitaph. Paulæ, tom. 1. operum, fol. 60. A. B.
[h] Histor. Eccles. l. 7. c. 29.

represented as very grand and terrible, ver. 2, 3, 4. the cause of all which wrath that appeared in him was the transgression of Jacob; particularly their idolatry, as appears by the special mention of their idols and graven images in the account of their destruction, ver. 5, 6, 7. which destruction is exaggerated by the prophet's lamentation for it, ver. 8, 9. and by the mourning of the inhabitants of the several places that should be involved in it, which are particularly mentioned, ver. 10—16.

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord that came to Micah the Morasthite*, &c.] So called, either from Mareshah, mentioned ver. 15. and was a city in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 44. as the Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, and Zacutus[i]; or rather from Moresheth, from which Moresheth-gath, ver. 14, is distinguished; which Jerom[k] says was in his time a small village in the land of Palestine, near Eleutheropolis. Some think these two cities to be one and the same; but they appear to be different from the account of Jerom[l] elsewhere. The Arabic version reads it, Micah the son of Morathi; so Cyril, in his commentary on this place, mentions it as the sense of some, that Morathi was the father of the prophet; which can by no means be assented to: *in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah*; by which it appears that he was cotemporary with Isaiah, Hosea, and Amos, though they began to prophesy somewhat sooner than he, even in the days of Uzziah; very probably he conversed with these prophets, especially Isaiah, with whom he agrees in many things; his style is like his, and sometimes uses the same phrases: he, being of the tribe of Judah, only mentions the kings of that nation most known to him; though he prophesied against Israel, and in the days of Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea: *which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem*; in the vision of prophecy; Samaria was the metropolis of the ten tribes of Israel, and is put for them all; as Jerusalem was of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and is put for them. Samaria is mentioned first, because it was the head of the greatest body of people; and as it was the first in transgression, it was the first in punishment.

Ver. 2. *Hear, all ye people*, &c.] Or, *the people, all of them*[m]; not all the nations of the world, but the nations of Israel, so called from their several tribes; though some[n] think the rest of the inhabitants of the earth are meant: these are the same words which are used by Micaiah the prophet in the times of Ahab, long before this time, from whom they might be borrowed, 1 Kings xxii. 28. The phrase in the Hebrew language, as Aben Ezra observes, is very wonderful, and serves to strike the minds and excite the attention of men; it is like the words of a crier, in a court of judicature, calling for silence: *hearken, O earth, and all that therein is*; or, *its fulness*[o]; the land of Israel and Judah, the whole land of promise, and all the inhabitants of it; for to them are the following words directed: *and let the Lord God be witness against you*; or, *in you*[p]; the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; let him who is the omniscient God, and knows all hearts, thoughts, words, and actions, let him bear witness in your consciences, that what I am about to say is truth, and comes from him; is not my own word, but his; and if you disregard it, and repent not, let him be a witness against you, and for me, that I have prophesied in his name; that I have faithfully delivered his message, and warned you of your danger, and reproved you for your sins, and have kept back nothing I have been charged and intrusted with: and now you are summoned into open court, and at the tribunal of the great God of heaven and earth; let him be a witness against you of the many sins you have been guilty of, and attend whilst the indictment is read, the charge exhibited, and the proof given by *the Lord from his holy temple*, from heaven, the habitation of his holiness; whose voice speaking from thence should be hearkened to; who from thence beholds all the actions of men, and from whence his wrath is revealed against their sins, and he gives visible tokens of his displeasure; and especially when he seems to come forth from thence in some remarkable instances of his power and providence, as follows:

Ver. 3. *For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place*, &c.] Out of heaven, the place of the house of his Shechinah or Majesty, as the Targum; where his throne is prepared; where he keeps his court, and displays his glory; from whence he removes, by local motion, since he is everywhere; but by some manifest exertion of his power, either on the behalf of his people, or in taking vengeance on his and their enemies; or on them sinning against him, in which sense it is probably to be understood. It signifies not change of place, but of his dispensations; going out of his former wonted method into another; removing, as Jarchi has it, from the throne of mercies to the throne of judgment; doing not acts of mercy, in which he delights, but exercising judgment, his strange work. So the Cabalistic writers[q] observe on the passage, that "it cannot be understood of place properly taken, according to Isa. xl. 12. 1 Kings viii. 27. for God is "the place of the world, not the world his place; "hence our wise men so expound the text, he cometh "forth out of the measure of mercy, and goes into "the measure of justice;" or property of it. Some understand this of his leaving the temple at Jerusalem, and giving it up into the hands of the Chaldeans; but the former sense is best: *and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth*; which are his footstool; Samaria and Jerusalem, built on mountains, and all other high towers and fortified places, together with men of high looks and haughty countenances, who exalt themselves like mountains, and swell with pride: these the Lord can easily subdue and humble, bring low and tread down like the mire of the street; perhaps there may be an allusion to the high places where idols were worshipped; and which were the cause of the Lord's wrath and vengeance, and of his

[i] Juchasin, fol. 12. 1.
[k] Prolog. in Mic.
[l] Epitaph. Paulæ, ut supra.
[m] עמים כלם populi omnes ipsi, Montanus, Drusius, Piscator, Tarnovius.
[n] So Burkius.
[o] ומלאה & plenitudo ejus, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius, Cocceius, Burkius.
[p] בכם in vobis, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius.
[q] Kabala Denudata, par. 1. p. 409.

coming forth, in this unusual way, in his providences.

Ver. 4. *And the mountains shall be molten under him,* &c.] As Sinai was when he descended on it, and as all nations will be at the general conflagration; but here the words are to be taken, not literally, but figuratively, for the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and for the kings, and princes, and great men in them, that lifted up their heads as high, and thought themselves as secure, as mountains; yet when the judgments of God should fall upon them, their hearts would melt through fear under him; as well as all their glory and greatness depart from them, and they be no more what they were before, but levelled with the meanest subject: *and the valleys shall be cleft;* have chasms made in them by the melting of the mountains, or by the flow of water from the hills: these may design the lower sort of people, who shall have their share in this calamity; the inhabitants of the valleys and country-villages; who, though mean and low, shall be lower still, and lose that little substance, that liberty and those privileges, they had; as valleys may be cleft, and open, and sink into the lower parts of the earth; so it is signified that these people should be in a more depressed state and condition: *as wax before the fire;* melts, and can't stand the force of it; so the mountains should melt at the presence of the Lord; and kingdoms and states, and the greatest and mightiest of men in them, would not be able to stand before the fierceness of his wrath; see Psal. lxviii. 2. and *as the waters that are poured down a steep place;* that run with great swiftness, force, and rapidity, and there is no stopping them; so should the judgments of God come down upon the lower sort of people, the inhabitants of the valleys; neither high nor low would escape the indignation of the Lord, or be able to stand against it, or stand up under it.

Ver. 5. *For the transgression of Jacob is all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel,* &c.] All this evil, all these calamities and judgments, signified by the above metaphorical phrases, these did not come by chance, nor without reason; but were or would be inflicted, according to the righteous judgment of God, upon the people of Israel and Judah, for their manifold sins and transgressions, especially their idolatry: and should it be asked, *what is the transgression of Jacob?* what notorious crime has he been guilty of? or what is the iniquity the two tribes are charged with, that is the cause of so much severity? the answer is, *is it not Samaria?* the wickedness of Samaria, the calf of Samaria? as in Hos. vii. 1. and viii. 6. that is, the worship of the calf of Samaria; is not that idolatry the transgression of Jacob, or which the ten tribes have given into? it is; and a just reason for all this wrath to come upon them: or, *who is the transgression of Jacob*[r]? who is the spring and source of it; the cause, author, and encourager of it? are they not the kings that have reigned in Samaria from the times of Omri, with their nobles, princes, and great men, who, by their edicts, influence, and example, have encouraged the worship of the golden calves? they are the original root and motive of it, and to them it must be ascribed; they caused the people to sin: or, as the Targum, "where have they of the house of Jacob sinned? is it "not in Samaria?" verily it is, and from thence, the metropolis of the nation, the sin has spread itself all over it: *and what are the high places of Judah?* or, who are they[s]? who have been the makers of them? who have set them up, and encouraged idolatrous worship at them? are *they not Jerusalem?* are they not the king, the princes, and priests, that dwell at Jerusalem? certainly they are; such as Ahaz, and others, in whose times this prophet lived; see 2 Kings xvi. 4. or, as the Targum, "where did they of the house of Judah commit sin? was it not in Jerusalem?" truly it was, and even in the temple; here Ahaz built an altar like that at Damascus, and sacrificed on it, and spoiled the temple, and several of the vessels in it, 2 Kings xvi. 10—18.

Ver. 6. *Therefore I will make Samaria as an heap of the field,* and as *plantings of a vineyard,* &c.] As a field ploughed, and laid in heaps; see ch. iii. 12. or as stones gathered out of a field, and out of a vineyard planted, and laid in a heap; so should this city become a heap of stones and rubbish, being utterly demolished; and this being done according to the will of God, and through his instigation of Salmaneser king of Assyria to it, and by his providence succeeding his army that besieged it, is said to be done by him. With this agrees the Vulgate Latin version, "I will make Samaria as a heap of stones in a field, when a vineyard "is planted;" see Isa. v. 2. for the city, being destroyed, cannot be compared to the plants of a vineyard set in good order, beautiful and thriving; but, as to heaps of stones in a field, so to such in a vineyard; or to hillocks raised up there for the plants of vines; and if the comparison is to plants themselves, it must be to withered ones, that are good for nothing. The note of similitude *as* is not in the text; and the words may be read without it, *I will make Samaria an heap of the field, plantings of a vineyard*[t]; that is, it shall be ploughed up, and made a heap of; turned into a field, and vines planted on it; for which its situation was very proper, being on a hill, where vines used to be planted, and so should no more be inhabited as a city: *and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley;* the stones of the buildings and walls of the city, which, being on a hill, when pulled down, rolled into the valley; and with as much swiftness and force as waters run down a steep place, as in ver. 4, where the same word is used as here: *and I will discover the foundations thereof;* which should be rased up, and left bare; not one stone should be upon another; so that there should be no traces and footsteps of the city remaining, and it should be difficult to know the place where it stood. This is expressive of the total desolation and utter destruction of it: this was not accomplished by Salmaneser when he took it; for though he carried captive the inhabitants thereof, he put others in their room; but this was entirely fulfilled, not by Jonathan Mac-

[r] מי פשע יעקב quis est prævaricatio Jacobi? De Dieu; so Pagninus, Burkius; quis defectio Jacobi? Cocceius; quis scelus Jacobi? Drusius.

[s] מי במות יהודה quis est excelsa Judæ? Montanus, Drusius, De Dieu; quis celsa Judæ? Cocceius; quis fuit causa excelsorum Jehudæ? Burkius; so Kimchi.

[t] לעי השדה למטעי כרם in acervum agri, in plantationem, vel plantationes vineæ, Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Cocceius; so Junius and Tremellius, Piscator, Burkius.

cabeus, though he is said[v] to besiege it, and level it with the ground; but by John Hyrcanus; and the account of the destruction of it by him, as given by Josephus[w], exactly answers to this prophecy, and to Hos. xiii. 16. where its desolation is also predicted; he says that Hyrcanus, having besieged it a year, took it; and, not content with this only, he utterly destroyed it, making brooks to run through it; and by digging it up, so that it fell into holes and caverns, insomuch that there were no signs nor traces of the city left. It was indeed afterwards rebuilt by Gabinius the Roman proconsul of Syria, and restored by Augustus Cæsar to Herod, who adorned and fortified it, and called it by the name of Sebaste, in honour of Augustus[x]; though Benjamin of Tudela pretends that Ahab's palace might be discerned there in his time, or the place known where it was, which is not likely; excepting this, his account is probable. "From Luz (he says[y]) "is one day's journey to Sebaste, which is Samaria; "and still there may be perceived there the palace "of Ahab king of Israel; and it is a fortified city "on a very high hill, and in it are fountains; and "is a land of brooks of water, and gardens, orchards, "vineyards, and olive-yards:" but, since his time, it is become more ruinous. Mr. Maundrell, who some years ago was upon the spot, gives a fuller account of it; "this great city (he says[z]) is now wholly converted "into gardens; and all the tokens that remain, to "testify that there has ever been such a place, are only "on the north side, a large square piazza, encompassed "with pillars; and, on the east, some poor remains of "a great church, said to be built by the Empress "Helena, over the place where St. John Baptist was "both imprisoned and beheaded." So say others[a], "the remains of Sebaste, or the ancient Samaria, "though long ago laid in ruinous heaps, and a great "part of it turned into ploughed land and garden-"ground, do still retain some monuments of its ancient "grandeur, and of those noble edifices in it, with "which King Herod caused it to be adorned;" and then mention the large square piazza on the north, and the church on the east. It was twelve miles from Dothaim, and as many from Merran, and four from Atharoth, according to Eusebius[b]; and was, as Josephus[c] says, a day's journey from Jerusalem. Sichem, called by the Turks Naplus, is now the metropolis of the country of Samaria; Samaria, or Sebaste, being utterly destroyed, as says Petrus à Valle[d], a traveller in those parts.

Ver. 7. *And all the graven images thereof shall be beaten to pieces*, &c.] By the Assyrian army, for the sake of the gold and silver of which they were made, or with which they were adorned, as was usually done by conquerors to the gods of the nations they conquered; these were the calf of Samaria, and other idols; and not only those in the city of Samaria, but in all the other cities of Israel which fell into the hands of the Assyrian monarch; see Isa. x. 11: *and all the hires thereof shall be burnt with fire*; this the Targum also interprets of idols; such as escaped the plunder of the soldiers should be burnt with fire: Kimchi, by *hires*, understands the beautiful garments, and other ornaments, with which they adorned their idols, which were gifts unto them; and they committing spiritual adultery with them, these are compared to the hire of a harlot: or it may design their fine houses, and the furniture of them, all their substance and riches, which they looked upon as obtained by entering into alliances with idolatrous nations, and as the hire and reward of their idolatry; all these should be consumed by fire when the city was taken: *and all the idols thereof will I lay desolate*; such as were not broke to pieces, nor burnt, should be thrown down, and trampled upon, and made no account of, or carried away with other spoil. The Targum interprets it of the houses or temples of their idols, which should be demolished. By this and the preceding clause it appears, that, besides the golden calf, there were other idols worshipped in Samaria. In the times of Ahab was the image of Baal, with others, for which he built an altar and a temple in Samaria, and a grove, 1 Kings xvi. 31, 32, 33. 2 Kings x. 26, 27. and at the time it was taken by Salmaneser there were idols in it, as appears from Isa. x. 10, 11. and xxxvi. 19. and there were still more after a colony of the Babylonians and others were introduced into it; the names of which were Succoth-benoth, Nergal, Ashima, Nibhaz, Tartak, Adram-melech, and Anammelech. The first of these is thought, by Selden[e], to be Venus; and the two last, both by him and Braunius[f], to be the same with Moloch, having the signification of a king in them, as that word signifies, and children being burnt unto them: they are all difficult to be understood. The account the Jews[g] give of them is, that *Succoth-benoth* were images of a hen and chickens; *Nergal*, a cock; *Ashima*, a goat without hair; *Nibhaz*, or *Nibchan*, as sometimes read, a dog; and *Tartak*, an ass; *Adram-melech*, a mule, or a peacock; and *Anammelech*, a horse, or a pheasant. And it was not unusual for some of these creatures to be worshipped by the Heathens, as a cock by the Syrians, and others; a goat by the Mendesians; and the dog Anubis, perhaps the same with Nibhaz, by the Egyptians[h]. And though the inhabitants of Samaria might be better instructed, after Manasseh and other Jews came to reside among them in after-times, still they retained idolatrous practices; and, even in the times of our Lord, they were ignorant of the true object of religious worship, John iv. 22. and they are charged by the Jewish writers[i] with worshipping the image of a dove on Mount Gerizzim, and also such strange gods, the teraphim, which Jacob hid under the oak at Sichem; however,

[v] Paschale Chronicon, p. 181. apud Reland. Palestina Illustrata, tom. 2. l. 3. p. 980.
[w] Antiqu. l. 13. c. 10. sect. 3.
[x] Ibid. l. 14. c. 5. sect. 3. & l. 15. c. 7. sect. 3. & c. 8. sect. 5.
[y] Itinerarium, p. 36.
[z] Journey from Aleppo, &c. p. 59. Ed. 7.
[a] Universal History, vol. 2. p. 429.
[b] In voc. Dothaim, &c.
[c] Antiqu. l. 15. c. 8. sect. 5.

[d] Epist. 14. Morino apud Antiqu. Eccles. Oriental. p. 166.
[e] De Dis Syris Syntagm. 2. c. 7. p. 309.
[f] Selecta Sacra, l. 4. c. 8. sect. 117. p. 464.
[g] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 63. 2. Vid. etiam T. Hieros. Avoda Zara, fol. 42. 3, 4.
[h] Vid. Godwin's Moses and Aaron, l. 4. c. 7.
[i] Maimon. in Misn. Beracot, c. 8. sect. 8. & Bartenora in ib. c. 7. sect. 1. & in Nidda, c. 4. sect. 1. Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 13. 2.

let their idols be what they will they worshipped, they are now utterly destroyed, according to this prophecy. *For she gathered it of the hire of an harlot, and they shall return to the hire of an harlot*: as all the riches of Samaria and its inhabitants were gathered together as the reward of their idolatry, as they imagined, so they should return to idolaters, the Assyrians; to Nineveh, called the well-favoured harlot, Nah. iii. 4. the metropolis of the Assyrian empire; and to the house or temple of those that worshipped idols, as the Targum; with which they should adorn their idols, or use them in idolatrous worship: or the sense in general is, that as their riches were ill-gotten, as the hire of a harlot, and which never prospers, so theirs should come to nothing; as it came, so it should go: according to our proverb, *lightly come, lightly go*. The allusion seems to be to harlots prostituting themselves in the temples of idols, which was common among the Heathens, as at Comana and Corinth, as Strabo [i] relates; and particularly among the Babylonians and Assyrians, which may be here referred to: for Herodotus [k] says, it was a law with the Babylonians that every woman of that country should once in her life sit in the temple of Venus, and lie with a strange man: here women used to sit with a crown upon their heads; nor might they return home until some stranger threw money into their laps, and took them out of the temple, and lay with them; and he that cast it must say, I implore the goddess Mylitta for thee; the name by which the Assyrians call Venus; nor was it lawful to reject the price or the money, be it what it would, for it was converted to holy uses: and Strabo [l] affirms much the same. So the Phœnician women used to prostitute themselves in the temples of their idols, and dedicate there the hire of their bodies to their gods, thinking thereby to appease their deities, and obtain good things for themselves [m].

Ver. 8. *Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked*, &c.] To his shirt, putting off his upper garment; the rough one, such as the prophets used to wear; which he did as the greater sign of his mourning: sometimes, in such cases, they rent their garments; at other times they stripped themselves of them, and walked naked, as Isaiah did, ch. xx. 3, 4. he went about like a madman, one disturbed in his mind, bereft of his senses, because of the desolation coming upon Israel; and without his clothes, as such persons often do: so the word rendered *stripped* signifies, as the Jewish commentators observe. This lamentation, and with these circumstances, the prophet made in his own person, to shew the reality and certainty of their ruin, and to represent to them the desolate condition they would be in, destitute of all good things, and to affect them with it; as well as to express the sympathy of his heart, and thereby to assure them that it was not out of ill will to them, or a spirit of revenge, that he delivered such a message: or this he did in the person of all the people, shewing what they would do, and that this would be their case shortly. So the Targum, "for this they shall wail and howl, and go naked "among the spoilers." *I will make a wailing like the dragons*; as in their fight with elephants, at which time they make a hideous noise [n]; and whose hissings have been very terrible to large bodies of men. Ælianus [o] speaks of a dragon in India, which, when it perceived Alexander's army near at hand, gave such a prodigious hiss and blast, that it greatly frighted and disturbed the whole army; and he relates [p] of another, that was in a valley near Mount Pellenæus, in the isle of Chios, whose hissing was very terrible to the inhabitants of that place; and Bochart [q] conjectures that this their hissing is here referred to; and who observes of the whale, that it has its name from a word in the Hebrew tongue, which signifies to lament; and which word is here used, and is frequently used of large fishes, as whales, sea-calves, dolphins, &c. which make a great noise and bellowing, as the sea-calf; particularly the balæna, which is one kind of a whale, and makes such a large and continued noise, as to be heard at the distance of two miles, as Rondeletius [r] says; and dolphins are said to make a moan and groaning like human creatures, as Pliny [s] and Solinus [t] report; and Peter Gillius relates, from his own experience, that lodging one night in a vessel, in which many dolphins were taken, there were such weeping and mourning, that he could not sleep for them; he thought they deplored their condition with mourning, lamentation, and a large flow of tears, as men do, and therefore could not help pitying their case; and, while the fisherman was asleep, took that which was next him, that seemed to mourn most, and cast it into the sea; but this was of no avail, for the rest increased their mourning more and more, and seemed plainly to desire the like deliverance; so that all the night he was in the midst of the most bitter moaning: wherefore Bochart, who quotes these instances, elsewhere [u] thinks that the prophet compares his mourning with the mourning of these creatures, rather than with the hissing of dragons. Some [w] think crocodiles are here meant; and of them it is reported [x], that when they have eaten the body of a creature, which they do first, and come to the head, they weep over it with tears; hence the proverb of crocodiles' tears, for hypocritical ones; but it can't well be thought, surely, that the prophet would compare his mourning to that of such a creature. The learned Pocock thinks it more reasonable that the *jackalls* are meant, called by the Arabians *ebn awi*, rather than dragons; a creature of a size between a fox and a wolf, or a dog and a fox, which makes a dreadful howling in the night; by which travellers, unacquainted with it, would think a company of women or children were howling, and goes before the lion as his provider. *And mourning as the owls*; or *daughters of the owl* [y]; which is a night-bird, and makes a very fright-

[i] Geograph. l. 12. p. 383.
[k] Clio, sive l. 1. c. 199.
[l] Ibid. l. 16. p. 513.
[m] Athanasius contra Gentes, p. 21.
[n] Ælian. de Animal. l. 6. c. 22. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 11.
[o] Ib. l. 15. c. 21.
[p] Ib. l. 16. c. 39.
[q] Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 2. c. 14. col. 427.
[r] Apud Bochart. ib. par. 1. l. 1. c. 7. col. 47.
[s] Nat. Hist. l. 9. c. 8.
[t] Polyhistor. c. 22.
[u] Ut supra, col. 48.
[w] Ludolphus apud Burkium in loc.
[x] Vid. Frantzii Hist. Animal. Sacr. par. 1. c. 26. sect. 2.
[y] כבנות יענה ut filiæ ululæ, Piscator, Burkius; instar filiarum ululæ, Cocceius. So Montanus.

ful noise, especially the screech-owl. The Targum interprets it of the ostrich[z]; and it may be meant either of the mourning it makes when its young are about to be taken away, and it exposes itself to danger on their account, and perishes in the attempt. Ælianus[a] reports that they are taken by sharp iron spikes fixed about their nest, when they are returning to their young, after having been in quest of food for them; and, though they see the shining iron, yet such is their vehement desire after their young, that they spread their wings like sails, and with great swiftness and noise rush into the nest, where they are transfixed with the spikes, and die: and not only Vatablus observes, that these creatures have a very mournful voice; but Bochart[b] has shewn, from the Arabic writers, that they frequently cry and howl; and from John de Laet, who affirms that those in the parts about Brasil cry so loud as to be heard half a mile; and indeed they have their name from crying and howling. The Targum renders it by a word which signifies pleasant; and so Onkelos on Lev. xi. 16, by an antiphrasis, because its voice is so very unpleasant. Or, since the words may be rendered, *the daughters of the ostrich*[c], it may be understood of the mourning of its young, when left by her, when they make a hideous noise and miserable moan, as some observe[d].

Ver. 9. *For her wound is incurable*, &c.] Or her *stroke is desperate*[e]. The ruin of Samaria, and the ten tribes, was inevitable; the decree being gone forth, and they hardened in their sins, and continuing in their impenitence; and their destruction was irrevocable; they were not to be restored again, nor are they to this day; nor will be till the time comes that all Israel shall be saved: or *she is grievously sick of her wounds*; just ready to die, upon the brink of ruin, and no hope of saving her; this is the cause and reason of the above lamentation of the prophet: and what increased his grief and sorrow the more was, *for it is come unto Judah*; the calamity has reached the land of Judah; it stopped not with Israel or the ten tribes, but spread itself into the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; for the Assyrian army, having taken Samaria, and carried Israel captive, in a short time, about seven or eight years, invaded Judea, and took the fenced cities of Judah in Hezekiah's time, in which Micah prophesied. *He is come unto the gate of my people, even to Jerusalem*; Sennacherib, king of Assyria, having taken the fenced cities, came up to the very gates of Jerusalem, and besieged it, where the courts of judicature were kept, and the people resorted to, to have justice done them; and Micah, being of the tribe of Judah, calls them his people, and was the more affected with their distress.

Ver. 10. *Declare ye it not at Gath*, &c.] A city of the Philistines, put for all the rest: the phrase is borrowed from 2 Sam. i. 20, where the reason is given, and holds good here as there; and the sense is, not that the destruction of Israel, or the invasion of Judea, or the besieging of Jerusalem, could be hid from the Philistines; but that it was a thing desirable, was it possible, since it would be matter of rejoicing to them, and that would be an aggravation of the distress of Israel and Judah: *weep ye not at all*; that is, before the Philistines, or such-like enemies, lest they should laugh and scoff at you; though they had reason to weep, and did and ought to weep in secret; yet, as much as in them lay, it would be right to forbear it openly, because of the insults and reproach of the enemy. The learned Reland[f] suspects that it should be read, *weep not in Acco*; which was another city in Palestine, to the north from the enemy, as Gath was to the south; and observes, that there is a like paronomasia[g] in the words, as in the places after mentioned. Acco is the same with Ptolemais, mentioned in Acts xxi. 7. see the note there. It had this name from Ptolemy Lagus king of Egypt, who enlarged it, and called it after his own name; but Mr. Maundrell[h] observes, "now, since it hath been in the possession of "the Turks, it has, according to the example of many "other cities in Turkey, cast off its Greek, and recovered some semblance of its old Hebrew name again, "being called Acca, or Acra. As to its situation (he "says) it enjoys all possible advantages, both of sea "and land; on its north and east sides it is compassed with a spacious and fertile plain; on the west "it is washed by the Mediterranean sea; and on the "south by a large bay, extending from the city as "far as Mount Carmel." *In the house of Aphrah roll thyself in the dust*; as mourners used to do, sit in the dust, or cover their heads with it, or wallow in it; this is allowed to be done privately, in houses or in towns distinct from the Philistines, as Aphrah or Ophrah was, which was in the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 23. called here *Aphrah*, to make it better agree with *Aphar*, dust, to which the allusion is: and it may be rendered, *in the house of dust roll thyself in the dust*; having respect to the condition houses would be in at this time, mere heaps of dust and rubbish, so that they would find enough easily to roll themselves in. Here is a double reading; the Keri, or marginal reading, which the Masora directs to, and we follow, is, *roll thyself*; but the Cetib, or writing, is, *I have rolled myself*[i]; and so are the words of the prophet, who before says he wailed and howled, and went stripped and naked; here he says, as a further token of his sorrow, that he rolled himself in dust, and as an example for Israel to do the like. This place was a village in the times of Jerom[k], and was called Effrem; it was five miles from Beth-el to the east.

Ver. 11. *Pass ye away, thou inhabitant of Saphir*, &c.] A village, according to Eusebius[l], between Eleutheropolis and Ashkelon; perhaps the same with Sephoron; it is mentioned among the cities of Judah, in the Greek version of Josh. xv. 48. Calmet[m] conjectures the prophet intends the city of Sephoris or Se-

[z] So the Vulgate Latin, Munster, Pagninus, Drusius, Bochartus, and others.

[a] De Animal. l. 14. c. 7.

[b] Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 2. c. 14. col. 228.

[c] Filiarum struthionis, Pagninus; juvenes struthiones, Tigurine version.

[d] Vid. Frantz. Hist. Animal. Sacr. par. 2. c. 2. p. 339, 342.

[e] אנושה מכותיה desperata est plaga ejus, V. L.; plagæ ejus, Montanus, Drusius.

[f] Palestina Illustrata, tom. 2. p. 534, 535.

[g] בכו אל תבכו.

[h] Journey from Aleppo, &c. p. 54.

[i] התפלשתי volutavi me, De Dieu.

[k] De locis Hebr. fol. 88. H.

[l] Ad vocem Σαφείρ.

[m] Dictionary, in the word *Saphir*.

phora in Galilee. Hillerus [n] takes it to be the same with Parah, mentioned with Ophrah, in Josh. xviii. 23. so called from its ornament, neatness, beauty, and elegance, as both words signify, to which the prophet alludes: now every one of the inhabitants of this place are called upon to prepare to go into captivity to Babylon; which would certainly be their case, though they dwelled in fine buildings, neat houses, and streets well paved. In the margin it is, *thou that dwellest fairly* [o]; which some understand of Samaria; others of Judea; and particularly Jerusalem, beautifully situated, yet should go into captivity: *having thy shame naked*: their city dismantled, their houses plundered, and they stripped of their garments, and the shame of their nakedness discovered; which must be the more distressing to beautiful persons, that have dressed neatly, and lived in handsome well-built houses, and elegantly furnished, and now all the reverse. *The inhabitant of Zaanan came not forth in the mourning of Beth-ezel*; or house of Azel, where the posterity of Azel, of the tribe of Benjamin, dwelt. Hillerus [p] suspects it to be the same with Moza, Josh. xviii. 26. so called from Moza, the great-grandfather of Azel, 1 Chron. viii. 37, 38. Capellus takes it to be the same with Azel in Zech. xiv. 5. This place being taken and plundered by the enemy occasioned great mourning among the inhabitants: and it seems to have been taken first, before Zaanan; perhaps the same with Zenan, Josh. xv. 37. and is here read *Seanan* by Aquila; the inhabitants of which did not *come forth*, in which there is an allusion to its name [q], either to help them in their distress, or to condole them; they being in fear of the enemy themselves, and in arms in their own defence, expecting it would be their turn next, and that they should share the same fate with them. Some think that under the name of Beth-ezel is meant Beth-el; and of Zaanan, Zion; and that the sense is, that when Beth-el, Samaria, and the ten tribes, were in distress, they of Zion and Judea did not come to give them any relief; and when they were carried captive did not mourn with them, were not affected with their case, nor troubled themselves about them. *He shall receive of him his standing*: either the enemy, as R. Joseph Kimchi, shall receive of the inhabitants of Zaanan his standing; that is, he shall make them dearly pay for stopping him, for making him stand and stay so long before their city ere he could take it; for all his loss of time, men, and money, in besieging it; by demolishing their city, plundering their houses, and carrying them captive; who remained he put to death by the sword. Aben Ezra interprets the word *receive* of doctrine or learning, as in Prov. iv. 2. and renders it, *he shall learn*; either Beth-ezel, or rather Zaanan, shall learn, by the case of Beth-ezel, and other neighbouring places, what would be his own case, whether he should stand or fall.

Ver. 12. *For the inhabitant of Maroth waited carefully for good, &c.*] Or, *though* they *waited for good* [r]; expected to have it, yet the reverse befell them: or *verily* they were *grieved for good* [s]; for the good things they had lost, or were likely to lose; and which they had no more hope of, when they saw Jerusalem in distress. Grotius thinks, by transposition of letters, Ramoth is intended by Maroth, or the many Ramahs which were in Judah and Benjamin; but Hillerus [t] is of opinion that Jarmuth is meant, a city of Judah, Josh. xv. 35. the word Maroth signifies *bitterness*; see Ruth i. 20. and, according to others, *rough places*; and may design the inhabitants of such places that were in great bitterness and trouble because of the invasion of the enemy, who before that had promised themselves good things, and lived in the expectation of them: *but evil came down from the Lord unto the gate of Jerusalem*; meaning the Assyrian army under Sennacherib, which came into the land of Judea by the order, direction, and providence of God, like an overflowing flood; which spread itself over the land, and reached to the very gates of Jerusalem, which was besieged by it, and threatened with destruction: or *because evil came down, &c.*; that is, *because* of that, the inhabitants of *Maroth grieved*, or *were in pain*, as a woman in travail.

Ver. 13. *O thou inhabitant of Lachish, bind the chariot to the swift beast, &c.*] Horses, camels, dromedaries, or mules. Some [u] render the word swift horse or horses, post-horses; others dromedaries [w]; and some mules [x]: the two latter seem more especially to be meant, either dromedaries, as the word is translated in 1 Kings iv. 28. which is a very swift creature: Isidore says [y] the dromedary is one sort of camels, of a lesser stature, yet swifter, from whence it has its name, and is used to go more than a hundred miles a day; this is thought to be what the Jews [z] call a flying camel; which the gloss says is a sort of camels that are as swift in running as a bird that flies; they are lighter made than a camel, and go at a much greater rate; whereas a camel goes at the rate of ten leagues a day, the dromedary will perform a journey of forty leagues in a day; they make use of them in the Indies for going post, and expresses frequently perform a journey of eight hundred miles upon them in the space of a week [a]: this may serve the better to illustrate Jer. ii. 23. and improve the note there: but whether these were used in chariots I don't find; only Bochart [b] takes notice of a kind of camel, that has, like the dromedary, two bunches on its back, which the Arabians call *bochet*, and put to chariots: or else mules are meant, for by comparing the above text in 1 Kings iv. 28, with 2 Chron. ix. 24, it looks as if *mules* were there intended; and so the word here used is rendered in Esth. viii. 10, 14. and by their being there said to be used for posts to ride on expresses, it appears to be a swift creature. Ælianus [c] makes mention of mules in India of a red colour, very famous for running; and mules were used

[n] Onomast. Sacr. p. 925.
[o] ישבת שפיר habitans pulchre, Montanus; habitatrix elegantia loci, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[p] Ibid. p. 516, 951.
[q] צאנן from יצא Vid. Vulg. Lat. vers.
[r] כי quamvis.
[s] כי חלה לטוב certe doluit propter bonum, Vatablus; siquidem doluit, Pagninus, Montanus; quia doluit propter bonum, Burkius.
[t] Onomast. p. 87. 951.

[u] לרכש ad equos velocissimos, Pagninus; equo veloci, Montanus; angariis sc. equis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[w] Dromadibus, Vatablus. So Elias.
[x] Mulis, so some in Piscator; ad mulum celerem, Burkius.
[y] Origin. l. 12. c. 1. p. 102.
[z] T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 5. 1.
[a] See Harris's Voyages and Travels, vol. 1. p. 469.
[b] Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 4. col. 87.
[c] De Animal. l. 16. c. 9.

in the Olympic games, and many riders of them got the victory; and that these were used in chariots, there is no doubt to be made of it: Homer [d] speaks of mules drawing a four-wheeled chariot; so Pausanias [e] of mules yoked together, and drawing a chariot, instead of horses; and the Septuagint version of Isa. lxvi. 20, instead of *in litters and on mules*, renders it, in *litters* or carriages *of mules*: but, be they one or the other that are here meant, they were creatures well known, and being swift were used in chariots, to which they were bound and fastened in order to draw them, and which we call *putting to*: this the inhabitants of Lachish [f] are bid to do, in order to make their escape, and flee as fast as they could from the enemy, advancing to besiege them; as they were besieged by the army of Sennacherib, before he came to Jerusalem, 2 Chron. xxxii. 1, 9. Or these words may be spoken in an ironical and sarcastic way, that whereas they had abounded in horses and chariots, and frequently rode about their streets in them, now let them make use of them, and get away if they could; and may suggest, that, instead of riding in these, they should be obliged to walk on foot into captivity. Lachish was a city in the tribe of Judah, in the times of Jerom [g]; it was a village seven miles from Eleutheropolis, as you go to Daroma or the south. *She is the beginning of the sin to the daughter of Zion*: lying upon the borders of the ten tribes, as Lachish did, it was the first of the cities of Judah that gave into the idolatry of Jeroboam, the worshipping of the calves; and from thence it spread itself to Zion and Jerusalem; and, being a ringleader in this sin, should be punished for it: though some think this refers to their conspiracy with the citizens of Jerusalem against King Amaziah, and the murder of him in this place, now punished for it, 2 Kings xiv. 18, 19: *for the transgressions of Israel were found in thee*: not only their idolatry, but all other sins, with which it abounded: it was a very wicked place, and therefore no wonder it was given up to destruction. The Targum is, "for "the transgressors of Israel were found in thee."

Ver. 14. *Therefore shalt thou give presents to Moresheth-gath*, &c.] Since Lachish was the cause of leading Judah into idolatry, and was a city so very wicked; therefore it should be reduced to such distress as to send messengers with presents to the Philistines at Moresheth-gath, a place near to Gath of the Philistines, and may include that and other cities of theirs, to come and help them against the Assyrians: *the houses of Achzib shall be a lie to the kings of Israel*: a city of Judah, Josh. xv. 44. or of Asher, Josh. xix. 29. the same with Chezib, Gen. xxxviii. 5. and called Ecdippa by Josephus [h], Pliny [i], and Ptolemy [k]. The Jewish writers commonly call it Cezib, of which they [l] say many things about that, and the land unto it, being subject to tithes, the laws of the seventh year, and the like. Maimonides and Bartenora say [m] it is the name of a place which divided between the land of Israel, which they possessed who came out of Babylon, and that land which they enjoyed who came out of Egypt; but the Jews are not agreed about the situation of it. One of their writers [n] places it to the north-east of the land of Israel; but another [o] observes, and proves from one that resided in those parts some time, and diligently inquired into and made his observation on places, that Cezib, and also Aco and Amana, frequently mentioned with it, were all on the western sea of the land of Israel, that is, the Mediterranean sea; in which he was right, without all doubt: the place is now called Zib by contraction, of which Mr. Maundrell [p] gives this account; "having travelled about one "hour in the plain of Acra, we passed by an old town "called Zib, situate on an ascent close by the sea-"side; this may probably be the old Achzib, men-"tioned Josh. xix. 29. and Judg. i. 31. called after-"wards Ecdippa; for St. Jerom [q] places Achzib nine "miles distant from Ptolemais (or Aco), towards Tyre, "to which account we found the situation of Zib "exactly agreeing." Now the houses or families that dwelt in this place, or the idols' temples there, as some, and the idolatry exercised therein, should be a lie unto, or disappoint the expectations of, the kings of Israel; which, according to Kimchi, is put for Judah, who placed confidence in them, and had dependence on them: there is an elegant paronomasia between Achzib and a *lie* [r]. The Targum is, "thou shalt send "gifts to the heirs of Gath; the houses of Achzib shall "be delivered to the people, because of the sins of the "kings of Israel, who worshipped idols in them."

Ver. 15. *Yet will I bring an heir unto thee, O inhabitant of Mareshah*, &c.] Another city in the tribe of Judah, mentioned with Achzib in Josh. xv. 44. and is by many thought to be the birth-place of this prophet; and, if so, his faithfulness may be observed in declaring the whole counsel of God, though against his own native place; and this must be an aggravation of the sin of the inhabitants of it, that they had such a prophet that arose from them, and they regarded him not. There is a beautiful allusion in the word *heir* to Mareshah [s], which signifies an *inheritance*: and here were an *heir* or heirs for it, as the Targum; not the Persians, as some in Aben Ezra, and in an Agadah mentioned by Jarchi, who descended from Elam the first-born of Shem; and so had a right of inheritance, as those interpreters suppose; but the king of Assyria, who should invade the land, and seize upon this place among others, and possess it, as if it was his by right of inheritance, having obtained it by conquest; and this being by the permission and according to the will of God, he is said to be brought by him to it. Capellus thinks, on the contrary, that Hezekiah and his posterity are meant: *he shall come unto Adullam the glory of Israel*: another city in the tribe of Judah, a royal one,

[d] Iliad. 24. l. 324.

[e] Eliac. prior, sive l. 5. p. 302. So Suetonius in Vit. Jul. Cæsar. c. 31. mulis ad vehiculum junctis.

[f] There is a likeness in sound between לכיש and רכש.

[g] De locis Hebr. fol. 92. M.

[h] Antiqu. l. 5. c. 1. sect. 22. De Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 13. sect. 4.

[i] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 19.

[k] Geograph. l. 5. c. 15.

[l] T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 36. 2. T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 7. 2. Misn. Demai, c. 1. sect. 3.

[m] In Misn. Demai, c. 1. sect. 3.

[n] Bartenora in Misn. Sheviith, c. 6. 1. & Challa, c. 4. sect. 8.

[o] Yom Tob in Sheviith, c. 6. 1. e Caphtor Uperah, c. 11.

[p] Journey from Aleppo, &c. p. 53. Ed. 7.

[q] De locis Hebr. fol. 88. I.

[r] אכזב & אכזיב.

[s] מרשה & יורש.

Josh. xv. 35. said by Jerom to be in his time no small village, and to be about ten miles from Eleutheropolis: called the *glory of Israel*, having been a royal city in Joshua's time, Josh. xii. 15. and a fenced city in the times of Rehoboam, 2 Chron. xi. 7. and Eusebius says it was a large town; and Jerom says it was not a small one in his time; though some think Jerusalem is meant, the metropolis of the nation, Israel being put for Judah, as in the preceding verse; and to be read, *he* that is the enemy and heir *shall come to Adullam, yea, to the glory of Israel*[t]; even to Jerusalem, the most glorious city in all the tribes; though others are of opinion that this is the character of the enemy or heir that should come thither, called so by way of contradiction, as coming to the reproach and disgrace of Israel; or, ironically, whom Israel before gloried in, when they had recourse to him for help. The margin of our Bible reads, *the glory of Israel shall come to Adullam*: that is, the great men, the princes and heads of the people, shall flee to the cave of Adullam[u], to hide them from the enemy, where David was hid from Saul; see 1 Sam. xxii. 1. Burkius[w], a very late commentator, takes Adullam for an appellative, and with Hillerus[x] renders it, *the perpetuity of the yoke*; and the whole thus, *at the perpetuity of the yoke, the glory of Israel shall come*: that is, when all things shall seem to tend to this, that the yoke once laid on Israel by the Gentiles shall become perpetual, without any hope of deliverance, then shall come the Deliverer, that is, Jesus, the Glory of Israel; and, adds he, God forbid we should think of any other subject here; and so he interprets the *heir* in the preceding clause of the Messiah; and which is a sense far from being despicable.

Ver. 16. *Make thee bald, and poll thee for thy delicate children*, &c.] Which is said, either with respect to Mareshah, or to Adullam, or to the whole land, as Kimchi observes; rather to the latter; and that either to Israel, or to Judah, or both; the prophecy in general being concerning them both, ver. 1. making baldness, whether by plucking off the hair, or by shaving it, was used in token of mourning, Job i. 20. Jer. vii. 29. and so it is designed to express it here: the inhabitants of the land are called to lamentation and weeping for their children taken from them, whom they dearly loved, and brought up in a delicate manner. The Targum is, "pluck off thy hair, and cast it upon "the children of thy delight;" and Sanctius observes, that it was a custom with the Gentiles to cut off their hair, and cast it into the graves of their kindred and friends at their interment, to which he thinks the prophet alludes: *enlarge thy baldness as the eagle*: when it moults, and cast off all its feathers, as it does in old age, and so renews its youth; to which the allusion seems to be in Psal. ciii. 5. Isa. xl. 31. or every year, as birds of prey usually do at the beginning of the spring. The Jewish writers[y] say this happens to it every ten years; when, finding its feathers heavy and unfit for flying, it makes a tour to the sun with all its force it can, to get as near it as possible; and, having heated its plumage excessively, it casts itself into the sea for cooling, and then its feathers fall off, and new ones succeed; and this it does until it is a hundred years old; and to its then state of baldness, whilst it is moulting, is the allusion here; unless it can be thought any respect is had to that kind of eagle which is called the bald one. In Virginia[z] there are three sorts of eagles; one is the grey eagle, about the size of a kite; another the black eagle, resembling those in England; and a third the bald eagle, so called because the upper part of the neck and head are covered with a sort of white down: but the former sort of baldness seems to be intended, which is at certain stated times, and not what always is, and is only partial; for it denotes such an universal baldness to be made, as to take in all the parts of the body where any hair grows; as expressive of the general devastation that should be made, which would be the cause of this great mourning: *for they are gone into captivity from thee*; that is, the delicate children of Israel and Judah, and so were as dead unto them, or worse: this was accomplished in Israel or the ten tribes, partly by Tiglath-pileser, and more completely by Salmaneser, king of Assyria, 2 Kings xv. 29. and xvii. 6. and in Judah or the two tribes, when Sennacherib came and took their fenced cities; and doubtless some of the inhabitants and their children were carried captive by him, though not Jerusalem; and therefore cannot be addressed here, as some do interpret the words, unless the prophecy is to be extended to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians.

CHAP. II.

IN this chapter complaint is made of the sins of the people of Israel, and they are threatened with punishment for them. The sins they are charged with are covetousness, oppression, and injustice, which were premeditated, and done deliberately, ver. 1, 2. therefore the Lord devised evil against them, they should not escape; and which would bring down their pride, and cause them to take up a lamentation, because they should not enjoy the portion of land that belonged to them, ver. 3, 4, 5. they are further charged with opposing the prophets of the Lord, the folly and wickedness of which is exposed, ver. 6, 7. and with great inhumanity and barbarity, even to women and children, ver. 8, 9. and therefore are ordered to expect and prepare for a removal out of their land, ver. 10. and the rather, since they gave encouragement and

[t] So Piscator, Junius, Drusius.
[u] Ad Adullam veniet gloria Israelis, Cocceius.
[w] He published Annotations on the twelve minor Prophets at Heilbronn, 1753, which he calls a Gnomon, wrote in imitation of Bengelius's Gnomon of the New Testament, whose son-in-law it seems he is, and by whom his work is prefaced.
[x] Onomast. Sacr. p. 730.
[y] Saadiah Gaon apud Kimchi & Ben Melech in Psal. ciii. 5. & Isa. xl. 31.
[z] See Harris's Voyages and Travels, vol. 2. p. 249, Lowthorp's Philosoph. Transact. abridged, vol. 3. p. 589.

heed to false prophets, and delighted in them, ver. 11. and the chapter is concluded with words of comfort to the remnant among them, and with precious promises of the Messiah, and the blessings of grace by him, ver. 12, 13.

Ver. 1. *Woe to them that devise iniquity*, &c.] Any kind of iniquity; idolatry, or worshipping of idols, for the word is used sometimes for an idol; or the sin of uncleanness, on which the thoughts too often dwell in the night-season; or coveting of neighbours' goods, and oppressing the poor; sins which are instanced in the next verse; and every thing that is vain, foolish, and wicked, and in the issue brings trouble and distress: now a woe is denounced against such that think on such things, and please themselves with them in their imaginations, and contrive ways and means to commit them: *and work evil upon their beds:* when, the senses being less engaged, the thoughts are more free; but should not be employed about evil; but either in meditating on the divine goodness, and praising the Lord for his mercies; or in examining a man's heart, state, and case, and mourning over his sins, and applying to God for the remission of them; but, instead of this, the persons here threatened are said to *work evil on their beds*, when they should be asleep and at rest, or engaged in the above things; that is, they plot and contrive how to accomplish the evil they meditate; they determine upon doing it, and are as sure of effecting it as if it was actually done; and do act it over in their own minds, as if it was real; see Psal. xxxvi. 4: *when the morning is light, they practise it:* they wish and wait for the morning light, and as soon as it appears they rise; and, instead of blessing God for the mercies of the night, and going about their lawful business, they endeavour to put in practice with all vigour and diligence, and as expeditiously as they can, what they have projected and schemed in the night-season: *because it is in the power of their hand:* to commit it; and they have no principle of goodness in them, nor fear of God before them, to restrain them from it: or, *because their hand is unto power*[b]; it is stretched out, and made use of in the commission of sin to the utmost of their power, without any regard to God or man. The Vulgate Latin version is, *because their hand is against God:* their hearts are enmity to God, and therefore they oppose him with both their hands, and care not what iniquity they commit; they are rebels against him, and will not be subject to him. The Septuagint and Arabic versions are, *because they lift not up their hands to God:* they don't pray to him, and therefore are bold and daring to perpetrate the grossest iniquity, which a praying man durst not do; but the Syriac version is the reverse, *they do lift up their hands to God:* make a shew of religion and devotion, when their hearts and their hands are deeply engaged in sinning; which shews their impudence and hypocrisy; but the passages in Gen. xxxi. 29. Deut. xxxii. 28. Prov. iii. 27. favour and confirm our version, and the sense of it; so the Targum.

Ver. 2. *And they covet fields, and take* them *by violence*, &c.] The fields of their poor neighbours, which lie near them, and convenient for them; they wish they were theirs, and they contrive ways and means to get them into their possession; and if they can't get them by fair means, if they can't persuade them to sell them, or at their price, they'll either use some crafty method to get them from them, or they'll take them away by force and violence; as Ahab got Naboth's vineyard from him: *and houses, and take* them *away;* they covet the houses of their neighbours also, and take the same course to get them out of their hands, and add them to their own estates: *so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage:* not only dispossess him of his house to dwell in, but of his paternal inheritance, what he received from his ancestors, and should have transmitted to his posterity, being unalienable; and so distressed a man and his family for the present, and his posterity after him. The Vulgate Latin version is, *they calumniate a man and his house;* which seems to be designed to make it agree with the story of Ahab, 1 Kings xxi. 13.

Ver. 3. *Therefore thus saith the Lord, behold, against this family do I devise an evil*, &c.] Because of those evils of covetousness, oppression, and injustice, secretly devised, and deliberately committed, the Lord, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, declares, and would have it observed, that he had devised an evil of punishment against the whole nation of Israel, the ten tribes particularly, among whom these sins greatly prevailed; even an invasion of their land by the Assyrians, and the carrying of them captive from it into foreign parts: *from which ye shall not remove your necks:* that is, they should not be able to deliver themselves from it; they would not be able to stop the enemy in his progress, having entered their land; nor oblige him to break up the siege of their city, before which he would sit, and there continue till he had taken it; and being carried captive by him, they would never be able to free themselves from the yoke of bondage put upon them, and under which they remain unto this day. The allusion is to beasts slipping their necks out of the collar or yoke put upon them: these sons of Belial had broke off the yoke of God's commandments, and now he'll put another yoke upon them, they shall never be able to cast off until the time of the restitution of all things, when all Israel shall be saved: *neither shall ye go haughtily:* as they now did, in an erect posture, with necks stretched out, and heads lifted up high, and looking upon others with scorn and contempt; but hereafter it should be otherwise, their heads would hang down, their countenances be dejected, and their backs bowed with the burdens upon them: *for this time is evil:* very calamitous, afflictive, and distressing; and so not a time for pride and haughtiness, but for dejection and humiliation; see Ephes. v. 16.

Ver. 4. *In that day shall one take up a parable against you*, &c.] Making use of your name, as a by-word, a proverb, a taunt, and a jeer; mocking at your calamities and miseries: or, *concerning you*[c]; take up and deliver out a narrative of your troubles, in figurative and parabolical expressions; which Kimchi thinks is

[b] כי יש לאל ידם quia est ad potentiam manus ipsorum, Calvin.

[c] עליכם super vos, Pagninus, Montanus; de vobis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; super vobis, Cocceius.

to be understood of a false prophet, finding his prophecies and promises come to nothing; or rather a stranger, a stander-by, a spectator of their miseries, an insulting enemy, mimicking and personating them: or one of themselves, in the name of the rest: *and lament with a doleful lamentation*; or, *lament a lamentation of lamentation*[d]: a very grievous one; or, *a lamentation that is*, or *shall be*, or *is done*[e]; a real one, and which will continue: and *say, we be utterly spoiled*; our persons, families, and friends; our estates, fields, and vineyards; our towns and cities, and even our whole land, all laid waste, spoiled, and plundered: *he hath changed the portion of my people*; the land of Israel, which was the portion of the people of it, given unto them as their portion by the Lord; but now he, or the enemy the Assyrian, or God by him, had changed the possessors of it; had taken it away from Israel, and given it to others: *how hath he removed it from me!* the land that was my portion, and the portion of my people; how comes it to pass that he hath taken away that which was my property, and given it to another! how strange is this! how suddenly was it done! and by what means! *turning away, he hath divided our fields*; either God, turning away from his people, because of their sins, divided their fields among their enemies; *instead of restoring*[f], as some read it, he did so; or the enemy the Assyrian, turning away after he had conquered the land, and about to return to his own country, divided it among his soldiers: or, *to the perverse*, or *rebellious one*[g], *he divideth our fields*; that is, the Lord divides them to the wicked, perverse, and blaspheming king of Assyria; so the word is used of one that goes on frowardly, and backslides, Isa. lvii. 17. Jer. iii. 14, 22.

Ver. 5. *Therefore thou shalt have none that shall cast a cord by lot*, &c.] This confirms what was before delivered in a parabolical way, and as a lamentation; and is spoken either to the false prophet, as Kimchi; who should not be, nor have any posterity to inherit by lot the land of Israel; or to those oppressors that took away houses and fields from others, these should have no part nor lot in the land any more; or rather to the whole people of Israel, who should no more inherit their land after their captivity, as they have not to this day. The allusion is to the distribution of the land by lot, and the dividing of it by a cord or line, as in Joshua's time; but now there should be no land in the possession of Israelites to be divided among them; nor any people to divide it to, being scattered up and down in the world, and so no need of any person to be employed in such service; nor any sanhedrim or court of judicature to apply unto for a just and equal division and distribution, who perhaps may be meant in the next clause; *in the congregation of the Lord*; unless this is to be understood of the body of the people, who were formerly called the congregation of the Lord, Deut. xxiii. 1, 2. though now they had forfeited this character, and are only called so ironically, as some think. Aben Ezra interprets it, when the Lord returns the captivity of his people; and so Kimchi, who applies it to the false prophet, as before observed, who at this time should have no part nor lot in the land.

Ver. 6. *Prophesy ye not*, say they to them that *prophesy*, &c.] Or *drop not*[h]; such terrible words, such menacing things; let them not flow from your lips with such profusion and abundance; cease from speaking in the name of the Lord, if we can hear nothing else but sharp reproofs, and severe judgments: or the first word respects the true prophets of the Lord, and forbids their prophesying; and, according to others, the next should be rendered, *let them prophesy*, or *drop*[i]; that is, the false prophets, that prophesy smooth things; and so the sense is, let the one prophesy, but not the other: *they shall not prophesy to them*; these are the words of the Lord, in answer to the other, that since they did not like his prophets, they should no more be sent to them, nor should drop or distil the rain of doctrine upon them; but, as a judgment upon them, should be deprived of them: or, *they shall not prophesy according to these*[k]; as the false prophets do, not such things as they: or the whole may be rendered thus, *prophesy not*, or, if *they prophesy, let them not prophesy as these*[l]; such things as these; namely, *that shame shall not overtake them*; that is, as the false prophets, who said that shame and confusion should not come upon the people of Israel, or the wrath denounced against them, but they should enjoy great peace and prosperity: but the first sense seems best, and the meaning of this clause to be, that the true prophets of the Lord should not prophesy any more to this people, since they did not choose they should: *that shame might not come upon them*; that the prophets might not be treated by them in a shameful and ignominious manner: or, as others, *shame shall not depart from them*[m]; though they think to escape it by forbidding the prophets prophesying terrible things to come, yet confusion will be their portion at last.

Ver. 7. *O thou that art named the house of Jacob*, &c.] Called after that great and good man, and reckoned the people of God, and have the character of being religious persons; but, alas! have but a name, and not the thing, and are the degenerate offspring of that famous patriarch: *is the spirit of the Lord straitened?* or *shortened*[n]; the spirit of the Lord in his prophets, is it to be limited and restrained according to the will of men? or, if these prophets are forbid to prophesy, and they are silenced, is not the residue of the spirit with the Lord? can't he raise up others to prophesy in his name? or is the spirit of the Lord confined, as a spirit of prophesy, only to foretel good things, and not evil? may it not threaten with punishment for sin, as well as promise peace and prosperity? and is it to be reckoned narrow and strait, because it now does not? the fault is not in that, but in you, who

[d] נהה נהי נהיה & lamentabitur lamentum lamenti, Montanus.
[e] נהיה factum est, De Dieu; ejulatu vero, Cocceius; actum est, Burkius.
[f] לשובב pro reddendo, Castalio.
[g] שובב aversus, refractario, Drusius; ingrato & rebelli, De Dieu.
[h] אל תטיפו ne stilletis, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Burkius, Junius & Tremellius; ne stillatote, Piscator.
[i] יטיפון stillent isti, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius; stillanto, Piscator.

[k] לאלה secundum istos, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[l] Ne vaticinemini, aut si vaticinentur, ne talia vaticinentur, Castalio.
[m] לא יסג כלמות non recedent ignominiae, De Dieu; non retrogradietur summa ignominia, Cocceius; non recederet ignominia magna, Burkius.
[n] הקצר abbreviatus est, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius, Cocceius; decurtatus esset, Piscator.

make it necessary, by your conduct, that not good, but evil things, should be predicted of you: are *these his doings?* either Jacob's doings, such things as Jacob did? did he ever forbid the prophets of the Lord from prophesying? or did he do such things as required such menaces and threatenings as now delivered by the prophets? or are these becoming such persons as go by his name? or are such works as are done by you pleasing to God? were they, no such terrible messages would be sent by his prophets: or are these the Lord's doings? are judgments the works he is continually doing and taking delight in? are they not his acts, his strange acts? did you behave otherwise than you do, you would hear nothing of this kind: *do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?* that walks in a right way, and according to the rule of the divine word, in the uprightness and integrity of his heart, aiming at the honour and glory of God in all his ways? to such a man the words of the Lord by his prophets speak good things, promise him good things here and hereafter, and do him good, exhilarate his spirits, cheer, refresh, and comfort his soul.

Ver. 8. *Even of late my people is risen up as an enemy*, &c.] Or *yesterday*[p]; meaning, a very little while before this prophecy, the people of Israel, those of the ten tribes, who were the people of God by profession, rose up as an enemy, not only to God and true religion, worshipping idols; but rather to their brethren, those of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; as they did in the times of Pekah king of Israel, who slew a hundred and twenty thousand of them in one day, 2 Chron. xxviii. 6. and which is here mentioned as a reason why the spirit of the Lord in his prophets threatened them with evil, and did not promise them good things: *ye pull off the robe with the garment*; the upper and nether garment, and so stripped them naked: or, *they stripped the robe from off the garment*, as some[q]; they took the upper garment or cloak from them, and left them only the under garment: *for them that pass by securely, as men averse from war*: who were travelling from place to place about their proper business, and thought themselves very safe; were peaceable men themselves, and suspected no harm from others: or, *returning from war*[r]; such who escaped in the battle, and fled for their lives; and when they imagined they were safe, and out of danger, fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped them of their garments. Gussetius[s] interprets it of such who were returning to the battle, and yet so used.

Ver. 9. *The women of my people have ye cast out from their pleasant houses*, &c.] Not content to slay their husbands, they took their wives or widows captive, dispossessed them of their habitations, where they had lived delightfully with their husbands and children; so we find that, at the time before referred to, the people of Israel carried captive of their brethren two hundred thousand women, and brought them to Samaria, 2 Chron. xxviii. 8. Some understand this of divorce, which those men were the cause of, either by committing adultery with them, which was a just reason for their husband's divorcing them; or by frequenting their houses, which caused suspicion and jealousy: *from their children have ye taken away my glory for ever*; that which God would have had glory from, and they would have given it to him on account of; as their being brought up in a religious way; their liberties, both civil and religious; their paternal estates and inheritances, and the enjoyment of their own land; and especially the worship of God in the temple, of which they were deprived by being carried away from their own country: or it may be understood of the glory that accrues to God by honourable marriage, and the bed undefiled; and the dishonour cast upon him by the contrary, as well as upon children, who may be suspected to be illegitimate.

Ver. 10. *Arise ye, and depart*, &c.] That is, out of the land; don't think of a continuance in it, but expect a removal from it; prepare for captivity and exile; look for it every moment, to hear it said to you, arise, and be gone from hence; for, since you have drove others out of their inheritances and possessions, this shall be your case: *for this is not your rest*; the land in which the ten tribes then dwelt, and which was given to their fathers for an inheritance, and for a resting-place, and had been so for ages past, now would be no more so, because of their sins and transgressions; they must not expect to abide here long, and enjoy rest and ease; but to be turned out, and deprived of all the blessings of it, and be carried into a foreign country, where, instead of rest and ease, they should be in slavery and bondage: *because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction*; because the land that was given them to dwell in was defiled by their manifold iniquities, particularly adulteries, before hinted at: all sin is of a defiling nature; it defiled the bodies and souls of these men; defiled the estates they were possessed of, and the land on which they dwelt, and their fellow-inhabitants of it; therefore utter destruction, even a sore and grievous one, should come upon them, by which their land should be laid waste, and they consumed off of it: or, *it shall corrupt you, even with a grievous corruption*[t]; or you being corrupt upon it, it shall spew you out as a corrupt thing, as it did the Canaanites, the ancient inhabitants of it; when you will appear to be as you are, extremely corrupt: or, *it shall be in pain, even with sore pains*[u]; such as those of a woman in travail, not being able to bear them any longer, but ease itself of them, through the judgments of God upon them. This may be applied to the present state and condition of the people of God in this world, which is not their rest; there remains one for them in another world, but they are not yet come to it; for whilst here they are in trouble, through indwelling sin, the temptations of Satan, divine desertions, and various fears that attend them, so that they have little rest; besides, this is a warfare-state,

[p] אתמול heri, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Burkius.

[q] ממול שלמה a veste togam spoliatis, Noldius; a veste pallium exuitis, Burkius.

[r] שובי מלחמה revertentibus a bello, Piscator; redeunt a bello, Cocceius; & revertuntur a bello, De Dieu; uti essetis reversi ex bello, Burkius.

[s] Redeuntes in bellum, Comment. Ebr. p. 836.

[t] תחבל וחבל נמרץ corrumpet & corruptione acri, Montanus; & quidem corruptione vehementissima, Cocceius.

[u] So Aben Ezra and Kimchi in Sepher Shorash. rad. חבל.

and they are engaged with many enemies; and at best are but travellers passing through this world to their father's house: this is also their working time, and they are attended with a variety of afflictions within and without; and since there are so many corruptions and pollutions in the world, through lust, which make it that it can be no resting-place for a good man; it becomes them not to take up their rest here, but seek after it elsewhere; and to live in an expectation of being called out of it, and to be in a readiness to depart when the Lord shall call for them.

Ver. 11. *If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie*, &c.] Who pretends to be a prophet, and a spiritual man, and to be under the inspiration and influence of the spirit of God, but utters nothing but lies and falsehoods; or who is actuated by a spirit of falsehood and lying; or, as in the margin, *walks with the wind, and lies falsely* [v]; is full of wind and vanity; or, *after the wind* [w]; and follows the dictates of his vain mind, and coins lies, and speaks false things: saying, *I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink*: or *drop a word unto thee* [x]; that there will be good times, and nothing but good eating and drinking; and that men need not fear such dismal things befalling them as the prophets of the Lord spoke of; but may be cheerful and merry, and drink wine and strong drink, and not be afraid of their evil tidings: or, *for wine and strong drink* [y], so Kimchi; and the meaning is, that if they would give him a cup of wine, or a draught of strong drink, he would prophesy good things to them; the reverse of what is before said, as that they should continue in their land, and not depart from it; that this should be their rest, and they should remain therein, and not be destroyed in it, or cast out of it: *he shall even be the prophet of this people*: a *dropper* [z] to them; see ver. 6. such an one shall be acceptable to them; they'll caress him, and prefer him to the true prophets of the Lord; which is mentioned to shew the temper of the people, and how easily they were imposed upon, and their disrespect to the prophets of the Lord, as in ver. 6, 7. to which subject the prophet here returns, as Kimchi observes.

Ver. 12. *I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee*, &c.] These words are either the words of the false prophet continued, that prophesied of wine and strong drink, as Aben Ezra; promising great plenty and prosperity, and that the remnant of the ten tribes carried captive by Tiglath-pileser should be returned, and they should all live together in safety and plenty, and rejoice because of their numbers: or else they are a denunciation of threatenings and judgments, as Kimchi; that the Israelites should be gathered indeed together, but as sheep for the slaughter, even those that remained, not as yet carried captive; these should be shut up, and closely besieged in their cities, and make a noise, and cry for fear of their enemies, and because of the great number of them: or rather they are a comfortable promise of the gathering of the people of Israel in the times of the Messiah, in the last days of the Gospel dispensation, even all of Jacob, all the then posterity of Israel; for then *all Israel shall be saved*, Rom. xi. 26. and this is introduced, though abruptly, as often such promises are, for the comfort of the Lord's people, amidst sorrowful and sad tidings brought to the people in general: *I will surely gather the remnant of Israel*; the remnant according to the election of grace, whom the Lord will reserve for himself, those that are left of them in the latter day; these shall be gathered effectually by the grace of God unto Jesus, the true Messiah, they shall now seek after; and into his church, to join themselves to his people, embracing his Gospel, and submitting to his ordinances; when there shall be *one fold* for Jews and Gentiles, and *one Shepherd* over them, the Lord Jesus Christ: *I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah*; a place famous for flocks and pastures; signifying that they should be took care of by the great and good Shepherd, have a good fold, and good pastures provided for them, where they should feed comfortably together, in great unity and affection: *as the flock in the midst of their fold*; lying down safely, and resting quietly; see Ezek. xxxiv. 13, 14: *they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men*: a joyful noise, because of their own numbers being increased with men like a flock, and so numerous, that the place will be too strait for them; and because of the number of good and faithful shepherds under Christ, to feed and protect them, even pastors after God's own heart, given them to feed them with knowledge and understanding, Jer. iii. 15.

Ver. 13. *The breaker up is come up before them*, &c.] Not the enemy, either the Assyrian or Chaldean army, or any part thereof, going up before the rest, breaking down the walls of the city, either of Samaria or Jerusalem, so making way for entrance therein; nor Zedekiah, as Joseph Kimchi, who made his escape through the wall broken down; nor the Maccabees, who were instruments of great salvation and deliverance to the Jews after the captivity, and before the coming of Christ. Kimchi makes mention of an exposition, which interprets *the breaker* of Elias, that was to come before the Messiah; *and their king*, in the latter part of the text, of the branch the son of David; that is, the Messiah; which sense Mr. Pocock thinks may be admitted of, provided by Elias we understand John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, who is the true Elias that was to come; who broke, prepared, and cleared the way for Christ by his doctrine and baptism; see Luke i. 16, 17. and iii. 4, 5. but it is best to interpret *the breaker* of Christ himself; and so I find it explained [a] by the Jews also, to whom this and all the rest of the characters in the text agree; and who may be so called with respect to his incarnation, being the first-born that opened the womb, and broke forth into the world in a very extraordinary manner; his birth being of a virgin, who was so both before and after the birth; thus Pharez had his name, which is from the

[v] הולך רוח ושקר כזב qui ambulat cum vento & falsitate mentiatur, Piscator; ambulantem cum vento & falsitate mendacem, Cocceius.

[w] So Hillerus in Burkius.

[x] אטיף לך stillabo tibi, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Burkius.

[y] ליין pro vino, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius.

[z] מטיף stillator, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Cocceius.

[a] In Mattanot Cehunah in Bereshit Rabba, parash. 85. fol. 75. 2. Vid. Galatin. Arcan. Cathol. Ver. l. 3. c. 30.

same root, and is of a similar sound with Phorez here, from his breaking forth before his brother, unawares, and contrary to expectation, Gen. xxxviii. 29. this agrees with Christ, with respect to his death, when he broke through and vanquished all enemies, sin, Satan, the world, and death; broke through all the troops of hell, and spoiled principalities and powers; and through all difficulties that lay in the way of the salvation of his people; he broke down the middle wall of partition, the ceremonial law which was between Jew and Gentile; and broke off the yoke of sin, Satan, and the law, under which they were, and set them at liberty; and at his resurrection he broke asunder the cords of death, as Samson did his withs as a thread of tow; and at his ascension he broke his way through the regions of the air, and legions of devils there, leading captivity captive, and entered into heaven; and was *pandens iter*, as the Vulgate Latin version here renders it, opening the way for his people into it; by the ministry of the word, he broke his way into the Gentile world, conquering and to conquer, which was mighty, through God, for the pulling down of strong holds, and reducing multitudes to his obedience; at the conversion of every sinner he breaks open the everlasting doors of their hearts, and enters in; he breaks their rocky hearts in pieces, and then binds up what he has broken; and in the latter day he'll break in pieces all his enemies as a potter's vessel; yea, he'll break in pieces and consume all the kingdoms of the earth, which will become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors: and now he is ascended, or *gone up* to heaven to his father there, and *before them* his sheep, his people, said to be assembled, gathered and put together; he is ascended as the forerunner of them, to receive gifts for them, and bestow them on them, and to prepare heaven for them, and to make intercession on their behalf; and, as sure as he is gone up, so sure shall they also follow: *they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it*; not either the Assyrians or Chaldeans; nor the people that fled with Zedekiah; but the sheep of Christ following him their Shepherd; who, in the strength of Christ, and the power of his grace, break out of their prison-houses; and break off the yokes and fetters in which they have been detained, and all allegiance to former lords; and break through their enemies, and become more than conquerors through him that has loved them; and *pass through* him *the gate*; the strait gate, and narrow way, that leads to the Father, and to the enjoyment of all the blessings of grace; and into the sheep-fold, the church, and the privileges of it; and even into heaven itself, eternal life and happiness: and by which also they *go out*, for he is a door of escape unto them out of the hands of all their enemies, and from wrath to come; and he is a door of hope of all good things unto them, and which leads to green pastures, and by which they go in and out, and find pasture: *and their King shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them*; not the king of Assyria or Babylon, before their respective armies, the Lord God himself being in a providential way at the head of them, and succeeding them; nor Hoshea or Zedekiah, going before their people into captivity, the Lord having forsaken them; but the King Messiah, who is King of Zion, King of saints, that goes before his people as a king before his subjects, and as a shepherd before his flock; and who is the true Jehovah, the Lord our righteousness, who is at the head, and is the Head, of his church; the Captain of their salvation, that is at the head of his armies, his chosen and faithful ones, they following and marching after him, Rev. xvii. 14. and xix. 14.

CHAP. III.

IN this chapter the prophet reproves and threatens both princes and prophets, first separately, and then conjunctly; first the heads and princes of the people, civil magistrates, for their ignorance of justice, and hatred of good, and love of evil, and for their oppression and cruelty; and they are threatened with distress when they should cry unto the Lord, and should not be heard by him, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. next the prophets are taken to task, for their voraciousness, avarice, and false prophesying; and are threatened with darkness, with want of vision, and of an answer from the Lord, and with shame and confusion, ver. 5, 6, 7. and the prophet being full of the spirit and power of God, to declare the sins and transgressions of Jacob and Israel, ver. 8, very freely declaims against princes, priests, and prophets, all together; who, though guilty of very notorious crimes, yet were in great security, and promised themselves impunity, ver. 9, 10, 11. wherefore the city and temple of Jerusalem are threatened with an utter desolation, ver. 12.

Ver. 1. *And I said, hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel*, &c.] This seems to be a new sermon or discourse, delivered at another time and to another people than the preceding; for, as that chiefly concerns the ten tribes, this the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and was spoken to them in the times of Hezekiah, as appears from Jer. xxvi. 18. for though Jacob and Israel generally design the ten tribes, yet here the other two, as is manifest from the above-cited place, and also from ver. 9, 10, 12. and not only heads of families, but such as were in the highest posts under the government, the sanhedrim of the nation, judges, rulers, and nobles, are here addressed; and who had a great share in national guilt, being ringleaders in sin, who ought to have set good examples to others; and these are not to be spared because of their grandeur and dignity, but to be faithfully reproved for their vices, and which they should diligently attend unto; though they are to be addressed in a respectful and honourable manner, and be entreated to hearken to the word of the Lord by his prophet; all which was carefully observed by Micah; and it was with pleasure he could reflect upon his plain, faithful, and affectionate reproof of those great men: *is it not for you to know judgment?* what is just and right to be done by men, and what sentence is to be passed

in courts of judicature, in cases brought before them; and not only to know, in a speculative way, what is equitable, but to practise it themselves, and see that it is done by others: and when they duly considered this, they would be able to see and own that what the prophet from the Lord would now charge them with, or denounce upon them, was according to truth and justice.

Ver. 2. *Who hate the good, and love the evil*, &c.] Instead of knowing and doing what was just and right; or, directly contrary to their light and knowledge, and the duty of their office, they hated that which is good, which is agreeable to the law, nature, and will of God, and loved that which is evil, which is contrary thereunto; or they hated to do good, and loved to do evil, as the Targum; as men do who are averse to good, and prone to evil: or they hated a good man, as Aben Ezra, and loved the evil man; not only delighted in committing sin themselves, but took pleasure in those that did it; and could not endure the company and conversation of holy and good men: *who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones*; like wild beasts that tear off skin and flesh from the bones, and then devour them; or like cruel shepherds, that, not content to fleece their flocks, skin them, and take their flesh also, and feed themselves, and not the flock; or like butchers, that first take off the skin off a beast, and then cut up its flesh. The design of the expressions is to shew what rigour, cruelty, and oppressions, these rulers exercised on the people; and by their heavy taxes and levies, and exorbitant mulcts and fines, pillaged and plundered them of all they had in the world, and left them quite bare, as bones stripped of their skin and flesh. So the Targum, "seizing on "their substance by violence, and their precious mam- "mon they take away."

Ver. 3. *Who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skins from off them*, &c.] Like cannibals, flay them alive, and then eat their flesh: this signifies, as before, devouring their substance, only expressed in terms which still more set forth their savageness, inhumanity, barbarity, and cruelty. So the Targum, "who spoil the substance of my people, and their pre- "cious mammon they take from them;" and what aggravated their guilt was, that they were the Lord's people by profession and religion they so used; whom he had committed to their care to rule over, protect, and defend: *and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron*: did with them as cooks do, who not only cut flesh off the bones, and into slices, but break the bones themselves, to get out the marrow, and chop them small, that they may have all the virtue that is in them, to make their soup and broth the richer; by which is signified, that these wicked and avaricious rulers took every method to squeeze the people, and get all their wealth and riches into their hands, that they might live in a more riotous and luxurious manner.

Ver. 4. *Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear them*, &c.] When all the above evils threatened them in the preceding chapters shall come upon them; when the enemy shall invade their land, besiege their cities, and take them, and they, their families and substance, just ready to fall into their hands, they shall cry unto the Lord; or pray unto him, as the Targum, in the time of their distress; but he will not hear their prayer, so as to answer it according to their desire; that is, he will not save them from imminent danger, but deliver them up, them, and all that belong unto them, into the hands of such that shall use them as they have done others: *he will even hide his face from them at that time*: turn his back upon them, and a deaf ear to them, and shew them no favour, nor grant them any help and protection: *as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings*; he'll punish them according to the law of retaliation; as when the poor cried unto them, when they were stripping them of their substance, and they would not hearken to them, so now, when they cry unto the Lord in their distress, he'll not hearken to them; and as they turned their backs, and hid their faces from those that were afflicted by them, and would shew them no favour, so will the Lord deal with them; and as they exercised the utmost cruelty and barbarity that could be done, they will now be given up into the hands of cruel and merciless men, that will use them in like manner: or, *because they have done ill in their doings*[b]; to the poor, whose cause God will defend and vindicate.

Ver. 5. *Thus saith the Lord, concerning the prophets that make my people err*, &c.] The false prophets, as the Targum; and as the description given of them shews: who, instead of directing the people in the right way, as by their office and characters as prophets they should have done, they led them into mistakes about matters of religion and civil government, and out of the way of their duty to God and men, and exposed them to great danger and distress; and this was the more aggravating, as they were the Lord's people by name and profession, whom they caused to err from his ways and worship, which brought his displeasure upon them: *that bite with their teeth, and cry, peace*; prophesy smooth things, promise all kind of prosperity and plenty, and bite their lips, and keep in those distresses and calamities which they could not but see coming upon the people; or, while they are prophesying good things, they gnash their teeth against the prophets of the Lord, and bitterly inveigh against them for threatening with war, destruction, and captivity; or, by flattering the people with their lips, they bite them, devour their substance, and are the cause of their hurt and ruin; or rather, so long as the people fed them well, and they had a sufficiency to bite and live upon, they foretold happy days unto them. So the Targum, "he that feeds them with a feast of flesh, "they prophesy peace to him;" which sense is confirmed by what follows, *and he that putteth not into their mouth, they even declare war against him*: who don't give them what they ask, or don't feed them according to their desire, don't keep a good table for them, and cram and pamper them, but neglect them, and don't provide well for them; these they threaten with one calamity or another that shall befall them; and endeavour to set their neighbours against them,

[b] כאשר ἀνθ' ὧν, eo quod, Sept.; quia, Drusius; pro eo quod, Grotius.

and even the government itself, and do them all the mischief they can by defamation and slander.

Ver. 6. *Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision*, &c.] Not that those outward gifts and illuminations, and that prophetic light they had, or seemed to have, should be taken away from them, and it should be quite night with them; because these men were never sent of God, or received any message from him, or had any prophetic talents at all, and therefore could not be taken away from them, and they be benighted in this sense; though, it is true, such might be the circumstances they would be brought into, that it should appear to the people that they are the dark persons they were, that they have no vision, nor never had any; but rather the sense is, that such dark providences and dreadful calamities should come upon the people in general, and upon those prophets in particular, often signified by *night* in Scripture, that they would not have the face to pretend any more that they had any vision from God of good times and things. It may be rendered, *therefore night shall be unto you because of vision*[c]; calamity should come upon them because of their false and pretended visions of peace and prosperity they deluded the people with: *and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine:* such darkness of affliction should be upon them, that they would not offer to deliver out any divination or prediction of good things coming upon them; or such darkness and distress would be their portion *because of divination*[d], on account of their lying divinations they had imposed upon the people: *and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them:* their time of prosperity will be over, and they shall be no more in favour with the people, or courted and feasted by them; but shall be had in the utmost contempt and abhorrence. The Targum of the whole is, "therefore "ye shall blush at prophesying, and be ashamed of "teaching; and tribulation as darkness shall cover the "false prophets, and the time shall be darkened upon "them."

Ver. 7. *Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded*, &c.] When the events of things will make it most clearly appear to all that their visions, divinations, and prophecies, are false; they'll not be able to lift up their heads, or shew their faces, but shame and confusion will cover them: *yea, they shall all cover their lips:* stop their mouths, hold their tongues, and be entirely and totally silenced; they'll not pretend to utter any other vision or prophecy; nor be able to say one word in defence of themselves, and of what they have before prophesied; every thing in providence being contrary to what they had said, and agreeable to the words of the true prophets; or they shall cover their lips as mourners, as the Targum adds, by way of explanation: see Ezek. xxiv. 17, 22. It is said[e] there were two gates in Solomon's temple; one called the gate of the bridegrooms, the other the gate of mourners: to those that entered the latter, if their lip was covered, it was said, he that dwells in this house comfort thee; and so the lips of the false prophets being covered may signify that they were now sorry for what they had done, at least because of the calamities on them and the people; though the former sense seems best: *for there is no answer of God:* not that they shall be ashamed and silenced because they shall now have no answer of God, for they never had any, which this would imply; but that it shall now be most plain and clear to all that the Lord never spoke by them, and they never had any answer from him; all their visions, divinations, and prophecies, were of themselves, and not of him; what they delivered was not the word of the Lord, but their own; and this now being discovered and manifest to every one, will put them to utter silence and shame. The Targum is, "for there is not in them a spirit of prophecy from "the Lord."

Ver. 8. *But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord*, &c.] Or, *full of power, even the Spirit of the Lord*, as Gussetius[f], by way of apposition, and as explaining what is meant by power; for so the Spirit is sometimes called from his gifts and graces, which are powerful in men; see Luke xxiv. 47. Acts i. 8. and vi. 5, 8. These are the words of Micah concerning himself, in opposition to the false prophets, who are destitute of the Spirit of God; men of mean sordid dispositions, that had nothing but sinister and selfish ends in view, and not in the least qualified for the office and character they bore; whereas he could say of himself, with truth, that he was possessed of sufficient abilities for such an employment; and which he had, not of himself, but from the Spirit of God, who gives gifts to men, and divides them severally as he will; so that this was no vaunt and vain boast, or a piece of arrogance and ostentation in the prophet; since he only opposes himself to the false prophets, and ascribes his endowments and qualifications, not to himself, but to the Spirit of God; he had, though they had not, answers from the Lord, visions and prophecies from him, with a commission and abilities from him to execute the office of a prophet, being under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, and full of him and his gifts: *and of judgment, and of might;* or of the judgment of truth, as the Targum; being able to discern truth and error, between what comes from the Spirit of God, and what from a lying spirit, or a spirit of divination and falsehood; what is proper to be spoken, when the right time, and to whom; and having courage and greatness of mind, fearing no man's person or face, but bold *to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin:* freely and openly to set it before them in a true light, with all aggravating circumstances, and reprove them for the same; and threaten them with the judgments of God in case they repented not; see Isa. lviii. 1. and as a proof of all this says what follows:

Ver. 9. *Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel*, &c.] As an instance of his boldness, courage, and impartiality, he begins with the principal men of the land, and

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[c] מחזון propter visionem, Munster, Piscator.
[d] מקסם propter divinationem, Munster; propter divinare, i. e. divinationem, Vatablus; præ visione—præ divinatione, Burkius.
[e] R. Jacob, Sepher Musar, c. 9. apud Drusii Proverb. class. 2. l. 3. sect. 194.
[f] Ebr. Comment. p. 468.

charges them with sins, and reproves for them, and denounces judgments on account of them; see the note on ver. 1: *that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity*: a sad character of princes, rulers, and judges, who not only ought to know but to love judgment, justice, and equity, and do them; even take delight and pleasure in the distribution of them to every one, and in every cause that came before them; but, instead of this, hated to do that which was right and just; and perverted all the rules and laws of justice and equity, clearing the guilty, and condemning the innocent.

Ver. 10. *They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity.*] Or, *O thou that buildest up*[g], &c.; or, *every one of them that buildeth up*[h], &c.; for the word is in the singular number; but, be the words rendered either of these ways, they respect the heads and princes of the people; who either repaired the temple on Zion, or ornamented the king's palace, or built themselves fine stately houses in Jerusalem, or large streets there, by money they took of murderers to save them, as Kimchi; or by money got by rapine and oppression, by spoiling the poor of their goods and their livelihood, for them and their families, which was all one as shedding innocent blood; and by money obtained by bribes, for the perversion of justice, and such-like illegal proceedings, truly called iniquity. The Targum is, "who build their houses in Zion "with bloodshed, and Jerusalem with deceits."

Ver. 11. *The heads thereof judge for reward*, &c.] That is, the heads or principal men of Zion and Jerusalem; the kings, or sanhedrim, according to Kimchi; but as this prophecy was delivered in the times of Hezekiah, Jer. xxvi. 18, he who was so good a king must be excepted from this charge; perhaps it was delivered in the beginning of his reign, before a reformation was made, and might be the occasion of it: the former reign was a very wicked one; and very likely the public officers, judges, and civil magistrates, were as yet continued, and who went on in the same course of injustice, giving the cause not on the right side, but to them that gave them most money, or bribed highest, contrary to the law of God, Deut. xvi. 19: *and the priests thereof teach for hire*: for though they had a sufficient and honourable maintenance provided by the law of God for them, yet, not content with this, they took a price of the people for teaching them; and that not such things as were agreeable to the will of God declared in his word, which they ought to have done freely; but such doctrines as were most pleasing to carnal men, and indulged them in their lusts, presumption, and vain confidence: *and the prophets thereof divine for money*: tell men what should befall them; what good things they should be possessed of; what plenty and prosperity they should enjoy; and this they did according to the sum of money given them, more or less. This must be understood of the false prophets: *yet will they lean upon the Lord*: on his care, providence, and protection, as if they were entitled to these things, and might securely rely and depend upon them; though by their sins and transgressions they had forfeited all the benefits and privileges thereof. To lean by faith upon the Lord; or in his Word, as the Targum; and to trust in his promises, in his power, and faithfulness, and goodness; when this springs from an honest and upright heart, and is attended with the fruits of righteousness and holiness, it is well-pleasing to God, and highly regarded by him, and such may depend upon his blessing and protection; but to talk of faith in him, and reliance upon him, when the whole course of the conversation is wicked, this is abominable in the sight of God, and displeasing to him: *and say, is not the Lord among us?* trusting to this, that the temple of the Lord was among them, and that the temple of God were they; that the most holy place was there, where were the symbols of the divine Presence, the ark, cherubim, and mercy-seat; and so concluding from hence their safety and security; putting their confidence in outward places and things, in external worship, sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies, when they neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice, truth, and mercy: and so *none evil can come upon us*; as pestilence, famine, sword, and captivity, the prophets of the Lord had threatened them with.

Ver. 12. *Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field*, &c.] That is, for your sins, as the Targum; for the bloodshed, injustice, and avarice of the princes, priests, and prophets; not that the common people were free from crimes; but these are particularly mentioned, as being ringleaders into sin, and who ought to have set better examples; as also to take off their vain confidence in themselves, who thought that Zion and Jerusalem would be built up and established by them, and preserved for their sakes; as well as to shew the prophet's boldness and intrepidity in his rebukes and menaces of them: now this was prophesied of in the days of Hezekiah, before the invasion of Judea and siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib; it was deferred upon the repentance and reformation of the people; and was fulfilled in part at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, when the city was reduced to a heap of rubbish; and more fully when it was destroyed by the Romans, and ploughed up by Terentius, or Turnus Rufus, as the Jews say; so that there was not a house or building left upon it, but it became utterly desolate and uninhabited, especially in the reign of Adrian: *and Jerusalem shall become heaps*; not only the city of David, built on Mount Zion, should be demolished, but the other part of the city called Jerusalem should be thrown down, and its walls and houses lie in heaps, like heaps of stones in the midst of a ploughed field: *and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest*; Mount Moriah, on which the temple was built; hence called here, by the Targum, the mountain of the house of the sanctuary; the temple upon it should be destroyed, and not one stone left upon another; and the place on which it stood be covered with grass and trees, with briers and thorns, as a forest is, all which have been exactly fulfilled. The Jews say[i] of Turnus Rufus before mentioned, that he both ploughed up the city of Jerusalem, and the temple, the ground on which

[g] בנה ædificans, Montanus, Munster, Burkius.
[h] Quisque eorum ædificat, Vatablus, Piscator, Drusius.

[i] T. Hieros. Taaniot, fol. 69. 2. Juchasin, fol. 36. 2. & Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 28. 1.

they stood; and Jerom[k] affirms the temple was ploughed up by Titus Annius Ruffus; which, as it literally fulfilled this prophecy, denotes the utter destruction of them; for, as it was usual with the ancients to mark out with a plough the ground on which a city was designed to be built; so they drew one over the spot where any had stood, which was become desolate, and to signify that the city was no more to be rebuilt and inhabited: thus Seneca[l], Horace[m], and other writers, express the utter destruction of a city by such phrases.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

CHAP. IV.

THIS chapter contains some gracious promises concerning the glory and happiness of the church of Christ in the last days; as of its stability, exaltation, and increase, and of the spread of the Gospel from it, ver. 1, 2. and of the peace and security of it, and constant profession and exercise of religion in it, ver. 3, 4, 5. and of the deliverance of it from affliction and distress, and the ample and everlasting kingdom of Christ in it, ver. 6, 7, 8. and then follow some prophecies more particularly respecting the Jews; as that, though they should be in distress, and be carried captive into Babylon, they should be delivered from thence, ver. 9, 10. and, though many people should be gathered against them, yet should not be able to prevail over them, but their attempts would issue in their own destruction, ver. 11, 12, 13.

Ver. 1. *But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, &c.*] It appears by the adversative *but*, with which these words are introduced, that they have a dependence upon and a connexion with the last of the preceding chapter; signifying, that though *the mountain of the house*, on which the temple stood, should become desolate, yet *the mountain of the house of the Lord*, which is not literally the same, but what that was typical of, the church of Christ, should be greatly exalted and enlarged; and which, according to this prophecy, would be *in the last days*: that is, as Kimchi rightly interprets it, the days of the Messiah; and it should be observed, that all this will be in the last of his days, or of the Gospel dispensation: the first of these days were the days of Christ in the flesh, the times of his ministry, and of John the Baptist his forerunner, and of his disciples; and were indeed the last days of the Jewish world, or of their civil and church state; and when also it must be allowed the mountain of the Lord's house, or the temple literally taken, became glorious by the presence of Christ in it, by his doctrine and miracles there, and by the effusion of the Spirit on his disciples in that place, and the ministration of the Gospel; but then all this was before the destruction of the second temple; whereas this prophecy follows that, and is opposed to it, and supposes it; besides, in those times there was not such an exaltation and stability of the church of Christ; nor such a flow of nations to it; nor such a settled and universal peace and security as here promised: this prophecy therefore respects times yet to come, as Aben Ezra observes; the last of the days of the Messiah, or the last times of the Gospel dispensation, when the reign of antichrist will be at an end; he will be destroyed, and the kingdom of Christ set up, established, and enlarged in the world. The Prophet Isaiah predicts the same things, and much in the same words, Isa. ii. 2, 3, 4. these two prophets were cotemporary, and might converse together, and communicate to each other what they had received from the Lord upon this subject; but it is needless to inquire which might have them from the other, since they were both holy men of God, and moved by his spirit, and were inspired by the same spirit, with the same things, and to speak the same language; yet there is a diversity in words, though an agreement in sentiment; nor does it appear a clear case that they borrowed, much less that they stole, their words from one another, as the false prophets did; for they don't always use the same words to convey the same idea; and there are some words which Isaiah has that Micah has not; and there are others that Micah uses that Isaiah has not; though in the whole there is a most beautiful harmony of sense in their diversity of expression. *By the mountain of the house of the Lord* is not meant the temple built on Mount Moriah, where the divine Majesty resided; where were the symbols of his presence, the ark and mercy-seat, and where he was worshipped, which has been destroyed long ago, and will never be rebuilt more; for a third temple hereafter to be built at Jerusalem is a mere fiction of the Jews; nor indeed is any material building here intended, and still less any such building to be erected in such an absurd sense, literally taken, as if mountain was piled on mountain, and hill on hill, to raise it higher; but, mystically and spiritually, it designs the church of God, called so because it is built by him, and built for a habitation for him; where he will, at the time here referred to, more manifestly dwell in a spiritual manner; and by whom, and by which spiritual and gracious presence of his, it will be made very beautiful and glorious: and it is signified by a *mountain*, to denote its visibility, immovableness, and perpetuity; and is said to be *established in the top of the mountains*, with respect to the kingdoms of this world, and especially antichristian churches, which, because of their eminence, and largeness, and national establishment, may seem like mountains; but, in the latter day, the true church of Christ, which now may seem like a mole-hill to them, will be above them, and will be in a settled state and condition, and not be fluctuating, and tossed to and fro, and removing here and there, as now; but be fixed and stable, and continue so until

[k] Comment. in Zach. viii. 19.
[l] Aratrum vetustis urbibus inducere, Seneca de Clementia, l. 1. c. 26.
[m] ——— Imprimeretque muris
Hostile aratrum exercitus insolens. Hor. Carmin. l. 1. Ode 16.

the second and personal coming of Christ: *and it shall be exalted above the hills*: by *hills* may be meant petty kingdoms, inferior to greater monarchies; or religious states, not of Christ's constitution; and the *exaltation* of the church above them denotes her power over them, to enjoy the one, and crush the other: it may respect the glory of the church, both as to things temporal and spiritual; for now will the kingdoms under the whole heaven be given to the saints of the most High; civil government will come into their hands, the kings and princes of the earth being now members of Gospel churches: so that the church will be in a glorious and exalted state, having riches, power, and authority, a large extent everywhere, and a multitude of members, and those of the highest class and rank, as well as of the meaner and lower sort; and all of them possessed largely of the gifts and graces of the spirit of God, and enjoying the Gospel and Gospel ordinances in their power and purity: *and the people shall flow unto it*; in great abundance, in large numbers, in company like the flowing streams of a river; and may denote not only their numbers, but their swiftness and readiness to join themselves with the church of God, to hear the word, and partake of the ordinances, and of all the privileges of the house of the Lord. It may be rendered, they *shall look unto it*, as the word is translated in Psal. xxxiv. 6. and so the Targum here, "and the kingdoms shall look (or "turn their faces) to serve upon it;" and this sense is preferred by many learned Jewish writers[x]; and the meaning may be, that multitudes, seeing the glory of the church, and the many desirable things in it, shall look to it with a look of love and affection, and with a wishful look, greatly desiring to be admitted into it. In Isa. ii. 2, it is said, *and all nations shall flow unto it*: not the people of the Jews only, now converted; or a single nation only, or some out of that; but all the nations of the world, at least great numbers out of all, by far the greatest in them; such an increase will there be of the churches in the latter day.

Ver. 2. *And many nations shall come, and say, come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob*, &c.] In Isa. ii. 3, it is, *many people*, &c. see the note there; the sense is the same: *and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths*; the teacher is the King Messiah, as Kimchi observes; the great Prophet of his people, the teacher sent from God; and will in the last days teach men by his spirit and word, in a very plentiful manner, and with great success: *for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem*; these, according to Kimchi, are the words of the prophet, and not of the people, that encourage one another to go up to the house of the Lord; but the sense is much the same; for they contain a reason why the people of different nations would encourage one another to go to the house of the Lord, that they might learn his ways, and walk in his statutes, because here the word of the Lord is preached; the word which comes from God, and is concerning him, his love and grace to men; the word of peace and righteousness, of life and salvation, by Jesus Christ; and the several doctrines of grace intended by the *law* or *doctrine* of the Lord; the doctrines of God's everlasting love, of election in Christ, and redemption by him; of justification by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, and satisfaction by his atonement; as well as of regeneration by the Spirit of God, and of perseverance in grace: in these, and others, now shall all the Lord's people be taught more clearly, distinctly, and comfortably; all shall know him, from the least to the greatest; and not only their light and knowledge, under such a teacher and such teachings, will be very great, but their practice will be answerable to it; as they will be instructed in all the ways of the Lord, and in the methods of his grace, so they will walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless; see the note on Isa. ii. 3.

Ver. 3. *And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off*, &c.] That are in the most distant parts of the world; not only the isles afar off, but the remotest parts of the continent, the American nations found out since. In Isa. ii. 4, it is, *and he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people*; that is, the King Messiah, as Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech. Some render it, *it shall judge*, &c. and interpret it either of the church, the mountain of the Lord's house; or of the word and doctrine of the Lord; or of the Lord in the church, by the ministry of the word. The phrase, *afar off*, is not in Isa. ii. 4. which the Targum interprets *for ever*, and the *strong nations* of strong kings; signifying that the kingdom of Christ should not only be to the ends of the earth, but should endure for ever, unto distant time, even till it shall be no more; as well as shall reach to distant lands, as to situation, and to the Gentiles afar off, as to state and condition; see Ephes. ii. 14. *and they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more*; which as yet has never been fulfilled; but will be the case when Christ's kingdom appears in its glory, and the kingdoms of this world become his, and all the enemies of the church are destroyed; see the note on Isa. ii. 4. These words are by the Jews[y] applied to the days of the Messiah.

Ver. 4. *But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree*, &c.] A proverbial phrase, expressive of the greatest tranquillity, security, and enjoyment of property; see 1 Kings iv. 25. when persons need not keep within their walled towns and cities, and lock themselves up in their houses, but may sit down in their gardens, fields, and vineyards, and enjoy the fruit thereof; as the Targum interprets it, "under "the fruit of his vine, and under the fruit of his fig-"tree." It was usual for persons in the eastern countries to sit under vines and fig-trees to read, meditate, pray, or converse together, where they grow very large, as were their vines; and even with us they are frequently raised and carried over supporters, so as to be sat under; and of fig-trees, we frequently read in Jewish writings of their being very large, and of their going up to them, and praying on the top of them; and of sitting under them, and studying in the law there. So one of the Rabbins says[z], he went up into his mustard-

[x] R. Saadiah, Abu Walid, R. Tanchuma apud Pocock in loc.
[y] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 63. 1.
[z] T. Hieros. Peah, c. 7. fol. 20. 2.

tree, as one goes up to the top of a fig-tree; and it is said [e], he that prays on the top of an olive-tree, or on the top of a fig-tree must come down, and pray below; and again [f]. R. Jacob and his companions were fasting, studying in the law, under a certain fig-tree; and sometimes they speak of all these together, of sitting under olives, and under vines, and under fig-trees, and studying in the words of the law [g]; see John i. 48. This is to be understood, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi explain it, of all men; not of the Israelites only, but of all nations, since there will be no more war any where; hence it follows: *and none shall make* them *afraid:* the enemies of God's people will be no more, neither Turk nor pope, eastern or western antichrist, beast or false prophet: wherefore, in those days of the Messiah, Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, even all the spiritual Israel of God, Jews and Gentiles; there shall be none to hurt in the holy mountain of the Lord, or any violence and oppression, wasting and destruction, any where: see Jer. xxiii. 5. Isa. xi. 9. and lx. 18: *for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken* it; who speaks nothing but truth, and who is able and faithful to perform what he has spoken; and therefore all this may be depended on.

Ver. 5. *For all people will walk every one in the name of his god,* &c.] Till those times come before described; when many nations and people shall flock to the church, and there shall be such general peace and tranquillity as here promised; till then the nations of the earth shall retain their former religion, and the profession of it, with constancy, till they are otherwise instructed, as Aben Ezra; or till the Messiah shall turn them into the right way, as Kimchi; till that time comes, the Pagans will worship their idols, and continue in the idolatry of their ancestors; the Papists will retain their image-worship, and hold to their lord god the pope, as they call him; the Mahometans will cleave to their prophet, and walk according to the rules he has left them to observe. Jarchi's note is, "they shall go to destruction because of their idolatry;" with which he says the Targum agrees, which is, "all nations shall go according to the idols they have worshipped;" or, as the king of Spain's Bible, "they shall be guilty or condemned because they have worshipped idols:" *and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever;* both in the mean while, and when those happy times shall come, and so through all generations as long as the world stands. This is the language of those that know the Lord, believe in him, and sincerely serve him; who determine in the strength of divine grace to continue in their profession of faith of him, in his worship and service, in his ways, truths, and ordinances, whatever others do; and indeed are the more animated to it, when they observe how constant and steadfast idolaters, Pagans, Papists, and Mahometans, are in their false worship, both in the profession and practice of it. The Targum is, "we will trust in the Word of the Lord our God for ever and ever;" in Christ the essential Word; and so the phrase is expressive of faith, and a profession of faith, in him; and of constant attendance upon his word and ordinances.

Ver. 6. *In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth,* &c.] The Jews or Israelites so described; not from the halting of Jacob their father, as Abarbinel thinks; nor because of their halting between two opinions, worshipping both the true God and idols, as in the times of Elijah; for this will not suit with the Jews in their present state; but because they were like lame and maimed sheep, to which the allusion is; or because they were guilty of sins, which are sometimes expressed by halting, Jer. xx. 10. Psal. xxxviii. 16, 17. The word signifies such that go side-way, and not uprightly; and fitly describes such who deviate from the ways of God, and walk not according to the divine word: now *in that day* or time before referred to, the last days of the Gospel dispensation, the Lord will convert the Jews; or *heal* these lame and maimed ones, so Jarchi interprets the word; or will gather them by his spirit and grace to the Messiah, and assemble them into his church, and among his people, and bring them into the sheep-fold, under the care of the one Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ: *and I will gather her that is driven out;* out of the land of Israel, and scattered among the nations of the world; even driven out by the Lord himself, because of their transgressions against him; see Jer. xvi. 15. and xxiv. 9: *and her that I have afflicted;* with various calamities, with famine and sword, with captivity and poverty; the Targum adds, "for the sins of my people;" the Israelites for their idolatry, and the Jews for the rejection of the Messiah, and other sins.

Ver. 7. *And I will make her that halted a remnant,* &c.] That is, make a reserve of her, and not utterly cut her off for her halting or sinning; that there may be a seed, a posterity descending from her, that shall serve the Lord, and appear to be a remnant according to the election of grace; which will be the persons called and gathered in the latter day: *and her that was cast afar off a strong nation;* Kimchi thinks this refers to the ten tribes that were carried far off into Media and other parts, 2 Kings xvii. 6. who shall now be a mighty and numerous people; and especially shall be strong in a spiritual sense in the Lord, and in the power of his might, in Christ and his grace, and in the faith of him; see Isa. lx. 22. Zech. xii. 8: *and the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever;* that is, Christ, who is Jehovah our righteousness, shall reign over the converted Jews and Israelites in the church of God, often signified by Mount Zion; where they shall be assembled, and shall acknowledge him as their King, and be subject to his word and ordinances, and never more depart from him; nor will his government over them ever cease more, Luke i. 32, 33. This shews that this prophecy refers not to the first times of the Gospel; for then the Jews would not have him to reign over them; but to times yet to come, the last days of the Gospel dispensation.

Ver. 8. *And thou, O tower of the flock,* &c.] The words *Migdal Eder* are left by some untranslated, and

[e] T. Hieros. Beracot, c. 2. fol. 5. 1.
[f] Ib. col. 3.

[g] Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 16. 4.

think that place to be intended so called, which was near to Beth-lehem, Gen. xxxv. 19, 21. and perhaps is the same which Jerom[t] calls the tower of Ader, about a mile from Beth-lehem: this is supposed to be the place where the shepherds were watching over their flocks at the time of Christ's birth, the tidings of which were first brought to them here: and the Jewish[u] doctors speak of it as near Jerusalem, and as a place of pasture; for they say, that cattle between Jerusalem and Migdal Eder, and in an equal space to every wind; the males were used for burnt-offerings, and the females for peace-offerings; and this place is thought to be referred to in the latter clause of this verse: others think that Beth-lehem itself is meant, to which the dominion came; but rather, as in the next chapter, the ruler came out of that: others think that the gate in Jerusalem called the sheep-gate is meant, Neh. iii. 32. and the tower at it, through which Christ is supposed to pass when he entered into Jerusalem as King, amidst the Hosannahs of the people: others take it to be the same with the tower of David, and put for Jerusalem itself, whither the tribes were gathered together three times a year, like sheep in a fold, so Kimchi and Ben Melech: hence others interpret it spiritually of the church of Christ; but though that is sometimes spoken of as a strong city, and a fortified place, yet is never called a tower, or a strong hold; which phrases, when figuratively used, are always spoken of a divine Person; see Psal. xviii. 2. Prov. xviii. 10. Zech. ix. 12. and here of the Messiah; and so the Targum interprets it, "O Christ of Israel:" the church indeed is the *flock*: the people of God are often compared to sheep for their harmlessness and innocence, and the church to a flock of them, which is Christ's flock he feeds like a shepherd; the flock of slaughter, a little one, consisting of persons separated from the world, and under his peculiar care; and he is the *tower* of this flock, in allusion to a shepherd's cottage, called a tower, as a cottage in a vineyard is in Isa. v. 2. where the shepherds watch, and into which they bring the sick and lame, and take care of them; Christ is a high tower, where his people are safe out of the reach of their enemies; and a strong one, being the mighty God and mighty Saviour, who has all power and strength to defend his church and people, and may be well called their tower: and *the strong hold of the daughter of Zion; the daughter of Zion* is the church, particularly the church of the converted Jews: Christ is the strong hold of it, into which, as prisoners of hope, they will be directed to turn, Zech. ix. 12. a strong refuge he is to flee unto from the avenger of blood, the justice of God; from the curses of the law; from the storm of divine wrath; from the temptations of Satan, and from the persecutions of men; a strong hold is he to dwell in, and where the saints dwell safely, pleasantly, at ease and peace, and very comfortably, and in great plenty; a strong hold for shelter from every enemy: *unto thee shall it come*: not the kingdom, as follows, which our version leads to, and is the sense of Aben Ezra; for there is a considerable accent on the word *come*, which makes a large stop; and that *it* refers, as Jarchi observes, to *her that halteth*, &c. *it* or *she* that halteth shall come, being assembled and gathered, or converted by the grace of God unto the Messiah; as to her, or their tower and strong hold, where all blessings of grace, and the supplies of it, and all salvation and safety, are to be had and enjoyed. The promise respects the Jews coming to Christ upon their conversion, even such who have been the halt, the maimed, the lame, and the blind: *even the first dominion: the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem*: or rather, *and the first dominion shall come, the kingdom to the daughter of Jerusalem*; meaning, not the first notice of the Messiah's kingdom, given by John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles, to the Jews, in the first times of the Gospel; or the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom first to them; but rather he who has the first or principal dominion, and to whom the kingdom belongs, he shall come to the daughter of Zion, as in Zech. ix. 9. though it rather respects here his coming to them at the time of their conversion, when they shall come to him, Rom. xi. 26. and when the first, chief, and principal kingdom in the world, and which is preferable to all others, will come unto, and be placed among them, as in ver. 7. and when it shall be, as some interpret it, as at the beginning, in the days of David and Solomon, and much more abundantly.

Ver. 9. *Now why dost thou cry out aloud?* &c.] Or *cry a cry*[x]; a vehement one, or set up a most lamentable cry, as if no help or hope were to be had, but as in the most desperate condition: here the prophet represents the Jews as if they were already in captivity, and in the utmost distress, and as they certainly would be; and yet had no reason to despair of deliverance and salvation, since the Messiah would certainly come to them, and his kingdom would be set up among them. The word used has sometimes the notion of friendship and association; hence the Targum renders it, "now "why art thou joined to the people?" and so Jarchi, "thou hast no need to seek friends and lovers, the "kings of Egypt and Assyria, for help." And which sense of the word is approved by Gussetius[y]. Is there *no king in thee? is thy counsellor perished?* be it so that they were; as was the case when Zedekiah was taken and carried captive, and his princes, nobles, and counsellors killed; yet God, their King and Counsellor, was with them, to keep and preserve them, counsel, instruct, and comfort them, and at last to deliver and save them; and the King Messiah would be raised up, and sent unto them in due time, who is the Wonderful Counsellor Isaiah had prophesied of: *for pangs have taken thee as a woman in travail*; which is often expressive of great sufferings and sorrows; and yet, as the pangs of a woman in travail don't continue always, but have an end, so would theirs, and therefore there was no reason for despair; and as, when she brings forth her issue, her sorrow is turned into joy, this would be their case.

Ver. 10. *Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O*

[t] De locis Hebr. fol. 89. E.

[u] T. Hieros. Kiddushin, fol. 63. 1. T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 55. 1. Misn. Shekalim, c. 7. sect. 4.

[x] למה תריעי רע quid vociferabis vociferationem, Pagninus, Montanus. So Vatablus, Drusius.

[y] Ebr. Comment. p. 789.

daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail, &c.] Bear thy troubles and calamities, sufferings and sorrows, patiently, and expect deliverance from them, as a woman in such circumstances does: or, as some render it in the future, *thou shalt be in pain, &c.* [y]; and so is a prediction of their distress and captivity, which is expressed in plainer terms in the following clauses: *for now shalt thou go forth out of the city:* the city of Jerusalem; either by flight, in a private and secret manner, as Zedekiah and his princes, and part of his army, did; or by force, being taken and led out by the enemy: *and thou shalt dwell in the field;* being turned out of their houses, they were obliged to lodge in the fields, whilst they were collected together, and in a body marched as captives to Babylon; and whilst on the road lay in the open fields, and not in houses, who had been used to dwell in a city, and in their cieled houses; but now even their city itself was ploughed like a field, as before predicted: *and thou shalt go even to Babylon;* to the city of Babylon, as their king did, and many of them also; and others of them into various parts of that kingdom: this is a plain prophecy of the Babylonish captivity, which came to pass upwards of a hundred years after this: *there shalt thou be delivered;* after seventy years captivity, by the hand of Cyrus; who taking the city of Babylon, and making himself master of the whole empire, delivered the Jews from their bondage, and gave them liberty to return to their own land: *there the Lord shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies;* the Chaldeans: and this was typical of the deliverance and redemption of all the Lord's people from the hand of all their spiritual enemies; from Satan and the world, law, death, and hell; by the blood of the great Redeemer, and near kinsman of his people, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ver. 11. *Now also many nations are gathered against thee, &c.*] Which is to be understood, not of Sennacherib's army invading Judea, and besieging Jerusalem, in Hezekiah's time; for that was not threshed, as the phrase is afterwards used, or destroyed by the daughter of Zion, but by an angel from heaven: nor of the Babylonians or Chaldeans, since they succeeded in their attempt, and were the conquerors, and not conquered: rather this respects the times of the Maccabees, as the series of prophecy and history agreeing together shews; in which times many of the neighbouring nations of the Jews gave them a great deal of trouble, and especially Antiochus king of Syria; and many and mighty armies sent by him. The Jews, as Kimchi, Aben Ezra, and Abarbinel [z], interpret this of the armies of Gog and Magog, in the times of their vainly-expected Messiah. Some Christian interpreters, with much more probability, understand this passage of the first times of the Gospel, and the opposition made to that and the Christian church, which yet in the issue prevailed; and perhaps it may have reference to the last times, and receive its full accomplishment in the battle at Armageddon, Rev. xvi. 14—16. and xix. 19, 20, 21. *That say, let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion;* either defiled with sin; so the Targum, "that say, when will she sin, "and our eye shall behold the fall of Zion?" as the effect of her sin: or, as others, *let her play the hypocrite* [a]; and be condemned as such; or rather, be defiled with slaughter and bloodshed, that they might be delighted with so pleasing a sight, and their eyes might feed with pleasure on an object so agreeable to their wishes.

Ver. 12. *But they know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they his counsel, &c.*] Which are very different from theirs: the thoughts and designs of the enemies of Zion, in the times of the Maccabees, were, to destroy utterly the people of God, and root them out of the earth, and abolish their religion and worship; but the intentions of God were to defeat them, and bring them to ruin: the views of the kings of the earth, being stirred up by unclean spirits to the battle of Almighty God, will be to extirpate the interest and kingdom of Christ; but the end of the Lord, in suffering them to be gathered together, will be utterly and totally to destroy them; and the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand, and the thoughts of his heart, to all generations. Men know their own designs, but they don't know the designs of the Lord; they intend the ruin of others, but God intends to bring about theirs; and his intentions are never frustrated, but theirs are. *For he shall gather them as sheaves into the floor;* as, when the harvest is ripe, it is cut down, and bound up in sheaves, and brought home, and these are laid in order upon the floor to be threshed; so, when the nations of the earth are fully ripe for ruin, God will put, or order to be put, in the sickle, and cut them down, and bind them in bundles, and lay them on his threshing-floor of wrath and vengeance, and utterly destroy them, contrary to their views and expectations.

Ver. 13. *Arise, and thresh, O daughter of Zion, &c.*] The nations gathered against her, and now laid together on the floor as sheaves to be threshed. Here the people of God are aroused, and called out of a low and weak estate, and are animated and encouraged to exert themselves, and fall upon their enemies, and destroy them; alluding to the threshing of corn on the floor, the metaphor being here carried on from the former verse. The Targum is, "arise, and kill, O "congregation of Zion." *For I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass;* signifying that the Lord would give them strength sufficient to such work, and such power their enemies should not be able to resist and overcome; and that they should fall into their hands, and be crushed, trod, and trampled on by them, and utterly subdued. The allusion is to oxen that have horns and hoofs; and it suggests that they should be as strong as they; have horns like them, that is, power to push down their enemies; and hoofs to trample upon them: or as these creatures have a horny substance on their feet, or hoofs, which are strong, and fit for the purpose of treading out corn, for which they were used in the eastern countries, drawing after them iron wheels, or planks stuck with flints; so horses and oxen that have strong feet, and hard hoofs, are said to have feet of brass [b];

[y] חולי dolebis ac suspirabis, so some in Vatablus.
[z] Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 62. 1.

[a] תחנף hypocrita fuit, Tigurine version; erit hypocrita damnator, Tarnovius; hypocrisi contaminabitur, Cocceius.
[b] Χαλκοποδ' ἵππω, æripedes equos. Homer. Iliad. 8. v. 41.

thus the Lord's people should have such courage, force, and power, as not only to withstand their enemies, but to obtain a conquest over them. The Targum is, "I will make the people in them strong as iron, and "their remnant firm as brass;" which was true of, and accomplished in, Judas Maccabeus and his brethren: and will be more clearly fulfilled in the Christian kings and princes in the latter day, when engaged with the antichristian states. *And thou shalt beat in pieces many people;* as the Maccabees did subdue many people and nations, as all Palestine, Moab, Idumea, Samaria, and Iturea, as Josephus[*] relates; and as the Christian princes will beat in pieces, and utterly destroy, all the antichristian kings of the earth, their states and kingdoms, and bring them into subjection to them: *and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth:* that is, to Christ, who in the last day will appear to be King and Lord of the whole earth; and all the riches of the antichristian nations, Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan, will be devolved to, and employed in, his interest and service; see Rev. xxi. 24. these are the words of God the Father, with respect to his Son Jesus Christ; who will now have a dominion, glory, and kingdom given him, by the Ancient of days, that so all people, nations, and languages, shall serve him, Dan. vii. 14. of which there might be some type and shadow in the times of the Maccabees.

CHAP. V.

THIS chapter begins with a prophecy of the siege of Jerusalem, ver. 1. and then follows another concerning the place of the Messiah's birth, ver. 2. and of the case of the Jews, either before or after it, ver. 3. and of Christ's office as a shepherd, and of his grandeur in the world, ver. 4. and of his being a peacemaker, and protector of his people from their enemies, ver. 5, 6. and of his people, the great increase of them, and their usefulness, and also of their courage, strength, and prowess, ver. 7, 8, 9. likewise that the Lord will remove from them their vain confidence, and all occasion of it, and whatsoever illicit arts and practices were found among them; and all idolatry, and the instruments of it, ver. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. and the chapter is concluded with a threatening of vengeance to the Heathens, ver. 15.

Ver. 1. *Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops, &c.*] Not Jerusalem, full of people, called to draw out their forces, and fall upon the enemy besieging them, whether Chaldeans or Romans; but rather the Babylonians, whose armies were large, and their troops numerous; who are called upon by the people of God, encouraged by the foregoing prophecies, as well as by what follows, to come forth with all their forces, and muster up all their armies, and exert all the power and strength they had, thus insulting them; being assured, by the above promises, that in the issue they should prevail over all their enemies: unless the Romans should be intended, to whom this character of *daughter of troops* well agrees, of whose legions all have heard; and since the Babylonish attempt on Jerusalem, and the carrying the Jews captive into Babylon, are before predicted, with their deliverance from it, and what they should do in the times of the Maccabees; a prophecy of the Romans, or a representation of them, a gathering their troops and legions together to besiege Jerusalem, very naturally comes in here. *He hath laid siege against us;* either Nebuchadnezzar, and the Chaldean army; or Vespasian with the Romans: this, according to the prophetic style, is spoken of as if actually done, because of the certainty of it. *They shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek;* that is, either they, the besiegers, the king of Babylon and his army, when they shall have taken Jerusalem, besieged by them, shall use Zedekiah the king of Judah, and judge of Israel, and his princes and nobles, very ill, signified by this phrase; yea, in a very cruel and barbarous manner; first slaying his sons and his princes before his eyes, then putting his eyes out, binding him in chains, and carrying him to Babylon, and there laying him in a prison, Jer. lii. 10, 11. or else they, the besieged, would use the Messiah, the King, Judge, and Ruler in Israel, in such a spiteful and scandalous manner; and so the Messiah was to be used by them, who according to prophecy gave his cheek to them that plucked off the hair, and hid not his face from shame and spitting; and so Jesus, the true Messiah, was smitten, both with rods, and with the palms of men's hands, and buffeted and spit upon, Isa. l. 6. Matt. xxvi. 67. and this is mentioned as a reason why Jerusalem would be encompassed with the Roman armies, and besieged by their troops and legions, and become desolate, even for their rejection and ill usage of the Messiah. Aben Ezra says, it is right in my eyes that the judge of Israel is the Messiah, or Zerubbabel; not the latter, who never was so used, but the former.

Ver. 2. *But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, &c.*] But though Jerusalem should be besieged and taken, and the land of Judea laid waste, yet, before all this should be, the Messiah should be born in Beth-lehem, of which this is a prophecy, as is evident from Matt. ii. 4, 5, 6. the place is called by both the names it went by, to point it out the more distinctly, and with the greater certainty, Gen. xxxv. 19. the former signifies *the house of bread*, and a proper place for Christ to be born in, who is the bread of life; and it has the name of the latter from its fruitfulness, being a place of pasture, and as we find it was at the time of our Lord's birth; for near it shepherds were then watching over their flocks; and it is here added, to distinguish it from another Beth-lehem in the tribe of Zebulun, Josh. xix. 15. from which tribe the Messiah was not to come, but from the tribe of Judah; and in which

[*] Antiqu. l. 12. c. 15. sect. 4.

this Beth-lehem was, and therefore called, by Matthew, Beth-lehem in the land of Judah; as it appears this was, from Ruth i. 1, 2. and from the Septuagint version of Josh. xv. 60. where, as Jerom observes, it was added by the Greek interpreters, or erased out of the Hebrew text by the wickedness of the Jews: the former seems rightest. Though *thou be little among the thousands of Judah*: this supplement of ours is according to Kimchi's reading and sense of the words; which, in some measure, accounts for the difference between the prophet and the Evangelist Matthew, by whom this place is said to be *not the least*, as it might, and yet be little; besides, it might be little at one time, in Micah's time, yet not little at another time, in Matthew's; it might be little with respect to some circumstances, as to pompous buildings, and number of inhabitants, and yet not little on account of its being the birth-place of great men, as Jesse, David, and especially the Messiah: or the words may be rendered with an interrogation, *art thou little?* &c.[d]; thou art not: or thus, it is a *little* thing *to be among the thousands of Judah*[e]; a greater honour shall be put upon thee, by being the place of the Messiah's birth. Moreover, Mr. Pocock has shewn out of R. Tanchum, both in his commentary on this place, and elsewhere[f], that the word צעיר signifies both *little* and *great*, or of great note and esteem. The tribes of Israel were divided into tens, hundreds, and thousands, over which there was a head or prince; hence, in Matthew, these are called the princes of Judah. Yet *out of thee shall he come forth unto me* that is *to be ruler in Israel*: not Hezekiah, who very probably was now born at the time of this prophecy; nor was he born at Beth-lehem, nor a ruler in Israel, only king of Judah: nor Zorobabel, who was born in Babylon, as his name shews, was governor of Judah, but not of Israel; nor can it be said of him, or any mere man, what is said in the next clause: but the Messiah is intended, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi confess, and other Jewish writers. The Targum is, "out of thee shall come "forth before me the Messiah, that he may exercise "dominion over Israel." Jarchi's note is, "out of "thee shall come forth unto me Messiah, the son of "David;" and so he says, *the stone which the builders refused*, &c. Psal. cxviii. 22. plainly suggesting that that passage also belongs to the Messiah, as it certainly does. Kimchi's paraphrase is, "although "thou art little among the thousands of Judah, out "of thee shall come forth unto me a Judge, to be "ruler in Israel, and this is the King Messiah." And Abarbinel[g], mentioning those words in ch. iv. 13. *arise, and thresh, O daughter of Zion*, observes, "this "speaks concerning the business of the King Mes-"siah, who shall reign over them, and shall be "the Prince of their army; and it is plain that "he shall be of the house of David: and it is said, "*O thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah*, which was a small "city, in the midst of the cities of Judah; and "*although thou art little in the thousands of Judah*, "*out of thee shall come forth unto me* a man, a ruler "in Israel, *whose goings forth are from the days of* "*old*: the meaning is, the goings forth of the fa-"mily of that ruler are from the days of old; that "is, from the seed of David, and a rod from the "stem of Jesse, who was of Beth-lehem Judah." So Abendana[h], a more modern Jew, paraphrases the words thus, "out of thee shall come forth unto me a "Judge, that is to be ruler in Israel, and this is the "King Messiah; for because he is to be of the seed of "David, from Beth-lehem he will be." To which may be added R. Isaac[i], who, having cited this passage, observes, and he, the ruler in Israel, is the King Messiah, who shall come forth from the seed of David the king, who was of Beth-lehem Judah, as in 1 Sam. xvii. 12. Wherefore Lyra, having quoted Jarchi, and given his sense of the passage, remarks, hence it is plain that some Catholics, explaining this Scripture of King Hezekiah, *judaize* more than the Hebrews. Though some of them object the application of it to Jesus, who they say ruled not over Israel, but Israel over him, and put him to death; which it is true they did; but God exalted him to be a Prince, as well as a Saviour, unto Israel, notwithstanding that, and declared him to be Lord and Christ; besides, previous to his death, and in the land of Israel, he gave abundant proof of his power and rule over universal nature, earth, air, and sea; over angels, good and bad; and over men and beasts: all creatures obeyed him; though indeed his kingdom is not of this world, but of a spiritual nature, and is over the spiritual Israel of God; and there is a time coming when he will be King over all the earth. Now *out* of Beth-lehem was the King Messiah, the ruler in Israel, to *come forth*; that is, here he was to be born, as the phrase signifies; see Gen. x. 14. and here our Jesus, the true Messiah, was born, as appears from Matt. ii. 8, 11. Luke ii. 1—6, 11, 15, 16. and this is not only certain from the evangelic history, but the Jews themselves acknowledge it. One of their chronologers[k] affirms that Jesus the Nazarene was born at Beth-lehem Judah, a parsa and a half from Jerusalem; that is, about six miles from it, which was the distance between them: and even the author of a blasphemous book[l], pretending to give the life of Jesus, owns that Beth-lehem Judah was the place of his nativity: and it is clear not only that the Jews in the times of Jesus expected the Messiah to come from hence, even both the chief priests and scribes of the people, who, in answer to Herod's question about the place of the Messiah's birth, direct him to this, according to Micah's prophecy, Matt. ii. 4, 5, 6. and the common people, who thought to have confronted the Messiahship of Jesus with it, John vii. 41, 42. but others also, at other times. The tower of Edar being a place near to Beth-lehem Ephratah, Gen. xxxv. 19, 21. Jonathan ben Uzziel, in his Targum of ver. 19, says of the tower of Edar, this is the place from whence the King Messiah shall be revealed in the end of days; nay, some of them say he is born already, and was

[d] צעיר להיות באלפי יהודה parvulane es? Drusius; parvane eis? Grotius; parva es? Cocceius.

[e] Parum est ut sis inter chiliarchas Judæ, Osiander, Grotius; vile, ignominiosum est, esse inter millia Judæ, De Dieu.

[f] Not. Misc. in Porta Mosis, p. 17, 18.

[g] Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 62. col. 2.

[h] Not. in Michol Yophi in loc.

[i] Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 279.

[k] R. David Ganz, Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 14. 2.

[l] Toldos Jesu, p. 7. Ed. Wagenseil.

born at Beth-lehem. An Arabian, they say [m], told a Jew, "the King Messiah is born; he replied to him, "what is his name? he answered, Menachem (the "Comforter) is his name; he asked him, what is his "father's name? he replied, Hezekiah; he said to him, "from whence is he? he answered, from the palace "of the king of Beth-lehem Judah." This same story is told elsewhere [n], with some little variation, thus, that the Arabian should say to the Jew, "the Redeemer of the Jews is born; he said to him, what is "his name? he replied, Menachem is his name; and "what is his father's name? he answered, Hezekiah; "and where do they dwell? (he and his father;) he "replied, in Birath-Arba, in Beth-lehem Judah."— These things shew their sense of this prophecy, and the convictions of their minds as to the births of the Messiah, and the place of it. The words *unto me* are thought by some to be redundant and superfluous; but contain in them the glory and Gospel of the text, whether considered as the words of God the Father; and then the sense is, that Christ was to come forth in this place in human nature, or become incarnate, agreeably to the purpose which God purposed in himself; to the covenant made with him, before the world was; to an order he had given him as Mediator, and to his promise concerning him; and he came forth to him, and answered to all these; as well as this was in order to do his will and work, by fulfilling the law; preaching the Gospel; doing miracles; performing the work of redemption and salvation; by becoming a sacrifice for sin, and suffering death; and likewise it was for the glorifying of all the divine perfections: or whether as the words of the prophet, in the name of the church and people of God, to and for whom he was born, or became incarnate; he came forth unto them, to be their Mediator in general; to be the Redeemer and Saviour of them in particular; to execute his several offices of Prophet, Priest, and King; and to answer and fill up all relations he stands in to them, of Father, Brother, Head, and Husband. *Whose goings forth* have been *of old, from everlasting*; which is said of him, not because his extraction was from David, who lived many ages before him; for admitting he was in him, *in his loins*, as to his human nature, so long ago, yet his *goings forth* were not from thence: nor because he was prophesied of and promised very early, as he was from the beginning of the world; but neither a prophecy nor promise of him can be called his *going forth*; which was only foretold and spoken of, but not in actual being; nor because it was decreed from eternity that he should come forth from Beth-lehem, or be born there in time; for this is saying no more than what might be said of every one that was to be born in Beth-lehem, and was born there: nor is this to be understood of his manifestations or appearances in a human form to the patriarchs, in the several ages of time; since to these, as to other of the above things, the phrase *from everlasting* cannot be ascribed: but either of his going forth in a way of grace towards his people, in acts of love to them, delighting in those sons of men before the world was; in applying to his Father on their account, asking them of him, and betrothing them to himself; in becoming their surety, entering into a covenant with his Father for them, and being the head of election to them, receiving all blessings and promises of grace for them: or else of his eternal generation and sonship, as commonly interpreted; who is the only-begotten of the Father, of the same nature with him, and a distinct person from him; the eternal Word that went forth from him, and was with him from eternity, and is truly God. The phrases are expressive of the eternity of his divine nature and person; Jarchi compares them with Psal. lxxii. 16: *before the sun was, his name was Jinnon*; that is, the Son, the Son of God; so as the former part of the text sets forth his human birth, this his divine generation; which, because of the excellency and ineffableness of it, is expressed in the plural number, *goings forth*. So R. Eliezer [o], along with the above-mentioned passage in the Psalms, produces this to prove the name of the Messiah before the world was, whose *goings forth* were *from everlasting*, when as yet the world was not created.

Ver. 3. *Therefore will he give them up*, &c.] Or *notwithstanding*, as this particle signifies; see Hos. ii. 14. though all this shall be, yet, previous to the birth of this person, the Lord would give up the Jews to trouble and distress, and into the hands of their enemies; and the time from this prophet to the birth of Christ was a time for the most part of great trouble to the Jews; not only was their country invaded and their city besieged by Sennacherib in Hezekiah's time, but, some years after that, they were wholly carried captive into Babylon; and when they returned it was troublesome times with them; they met with many enemies that disturbed them whilst they were rebuilding the city and temple; and after that they endured much tribulation, in the times of Antiochus Epiphanes, or of the Maccabees; nor were they long in any quiet, nor in any settled state, unto the coming of the Messiah. Or else this is to be understood of what should be after his coming; for though Jesus was born at Beth-lehem, according to this plain prophecy, and had all the characters of the Messiah in him, yet the Jews rejected him, and would not have him to reign over them: wherefore *he*, the Messiah, as Japhet interprets it, *gave them up* to judicial blindness and hardness of heart, and into the hands of their enemies the Romans; by whom they were destroyed or carried captive, and dispersed among the nations; in which condition they still remain, and will, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled; so long will Jerusalem be trodden under foot, or the Jews be given up to their will, according to Luke xxi. 24. or, as here expressed, *until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth*: that is, according to the first sense, until the Virgin Mary travailed in birth with the Messiah, and brought forth him her first-born, Matt. i. 25. or according to the latter, until Zion, or, the church of God, travailed in prayer, and in the ministry of the word, and brought forth many children to Christ, both among Jews and Gentiles; and the sense is, that the Jews shall be given up to distress

[m] T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 5. 1.
[n] Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 1.

[o] Pirke Eliezer, c. 3. fol. 2. 2.

and trouble, till the time of their conversion, see Isa. lxvi. 7, 8. The Jews have a tradition in their Talmud, that "the son of David would not come until the "kingdom spreads itself over the whole world for nine "months; as it is said, *therefore will he give them up* "*until the time that she that travaileth hath brought* "forth; which is the time of a woman's going with- "child." This both Jarchi and Kimchi take notice of. In one place [p] it is called the kingdom of Aram or Syria; and in another [q] a blank is left for Edom, that is, Rome; for by the kingdom is meant the Roman empire, and which did extend all over the world before the coming of the Messiah Jesus, as appears from Luke ii. 1. as well as from all profane history. *Then the remnant of his brethren shall return to the children of Israel*: that is, the brethren of the Messiah, as Kimchi and Abendana interpret it; who should return *with* the children of Israel, as both they and Jarchi explain it; to which the Targum agrees. Kimchi's note is, "*the* "*remnant of his brethren*; they are the tribes of Judah "and Benjamin, which remained when the ten tribes "were carried captive; and the surnames, his brethren, "relate to the Messiah." So Abendana [r], "and *the* "*remnant his brethren*; they are the tribes of Judah "and Benjamin, they shall return with the children "of Israel, who are the ten tribes; as if he should "say, these and these shall return to their land, and "King Messiah shall reign over them; and the sur- "names, his brethren, respect the Messiah." And to the same purpose R. Isaac [s], "the remnant of the "brethren of the Messiah, who are the children of "Judah and Benjamin, that are left and remain of the "calamities and persecutions of the captivities, shall "return to their own land, together with the children "of Israel, who are the ten tribes." Meaning either the remnant, according to the election of grace, among the Gentiles; who with those among the Jews should be converted to Christ in the first times of the Gospel, those immediately following the birth of Christ; the Gospel being preached both to the Jews and Gentiles, and some of both were called and converted, and whom Christ owned as his brethren, and were not ashamed of; see Matt. xii. 49, 50. Heb. ii. 11. or the Lord's chosen people, and brethren of Christ, those of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and those of the ten tribes of Israel; who shall join and coalesce together in seeking the Messiah, embracing and professing him, and appointing him the one Head over them, when they will turn to the Lord, and all Israel shall be saved; see Jer. l. 4. Hos. i. 11. Rom. xi. 25, 26.

Ver. 4. *And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord*, &c.] The ruler in Israel, before described and prophesied of; the Messiah, as Kimchi himself interprets it, and other Jewish writers. Kimchi's note is, "after the affliction, the King Messiah shall stand "and feed Israel in the strength of the Lord;" and so R. Isaac [t] paraphrases the words exactly in the same way: wherefore, as another learned Jew [u] observes, these expressions evince that the ruler here spoken of can be no other than the Messiah; not Zorobabel, who never attained to this height and happiness. He is both King and Shepherd, and to each of these the act of feeding is ascribed. The same word, in the Greek language, signifies both to rule and to feed, and is used by Matthew, ch. ii. 6. and kings are often compared to shepherds. Christ feeds his people, his brethren, his flock, his sheep, and lambs, all truly converted ones; and this takes in the whole office of a shepherd, and the care he has of his flock; he takes an exact account of them, goes before them, and leads them out into good pastures; sets under-shepherds over them; protects them from all their enemies; looks after what is lost or driven away; heals the sick, strengthens the weak, binds up the broken, and watches over his flock continually: he feeds them with himself, the bread of life, with his flesh and blood, which are meat and drink indeed; with the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel; and which are found to be spiritual, savoury, strengthening, satisfying, and soul-nourishing food: and he *stands* and does this, being raised from the dead, and possessed of all power in heaven and in earth; which designs not the position of his body, but the ministration of his office, and his alacrity and readiness to perform it, and his constancy in it: and all this *in the strengh of the Lord*; in his own strength, as a divine Person, which is the same with the strength of Jehovah; and in the power and strength that is dispensed to him as Mediator; and with his Gospel, the rod of his strength, and in such manner as to defend his flock from all that would devour them: *in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God*; Jehovah the Father is the God of Christ, as he is Mediator; and his name is in him, even the majesty of it; for, as a divine Person, he has the same nature and perfections with him; and as man, exalted at his right hand, has a name above every name in this world, or that to come; and it is by authority from him, in his office-capacity, that he rules and feeds his people, having all judgment committed to him: *and they shall abide*: that is, his people, his flock, his sheep fed and ruled by him; these shall continue and persevere under his care and keeping; in him, in whom they are chosen and preserved; in his love, from which they can never be separated; in his hands, out of which none can pluck them; in his church, where they shall ever remain; and so may be considered as a promise of the perseverance of the saints in faith and holiness to the end: or, *they shall sit* [w]; quietly and securely, being freed from persecution, with which the Christians were attended in the first three centuries: this began to be accomplished in the times of Constantius Chlorus, who succoured the Christians in the times of Dioclesian, and with whom the persecutions ended, and peace and prosperity followed: *for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth*; as he was in the times of Constantine, and will be again. Christ is great in himself, in his person and offices; and will appear to be so unto

[p] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 10. 1.
[q] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.
[r] Not. in Michol Yophi in loc.
[s] Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 281.
[t] Ibid.

[u] Tanchuma apud Pocock in loc.
[w] ישבו sedebunt, Tigurine version, Vatablus, Drusius; considebunt, Cocceius; so R. Isaac, they shall sit safely in his time, as is said above, ch. iv. 4. *they shall sit every man*, &c. Chizzuk Emunah, ut supra.

all men, even unto the ends of the earth, when his Gospel shall be preached and spread everywhere: when his kingdom shall be enlarged, and be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth; even then shall he appear to be a great King over all the earth, and the great Shepherd of the sheep, the man, Jehovah's fellow; and to have such a flock, and so large, as never any had; when there will be one fold, and one shepherd; for this prophecy respects the latter-day glory. Kimchi's gloss is, "the name of the "Messiah shall be magnified, after the judgment of "the wicked."

Ver. 5. *And this* man *shall be the peace*, &c.] The word *man* is not in the text, only *this*; and refers to the person before spoken of, who was to be born in Beth-lehem, to be the ruler in Israel, that should stand and feed his people, and should be great to the ends of the earth; and is no other than the Messiah, as Kimchi, and other Jewish writers, own. Kimchi's note is, "this peace respects the Messiah; for he shall "be the cause or author of peace; as it is said, *he* "*shall speak peace unto the* Heathen, Zech. ix. 10;" and R. Isaac [x] expresses his sense of the words in much the same language; and it is an observation the Jews sometimes make, and which they give as a sign of the Messiah's coming, "when you see a Persian "horse bound in the land of Israel, look for the feet "of the Messiah;" which is the sense of Mic. v. 5. *this shall be the peace, when the Assyrian comes into our land* [y], &c.; so Jesus the true Messiah is called our peace, Ephes. ii. 14. and is the cause and author of peace, not only between Jew and Gentile, but between God and men; which he has made by the blood of his cross, and speaks and gives peace to men; and he is the author of peace in his churches, whose kingdom is a kingdom of peace, of which there will be an abundance in the latter day; for all which he would not be sufficient was he a mere man; though it was proper he should be a man, that he might have blood to shed, a body to offer up, and in it die to procure peace; and yet be more than a man, God also, to put virtue and efficacy into what he did and suffered to obtain it, as well as to secure and continue the peace of his people, and preserve them from all their enemies: *when the Assyrian shall come into our land*: not Sennacherib king of Assyria; though by the invasion of Judea, and siege of Jerusalem, he might have lately been concerned in, and by reason of the terror which that had raised in the people, the Assyrian may be here put for any powerful enemy of the people of God in after-times; or Satan, and his principalities and powers, even all the powers of darkness Christ our peace-maker engaged with, at the time he made peace by his sufferings and death; and perhaps may chiefly design the Turk, the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel, as Mr. Mede [z] thinks, that will enter into the land of Judea, in order to take it out of the hands of the Jews, who will be possessed of it upon their conversion to Christ; but he by his instruments will secure to them the possession of it, and their peace and prosperity in it: *and when he shall tread in our palaces*; the palaces of our princes, and nobles, and great men, at least attempt to do it: *then shall we raise against him*; the Assyrian, or whatsoever enemy is meant by him: or, *with him*, that is, the Messiah, as Kimchi and others [a] interpret it. The Targum is, "then will we appoint "over us;" which sense the above writer wonders at, as being contrary to the Hebrew text: *seven shepherds, and eight principal men*; that is, many, as the phrase is used in Eccl. xi. 2. to which passage Aben Ezra and Kimchi refer us; these are, as the last-mentioned writer and others say [b], the princes of the Messiah; and, according to the ancient [c] Jewish Rabbins, the seven shepherds are particularly these, David in the midst, Adam, Seth, Methuselah, on his right hand (Kimchi has it, Seth, Enoch, and Methuselah), and Abraham, Jacob, and Moses, on his left hand; and the eight principal men are, Jesse, Saul, Samuel, Amos, Zephaniah, Zedekiah (in Kimchi and Rabbot 'tis Hezekiah), Elias, and Messiah; but, as Aben Ezra, not fifteen persons are designed, at most but eight, according to this form of speech in Prov. xxx. 15, 18, 21, 24, 29. Amos i. 3. &c. Calmet [d] takes those seven or eight shepherds to be the seven princes confederate with Darius the son of Hystaspes, who killed Smerdis the Magian, who had possessed himself of the empire of the Persians, after the death of Cambyses; but Smerdis was not an Assyrian, nor is the kingdom of Persia here meant, but the land of Judea; and the prophecy respects the times of the Messiah, who should appear there, and where would be raised up men to support his interest: and if conjecture may be allowed, as this may be understood of the apostles and first preachers of the Gospel, the princes of the Messiah, who were raised up, at the prayer and request of the church, to oppose Satan and his emissaries, in the first times of the Gospel; by these may be meant the writers of the New Testament, the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the Apostles Peter, James, and Jude, which make the seven shepherds; and if you add to these the Apostle Paul, they will make eight principal men; or rather I should think the seven angels are pointed at, that shall pour out the last plagues on the antichristian states; to which, if another angel is added, that will proclaim the fall of Babylon, the same number will be made up; see Rev. xvi. 1. and xviii. 1. and who will assist the Jews against the Turks, when they shall attempt to dispossess them of their land, they shall again inherit.

Ver. 6. *And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword*, &c.] Or *feed* [e] *upon it* with the sword, destroy the inhabitants of it; either spiritually subdue the nations of the world to the obedience of Christ, by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; by the preaching of the Gospel, the ministry of the apostles, and others, in the Gentile world; see 2 Cor. x. 3, 4, 5. Ephes. vi. 17. or literally, meaning that the angels of the vials, the Christian princes, shall destroy

[x] Ut supra.
[y] Echa Rabbati, fol. 42. 2.
[z] Works, l. 4. Ep. 41. p. 796.
[a] Vid. Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 232.
[b] Ibid.

[c] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 2. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 26. 2.
[d] Dictionary, in the word *Shepherds*.
[e] ורעו & depascent, Montanus, Drusius; pascent, Piscator, Grotius, Cocceius.

the Ottoman empire with the sword: *and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof;* the same with Babylon, the empire of which was first set up by Nimrod, the beginning of whose kingdom was Babel, Gen. x. 11. the same with Nebrodas, a name of Bacchus, and which is no other than Barchus the son of Chus, as Nimrod was the son of Cush, and Bacchus was a mighty hunter, as he was; all which Bochart[f] has observed: now his country was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar, that is, the land of Babylon, as the Targum of Onkelos and Jerusalem in Gen. x. 10, render it; though some think Nimrod extended his dominions into Assyria; and translate[g] the following verse, ver. 11, *out of that land, he* (i. e. Nimrod) *went forth into Assyria, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah;* and the Targum of Jonathan is very express for it, which paraphrases the words thus, "out of that land went forth Nimrod, "and he reigned in Assyria, because he would not be "in the counsel of the generation of the division, and "he left these four cities; and the Lord gave him a "place (or Assyria), and he built four other cities, "Nineveh," &c.; hence some[h] have thought that the land of Assyria and the land of Nimrod here design one and the same country; but Ashur, in the text in Genesis, seems rather to be the name of a man than of a place, even of the son of Shem so called, from whom the country of Assyria had its name; whereas, if it had been so soon in the hands of Nimrod, and so many cities had been built by him in it, it would rather have been called by his name than Ashur's; and it seems most reasonable to conclude that the cities of Nineveh, &c. were built by the latter, and not the former; and the two countries of Assyria and Nimrod, or Babylon, are very plainly in this text distinguished from one another; though they might at the time of this prophecy be united under Esar-haddon, who was both king of Assyria and Babylon; and at this present time they are both in the hands of the Turks, and in all probability will be until this prophecy is fulfilled in the destruction of them by the Christian princes: the same thing is meant as before; and the word rendered *in the entrances thereof* may as well be translated *with its sword*[i]; or, as the margin of our Bibles, *with her own naked swords;* so Kimchi and Aben Ezra interpret it: *thus shall he deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders;* that is, the King Messiah shall work this deliverance, as Kimchi and others[k] explain it; Christ delivered his people from all their spiritual enemies when he made peace for them; and he will deliver them in the latter day from both Pope and Turk, when he will destroy the man of sin by the breath of his mouth, and dry up the river Euphrates, and cast both beast and false prophet into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone; though all that is said in this and the preceding verse may have had its accomplishment already, at least in part, in the Saracens and their empire, which begun in the year 623, and who prevailed very much in Arabia, Palestine, Syria, Persia, Egypt, and Africa, and even penetrated into Spain and France, in all which places were Christian churches; and so may be called *our land,* as the churches therein *our palaces,* which these people entered into, trod upon, profaned, or destroyed; and the seven or eight principal men raised against them may be the Christian princes that fought with them, and drove them back, and destroyed their land; such as Hugh the great, brother to Philip king of France; Robert earl of Flanders; Robert earl of Normandy, brother to William the Conqueror, king of England; Stephen earl of Blois; Raymund earl of Tholouse; Godfrey duke of Lorrain, and his brothers Baldwin and Eustachius, and others. These beginning at Nice, where once a famous Christian council was held, and driving the army of Solyman from thence, in the space of four years subdued many provinces of Asia, Lycaonia, Cilicia, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Comagena; and at length having put to flight the Turks, and ejected the Saracens, took Jerusalem, and made Godfrey of Bullein king of it[l]. Some[m] have interpreted it of the emperor of Germany, and the seven electors in the empire (for formerly they were no more), happily and with success carrying on a war against the Turks, Tartars, and Saracens, when they broke into Europe; but the former sense seems better; and it is best of all to understand the prophecy of the destruction of the Turk or Ottoman empire in the latter day by the Christian princes.

Ver. 7. *And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people,* &c.] The Jews, who will be converted in the latter day, the remnant of them according to the election of grace, as well as all true Israelites, whether Jews or Gentiles, the Lord's chosen and peculiar people; who, though but a small number in comparison of others, and mean and contemptible in the eyes of men, are such as God has made a reserve of for himself; and these, though not of the world, yet are in the world, and will be in the several parts of it, but a distinct people from it, and of no account in it; nevertheless will be visible in it, and wonderfully preserved in the midst of it: and will be *as a dew from the Lord;* both with respect to themselves, being like to dew for the generation of it, which is from above, from heaven, and of God, as their regeneration is; and which secretly and silently falls, as the grace of God in regeneration does; and for the number of the drops of it, which are not to be reckoned; and so numerous are the people of God, at least they will be in the latter day, when Christ shall again have the dew of his youth; or such a number of converts, as will be like the drops of the morning dew; as also for the favour, grace, and blessings of God upon them, which are as the dew; and which he himself is as that unto them, so that they themselves are as dew from him, being indulged with his favour; which, as the dew is entirely free, very softening, cooling, and refreshing, as well as fructifying; and having the dews of his grace, or the blessings

[f] Phaleg. l. 1. c. 2. col. 15.
[g] Vatablus, Junius and Tremellius, Bochart, Cocceius, and others.
[h] Bochart, Phaleg. l. 4. c. 12. col. 229. Bedford's Chronology, p. 773.
[i] בפתחיה gladiis suis, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Tigurine version; so R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 31. 2.
[k] R. Isaac, ib. p. 283. Abarbinel, &c.
[l] Vid. Witsii Exercitat. 8. de Assyriis in Miscel. Sacr. tom. 2. p. 218, 219, 220.
[m] Vid. Gurtler. Voc. Typic. Prophetic. Explicat. p. 18.

of it, falling upon them in plenty; see Hos. xiv. 5, 6. and with respect to others, among whom they are, and to whom they are as the dew, by their speech, their doctrine, the word ministered by them, which distils like the dew, Deut. xxxii. 2. and by their good works, which are profitable unto men; and by their soft and gentle behaviour towards them; and by reason of the many outward blessings they enjoy through them, as Laban did for the sake of Jacob, and Potiphar on the account of Joseph: *as the showers upon the grass;* which revive, refresh it, and cause it to grow and flourish; or they are like grass, on which the showers fall, and grow up as such in great numbers, and with great verdure and fruitfulness, Psal. lxxii. 16: *that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men:* which seems to be connected with the dew, though it agrees with both dew and rain, which stay not for men's desires or deserts, but descend according to the will of God: and as this regards the people of God, either with respect to themselves; it shews that as they are as the dew, or as showers and clouds full of rain, either of grace or doctrine compared thereunto; they are not of themselves so, or of men, but of God; and that their dependence is not upon the creature, but upon the Lord for support and supply: and with respect to others, to whom they are beneficial by their doctrine and works; that it is all from the Lord, and owing to his goodness, which makes them a blessing round about unasked and undeserved; see Ezek. xxxiv. 26. It may have respect to plenty of Gospel ministers, whose doctrine is as the dew; and which, being attended with the power and spirit of God, waits not for any thing in man, but operates at once secretly and powerfully.

Ver. 8. *And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people,* &c.] The same persons are meant here as before; who are compared to dew and showers of rain, because numerous, and full of blessings in themselves, and useful and beneficial to others: and here are said to be *as a lion among the beasts of the forest:* strong, mighty, powerful, and courageous, and superior to their enemies, as the lion is strongest among beasts, and keeps all others in awe of him. Some refer this to the times of the Maccabees, when Judas and his brethren behaved with great fortitude and courage, and were victorious, and prevailed over the armies of Antiochus, and others; but it seems rather to belong to the latter day, when the Jews shall be superior to their enemies the Turks, who would disturb them in the possession of their land: and shall be a terror to them, *as a young lion among the flocks of sheep;* signifying that their enemies shall be no more to them, and no more able to oppose them, than a flock of sheep are to a young lion, or they to resist him. The design of the metaphor is, not to signify the harmlessness and innocence of their enemies, but their weakness, and the strength and courage of them: *who, if he go through;* the flock: on whatsoever he seizes, *both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver;* brings it to the ground at once, tramples upon it, and tears it in pieces as its prey; and none in the flock, or to whom it belongs, can deliver out of his hand. This will be the case when the Jews shall turn to the Lord, and the Lion of the tribe of Judah shall be at the head of them; though some interpret this of the first times of the Gospel, and take it to be fulfilled in the apostles and first ministers of the word, who were Jews: and who were valiant defenders of truth, and conquerors over the devil and the world, and were the instruments of bringing many into subjection to Christ; but it seems best to apply it to the last times, and not to the converted Jews only, though in the first place; but to all the spiritual Israel of God, the whole Christian church, which will then be in such happy circumstances.

Ver. 9. *Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries,* &c.] O remnant of Jacob or Israel, as the Targum; the church of God; now will be the time that it shall prevail over all the antichristian states; now will the Christian princes pour out the vials of God's wrath upon them, and they shall feel the strength and weight of their hand; which will fall heavy upon them, even to their utter destruction: or thine hand, O Messiah, the ruler in Israel, the man the peace that shall deliver from the Assyrian; and who will be at the head of his church and people, the remnant of Jacob, and destroy their enemies with the sword that proceeds out of his mouth: *and all thine enemies shall be cut off;* all the enemies of Christ and his church; all the kings of the earth that shall gather against them, the beast and false prophet, with all their followers; see Rev. xix. 19, 20, 21.

Ver. 10. *And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord,* &c.] When the above things shall be accomplished, even in the Gospel day, made so by the rising of the sun of righteousness; the Gospel dispensation, the latter part of it: *that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots;* which some take to be an apostrophe to literal Babylon, and to be fulfilled when Cyrus took possession of it; but rather it respects mystical Babylon, and the destruction of that by Christ; but it is best of all to interpret it of the church of Christ, all whose carnal confidences and dependences shall be cut off, and shall trust alone in Christ for salvation; particularly the Jews now converted, who have been used to put their trust in the flesh, and in such things as are here mentioned; but now shall be made to see the folly and vanity of such things, and shall renounce and disclaim them; see Hos. xiv. 3. or the sense is, there shall be no more war; horses and chariots shall be no more used in a hostile way; but there shall be perfect peace, all enemies being destroyed, which agrees with ch. ii. 3. and Zech. ix. 10. The Targum is, "I will cut off the "horses of the people from the midst of thee, and de- "stroy their chariots."

Ver. 11. *And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strong holds.*] The meaning is, they should not dwell in fortified cities and walled towns; they should have none of these to trust to, nor should they stand in any need of them to defend them, their enemies being subdued; and besides, the Lord would be their strong hold and place of defence, a wall of fire round about them, and the glory in the midst of them. The phrases are expressive of the greatest tranquillity and safety, and of living in an open air, free and undisturbed; see Zech. ii. 4. 5. The Targum is, "I "will cut off the cities of the people out of thy land, "and destroy all their strong fortresses;" these shall

dwell no more there, and be no more offensive and troublesome.

Ver. 12. *And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand, &c.*] Such as were formerly practised among the Jews, though forbidden them, and in mystical Babylon, or the antichristian church, whose sorceries are mentioned, Rev. ix. 21. and xviii. 23. but nothing of this kind will be found in the Christian church, consisting of Jews and Gentiles, in the latter day; all unlawful arts, cheating and juggling in religious matters, will cease, and be no more: *and thou shalt have no more soothsayers*, or diviners, that cast a mist over people's eyes, and deceived them with false appearances of things; that pretended to know times and seasons, when it was or was not a good day to go abroad, or to make merchandise; that judged by the clouds, and by the position of the heavens, what would come to pass hereafter; and though such sort of men were formerly indulged, connived at, and caressed among the Jews, they should be so no more; nor should they apply to such persons for advice and counsel; nor would they need it, nor should they use it; see Deut. xviii. 10, 11.

Ver. 13. *Thy graven images also will I cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee, &c.*] The former were such as were made of wood or stone; the latter statues, such as were molten or cast, and made of gold, silver, or brass; such as the Jews sometimes worshipped, and are now found in the apostate church of Rome; but will have no place in the Christian churches, or those so called, in the latter day. The Jews indeed have had no idols or idolatrous worship among them since the Babylonish captivity; and the prophet here speaks, not of what would be found among them, and removed at their conversion; but of what was in his time, or had been, or would be again, but should not be in future time, when they should turn to the Lord, and be like dew among the people; and so we are to understand some following passages. The Targum is, "I will cut off the images of the "people, and their statues[a]:" *and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands*; so as not to fall down to idols and worship them, so neither to trust in carnal privileges, ceremonial rites, observances of the traditions of the elders, or any works of righteousness done by them, which they had been prone unto.

Ver. 14. *And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee, &c.*] Planted for idolatrous worship, and which the Jews in the reigns of some of their kings raised, and made use of for such purposes; see 1 Kings xv. 13. and xvi. 33. and xviii. 19. though contrary to the law of God, Deut. xvi. 21. but now there should be nothing of this kind, all idolatry being rooted out of the world. The Targum is, "I will root out the "plantations of the people out of the midst of thee:" *so will I destroy thy cities*; which some understand of cities given to idolatry[b]; or rather it is to be understood in the same sense as in ver. 11. though by reason of that, and as something distinct from it, it is better to render the words with the Targum, "I will destroy "thine enemies[c]."

Ver. 15. *And I will execute vengeance in anger, and fury upon the Heathen, &c.*] Or nations[d]; not the Pagan nations only, but the Papal and Mahometan ones, even all that are enemies to Christ, and his church and people: *such as they have not heard*; such terrible judgments, and dreadful executions of divine wrath and fury, by earthquakes, pestilence, &c. as were never known or heard of in the world before; see Rev. xvi. 18—21. or, *which have not heard*[e]; the people that have not heard and hearkened to the word of God, to the voice of Christ in the Gospel, but have turned a deaf ear to it, and despised it. So the Targum, "who have not received the doctrine of the law;" but it is much more agreeable to understand it of the doctrine of the Gospel disobeyed by men, and therefore justly punished; see 2 Thess. i. 8, 9.

CHAP. VI.

THIS chapter contains reproofs of the people of Israel for their sins, threatening them with punishment for them. The prophet is bid to tell them of the controversy the Lord had with them, which he did, ver. 1, 2. and the Lord calls upon them to declare if they had any thing to object to his carriage towards them, ver. 3. and then puts them in mind of the favours they had received from him, in bringing them out of Egypt, and giving them such useful persons to go before them, lead and instruct them, as he had, ver. 4. and also reminds them of what passed between Balak, king of Moab, and Balaam the soothsayer; the questions of the one, and the answer of the other; whereby the designs of the former against them were frustrated, ver. 5, 6, 7, 8. but since the voice of the Lord by his prophet was disregarded by them, they are called upon to hearken to the voice of his rod, ver. 9. which should be laid upon them for their fraudulent dealings, injustice, oppression, lies, and deceit, ver. 10, 11, 12. and therefore are threatened with sickness and desolation, and a deprivation of all good things, the fruit of their labours, ver. 13, 14, 15. and that because the statutes of Omri, the works of Ahab, and their counsels, were observed by them, ver. 16.

Ver. 1. *Hear ye now what the Lord saith, &c.*] Here begins a new discourse, and with an address of the prophet to the people of Israel, to hear what the Lord had to say to them by way of reproof for their sins now, as they had heard before many great and precious promises concerning the Messiah, and the happiness of the church in future time; to hear what the Lord now said to them by the prophet, and what he said

[b] So Jarchi, and Marinus in Aben Ezra, and R. Sel. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 100. 1.

[c] [illegible] gentes, Junius & Tremellius.

[e] [illegible] quae non audierunt, Pagninus, Montanus; quae non auscultaverunt, Junius & Tremellius; quae non obedierunt, Burkius.

to the prophet himself, as follows: *arise, O* Prophet Micah, and do thine office; sit not still, nor indulge to sloth and ease; shew readiness, diligence, activity, zeal, and courage in my service, and in carrying a message from me to my people: *contend thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice:* open the cause depending between me and my people; state the case between us before the mountains and hills; and exert thyself, and lift up thy voice loudly, and with so much vehemence, that, if it was possible, the very mountains and hills might hear thee; the Lord hereby suggests that they would as soon hear as his people; thus upbraiding their stupidity, as he elsewhere does; see Isa. i. 2. Jer. ii. 12. and xxii. 29. Kimchi and Ben Melech render it, *to the mountains*, which is much to the same sense with our version; call and summon them as witnesses in this cause; let the pleadings be made before them, and let them be judges in this matter; as they might be both for God, and against his people: the mountains and hills clothed with grass, and covered with flocks and herds; or set with all manner of fruit-trees, vines, olives, and figs; or adorned with goodly cedars, oaks, and elms; were witnesses of the goodness of God unto them, and the same could testify against them; and, had they mouths to speak, could declare the abominations committed on them; how upon every high mountain and hill, and under every green tree, they had been guilty of idolatry. The Targum, and many versions*, render it, *with the mountains*: and the Vulgate Latin version, and others, *against the mountains*[*]: the inhabitants of Judea, that being a mountainous country, especially some parts of it. Some by *mountains* understand the great men of the land, king, princes, nobles; and, by *hills*, lesser magistrates, with whom the Lord's controversy chiefly was; they not discharging their offices aright, nor setting good examples to the people. Some copies of the Targum, as the king of Spain's Bible, paraphrase it, "judge or contend with the fathers, and let the "mothers hear thy voice;" which Kimchi thus explains, as if it was said, let the fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the mothers Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah, hear what their children hath rendered to the Lord; let them be, as it were, called out of their graves to hear the ill requital made to the Lord for all his goodness.

Ver. 2. *Hear ye, O mountains, the Lord's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth, &c.*] These are the words of the prophet, obeying the divine command, calling upon the mountains, which are the strong parts of the earth, and the bottoms of them the foundations of it, to hear the Lord's controversy with his people, and judge between them; or, as some think, these are the persons with whom, and against whom, the controversy was; the chief and principal men of the land, who were as pillars to the common people to support and uphold them: *for the Lord hath a controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel:* his people Israel, who were so by choice, by covenant, by their own avouchment and profession: they had been guilty of many sins and transgressions against both tables of the law; and now the Lord had a controversy with them for them, and was determined to enter into judgment, and litigate the point with them; and dreadful it is when God brings in a charge, and pleads his own cause with sinful men; they are not able to contend with him, nor answer him for one of a thousand faults committed against him; see Hos. iv. 1, 2.

Ver. 3. *O my people, &c.*] These are the words of the Lord himself by the prophet, expressing his strong affection to the people of Israel, of which his goodness to them was a full proof, and this was an aggravation of their ingratitude to him; they were his people, whom he had chosen for himself above all people of the earth; whom he had redeemed from the house of bondage, had distinguished them by his favours, and loaded them with his benefits, and yet they sinned against him: *what have I done unto thee?* what evil things, what injuries to provoke to such usage? *what iniquity have* you, *or your fathers, found in me*, to treat me after this manner? have I been *a wilderness, or a land of darkness*, to you? Jer. ii. 5, 31. have I withheld or denied you any thing that was for your good? The Targum is, "O my people, what good have I said I "would do unto thee, and I have not done it?" all that the Lord had promised he had performed; not one good thing had failed he had spoken of; how much good, and how many good things, had he done for them? nay, what good things were there he had not done for them? and what more could be done for them than what had been done? and yet they sinned against him so grossly; see Isa. v. 4: *and wherein have I wearied thee?* what heavy yoke have I put upon thee? what grievous commandments have I enjoined thee? is there any thing in my service, any duty, too hard, severe, or unreasonable? are the sacrifices required burdensome? *have I caused thee to serve with an offering, and wearied thee with incense?* is there any just reason to say of these things, *what a weariness is it?* see Isa. xliii. 23. Mal. i. 13: *testify against me*; declare it publicly, if any good thing has been wanting, or any evil thing done: thus the Lord condescends to have the case fairly debated, and every thing said that could be said in their favour, or against him: astonishing condescension and goodness!

Ver. 4. *For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, &c.*] Instead of doing them any wrong, he had done them much good; of which this is one instance, and he was able to produce more: this a notorious, plain, and full proof of his goodness to them, which could not be denied. It may be rendered, as it is by some, *surely I brought thee up*†, &c.; this is a certain thing, well known, and cannot be disproved; it must be allowed to be a great favour and kindness to be brought up out of a superstitious, idolatrous, Heathenish people, enemies to God and true religion, and who had used them in a barbarous and cruel manner: *and redeemed thee out of the house of servants*; or, *out of the house of bondage*; as the same words are rendered, Exod. xx. 2. that is, out of hard service, in which their lives were made bitter; out of cruel bondage and slavery; which made them cry to the Lord for help and deliverance, and he heard them, and sent them a deliverer; by whose hand he redeemed them from this

* [illegible] cum istis montibus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius; cum montibus, Montanus, Munster, Cocceius, Burkius.

* Adversum montes, Vulg. Lat. Grotius.

† [illegible] certe, Calvin, Piscator, Tarnovius; so some in Vatablus.

base and low estate in which they were, and for which they ought ever to have been thankful, and to have shewn their gratitude by their cheerful and constant obedience. Some take *the house of servants* to be descriptive, not of the state of the children of Israel in Egypt, but of the character of the Egyptians themselves; who, being the posterity of Ham, were inheritors of his curse, that he should be a servant of servants; and so it is an aggravation of the blessing, that Israel were redeemed from being servants to the servants of servants. This sense is mentioned by Kimchi and Abarbinel: *and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam;* not to bring them the news of their deliverance out of Egypt, before they came out of it, as Kimchi; but to be their guides to conduct and direct them in all matters, civil and religious. Moses was their lawgiver, leader, and commander; Aaron was their priest to offer sacrifice for them, and to intercede on their behalf; and Miriam was a prophetess; and they were all very useful and beneficial to them; and a very great blessing it is to a people to have a good constitution, civil and ecclesiastic, and to have good magistrates, and good ministers of the word. The Targum is, "I sent before thee three prophets, Moses "to teach the tradition of the judgments, Aaron to "make atonement for the people, and Miriam to in- "struct the women."

Ver. 5. *O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted,* &c.] What a scheme he had laid; what contrivances he had formed; what consultations he had with a soothsayer or diviner he sent for to curse Israel; how he sought to get the God of Israel on his side, and to set him against them, that he might be rid of them, and they be ruined and destroyed. The Moabites were the descendants of Moab, a son of Lot, by one of his daughters; when they first set up their kingdom is not certain; nor who their kings in succession were before Balak: it appears there was a former king, whom the king of the Amorites fought with, and took away his land from him, Numb. xxi. 26. who probably was Zippor, the father of Balak, and whom he succeeded; the kingdom being recovered by him, or by this his son; however, he was on the throne when Israel was upon the borders of his kingdom, which threw him into a panic; upon which he sent messengers to a neighbouring magician next mentioned, to advise with him what to do in this his extremity; and the Jews have a tradition, that, because of the multitude of sacrifices he offered, he was worthy to have Ruth, the descendant from him; who, they say, was the daughter of Eglon, the grandson of Balak, king of Moab[r]: *and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him;* this man is called a soothsayer, Josh. xiii. 22. The Jews say he was first a prophet; and so the Apostle Peter calls him, 2 Pet. ii. 16. and afterwards became a diviner[s]: they differ very much about him, who he was, and from whom he descended. Beor his father is sometimes said to be the son of Laban[t]; and, at other times, Balaam himself is said to be Laban the Syrian[u], whose soul they suppose transmigrated into Balaam, as it afterwards did into Nabal, according to them. Some[w] take him to be the same with Elihu, who interposed in the dispute between Job and his friends; and others say that he was one of the eunuchs, counsellors, and magicians of Pharaoh, both when Moses was a child, and when he wrought his miracles in Egypt; and that Jannes and Jambres, of whom the Apostle Paul makes mention, 2 Tim. iii. 8. were his two sons[x]: he was an inhabitant of Pethor, which was situated on the river Euphrates, thought by Junius to be the Pacoria of Ptolemy: he seems to have been a Mesopotamian, though some say a Midianite; but, whether one or the other, he did not live at any great distance from the king of Moab: he was slain by the sword of the children of Israel, in the times of Joshua, Josh. xiii. 22. and, as the Jews say[y] he was, when he was but thirty-three or thirty-four years of age; they observing upon it, that bloody and deceitful men do not live out half their days; but this does not seem so well to agree with other things they say of him; however, this soothsayer and sorcerer Balak sent for to curse Israel; whose heart and tongue, though a wicked man, and would fain have done according to Balak's wish and desire, were so overruled by the power of God, that instead of cursing Israel he was obliged to bless them, and to prophesy of their future happiness and prosperity, and of the Messiah, that should spring from them; see the history of all this in Numb. ch. xxii. and xxiii. and xxiv: *from Shittim unto Gilgal, that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord;* here something must be supplied to make sense of the words; either, *remember what good things I did for you*[z], *from Shittim to Gilgal;* the former was the place where the children of Israel committed whoredom and idolatry, and was on the other side Jordan; and the latter was the place they came to when they had passed over Jordan, where the covenant of circumcision was renewed, and the first passover kept; now they are called upon to remember the goodness of God unto them from one place to another, and what were done between them; how that at Shittim, though they provoked the Lord to anger, yet he did not cut them all off, but spared a number of them, to enter and possess the land of Canaan; and though Moses died by the way, yet he raised up Joshua to go before them, and in a miraculous manner led them through the river Jordan, and brought them to Gilgal—favours ever to be had in remembrance. So the Targum, "were not great things done for you in "the plain of Shittim unto the house of Gilgal, that "the righteousness of the Lord might be known?" both his justice in punishing offenders at Shittim, and his bounty and kindness, as well as his truth and faithfulness, in sparing others: bestowing his favours on them, and bringing them into the promised

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[r] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 105. 2.
[s] Ib. fol. 106. 1.
[t] Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 7. 2.
[u] Targum Jon. in Numb. xxii. 5. Targum in 1 Chron. i. 44. Vid. Berkium ib.
[w] Hieron. Quæst. Hebr. in Genesim, fol. 69. D.
[x] Dibre Hayamim Shel Moseh, fol. 4. 2. & 6. 2. Targum Jon. in Exod. ix. 21. Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 90. 1. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 106. 1.
[y] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 106. 2. Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 7. 2.
[z] Recordare qualia bona exhibuerim tibi, Munster; memento eorum quæ gesta sunt, Vatablus; quæ contigerint tibi, Calvin; memento eorum quæ fecerim, Grotius; recordare quid evenerit tibi, Piscator.

land: or it may be supplied thus, as by some, *remember what Balak consulted*[b] *from Shittim to Gilgal*; that is, with Balaam, and what answer and advice he gave him; which was to send beautiful women among the Israelites, and so tempt them to adultery, and by that means to idolatry; and which scheme and consultation took place at Shittim, by means of which several thousands were slain; and the device was to have continued the temptation even to Gilgal, which, had it not been prevented, in all likelihood would have issued in the destruction of that people; and therefore they had reason to know, own, and acknowledge the goodness and faithfulness of God unto them: or rather, taking the phrase *from Shittim to Gilgal* to be a proverbial one[c], of going from place to place, it may have respect to Balak's having Balaam from place to place, to take a view of the people, and curse them; or how he might set the God of Israel against them, and gain him over to him; and then the sense is this, "remember how Balak consulted Balaam from place to place, and what answers he returned him; all which was done, that *he (Balak) might know the righteousness of the Lord*;" and so the Syriac version renders it, and it will bear to be so rendered: the thing which Balak chiefly consulted was, how he should get the God of Israel on his side; as it was usual with Heathen princes, when at war, to attempt to get the gods of their enemies from them, and on their side; and inquires of Balaam how this was to be effected; what righteousness it was the Lord required; what duties of religion to be performed; what rites or sacrifices were acceptable to him; and the sum of his questions on this head, and Balaam's answer to them, are contained in the following verses.

Ver. 6. *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord*, &c.] These are not the words of the people of Israel God had a controversy with, and now made sensible of their sin, and humbled for it; and willing to appease the Lord, and make it up with him at any rate; for there are such things proposed by them as do by no means suit with persons of such a character, nay, even suppose them to be hypocritical; and much less are they what were put into their mouths by the prophet to say, as some suggest; but they are the words of Balak king of Moab, which, and what follow, are questions he put to Balaam, who had told him that he could do nothing without the Lord, nor any thing contrary to his word: now he asks what he must do to get the good will of this Lord; in what manner, and with what he must appear before him, serve and worship him, as the Targum; that so he might have an interest in him, and get him to speak a word to Balaam in his favour, and against Israel; see Numb. xxii. 8, 18, 38. and xxiii. 12, 15, 26: *and bow myself before the high God?* the most high God, the God of gods, whose Shechinah or Majesty is in the high heavens, as the Targum: his meaning is, with what he should come, or bring with him, when he paid his homage and obeisance to him, by bowing his body or his knee before him; being willing to do it in the most acceptable manner he could: *shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old?* such as he had been used to offer on the high places of Baal to that deity. Sacrifices of this kind prevailed among the Heathens, which they had received by tradition from the times of Adam and Noah; see Numb. xxii. 41.

Ver. 7. *Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams*, &c.] If single burnt-offerings of bullocks and heifers will not do, will rams, and thousands of them, be acceptable to him? if they will, they are at his service, even as many as he pleases; such creatures, as well as oxen, were offered by Balak, Numb. xxiii. 1, 2, 4, 29, 30: or *with ten thousands of rivers of oil?* for meat-offerings, as Jarchi, in which oil was used: this is a hyperbolical expression, as Kimchi rightly observes; suggesting that he was willing to be at any expenses, even the most extravagant, if he could but gain his point, and get the God of Israel on his side. Some render it, *ten thousands of fat valleys*[d]; abounding with corn, and wine, and oil; the produce of which, had he so many, he could freely part with, could he but obtain his end; see Job xx. 17: *shall I give my first-born* for *my transgression, the fruit of my body* for *the sin of my soul?* his son, his first-born, his own flesh and blood, to make atonement for his sins and transgressions; this betrays the person speaking. The people of Israel, though they were sometimes guilty of this horrid, unnatural, and abominable sin, in the height of their degeneracy and apostacy, as to sacrifice their children to Moloch; yet when convinced of their sins, and humbling themselves before God for them, even though but in a hypocritical way, could never be so weak and foolish, so impious and audacious, as to propose that to God, which they knew was so contrary to his will, and so abominable in his sight, Lev. xviii. 21. but this comes well enough from a Heathen prince, with whom it was the height of his devotion and religion, and the greatest sacrifice he thought he could offer up to God; for there is a climax, a gradation in the words from lesser things to greater; and this is the greatest of all, and what was done among the Heathens, 2 Kings xvii. 31. and was afterwards done by a king of Moab, 2 Kings iii. 26, 27.

Ver. 8. *He hath shewed me, O man, what is good*, &c.] This is not the answer of the prophet to the body of the people, or to any and every one of the people of Israel; but of Balaam to Balak, a single man, that consulted with him, and put questions to him; particularly what he should do to please the Lord, and what righteousness he required of him, that would be acceptable to him; and though he was a king, he was but a man, and he would have him know it that he was no more, and as such addresses him; and especially when he is informing him of his duty to God; which lay not in such things as he had proposed, but in doing that which was good, and avoiding that which was evil, in a moral sense: and this the Lord had shewn him by the light of nature; which is no other than the work of the law of God written in the hearts of the Heathens, by which they are directed to

[b] Memento quid cogitaverit contra te Balac, & quid responderit ei Balaam a Settim, &c. Ribera; so Menochius, Tirinus.

[c] See Bishop Chandler's Defence of Christianity, p. 290.

[d] ברבבות נחלי שמן in decem millibus vallium pinguium, Munster, Vatablus.

do the good commanded in the law, and to shun the evil forbidden by it; see Rom. ii. 14, 15: *and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly*; or *judgment*[e]; to exercise public judgment and justice, as a king, among his subjects; to do private and personal justice between man and man; to hurt no man's person, property, and character; to give to every one their due, and do as he would desire to be done by; which as it is agreeable to the law of God, so to the light of nature, and what is shewn, required, and taught by it: *and to love mercy*; not only to shew mercy to miserable objects, to persons in distress; to relieve the poor and indigent; to clothe the naked, and feed the hungry; but to delight in such exercises; and which a king especially should do, whose throne is established by mercy, and who is able, and should be munificent; and some Heathen princes, by their liberality, have gained the name of benefactors, *Euergetes*, as one of the Ptolemies did; see Luke xxii. 25. such advice Daniel gave to Nebuchadnezzar, a Heathen prince, as agreeable to the light of nature; see Dan. iv. 27: *and to walk humbly with thy God?* his Creator and Benefactor, from whom he had his being, and all the blessings of life, and was dependent upon him; and therefore, as a creature, should behave with humility towards his Creator, acknowledging his distance from him, and the obligations he lay under to him; and even though a king, yet his God and Creator was above him, King of kings, and Lord of lords, to whom he owed his crown, sceptre, and kingdom, and was accountable to him for all his administrations: and this *walking humbly* is opposed to *walking in pride*, which kings are apt to do; but God can humble them, and bring them low, as Heathen kings have been obliged to own; see Dan. ii. 21. and iv. 37.

Ver. 9. *The Lord's voice crieth unto the city*, &c.] The Lord having bid his prophet call to the mountains and hills to hear his voice, and the prophet having obeyed his will, and the Lord having by him addressed his people Israel, and expostulated with them about their ingratitude, observing to them many instances of his goodness; here informs them, that this voice of his, whether in his prophet, or in his judgments, was directed to the city, either Samaria or Jerusalem, or both, and even to all the cities of Israel and Judah, the singular being put for the plural; that is, to the inhabitants of them. Cities being populous, and where persons of the highest rank and figure, as well as of the best sense, dwell, and generally very wicked, though favoured with greater advantages; all which are reasons why the voice of the Lord, in his word and providences, particularly cries to them to repent of their sins, and reform from them, as might be expected from such persons; and so doing would set a good example to those who live in the country. Some render it, *the Lord's voice crieth to awake*[f]; or to *stir up*; it calls upon men asleep to awake out of sleep; to arouse from their carnal security; to attend to their sins, their danger, and their duty; to repent of their sins, and so avoid the danger they were in through them, and perform their duty they had neglected; such a voice as this, see in Ephes. v. 14. this reading of the words is mentioned by Kimchi. *And the man of wisdom shall see thy name*; not the mere natural man, or who is possessed only of natural wisdom, though he may have ever so great a share of it; for as he sees not the things of the spirit of God, the things of the Gospel, so neither the name and perfections of God in his judgments on the earth; much less the man that is wise to do evil, full of wicked subtlety, and makes a jest of every thing religious and serious; nor such as are wise in their own opinion, or have only a superficial share of wisdom; but such who have a share of solid and substantial wisdom, a man of *substance*, as the word[g] sometimes signifies; see Prov. viii. 21. such who have true wisdom in the hidden part, that which comes from above, and is pure and peaceable, and makes men wise to salvation; such men see and discern the power and providence of God in all the judgments that are in the earth; his attributes and perfections; his severity on some, and goodness to others; his sparing grace and mercy, and his special loving-kindness, and even all his perfections, for he is known to such by the judgments he executeth; see Psal. ix. 16. and cvii. 43. and such *fear his name* also, as some render the words[h]; they not only fear the Lord and his goodness, but have an awful sense of his judgments, and tremble at them. Some read the words, *thy name sees that which is*[i]; so the margin of our Bibles; that is, the Lord seeth that which is done in the city, though ever so secret and private, and therefore his voice cries to it. *Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it*; these are the words of the man of wisdom, as Kimchi observes; who, seeing the name and perfections of God in his judgments on the earth, calls upon others, and exhorts them to hear the voice of the rod, of the rod of correction and affliction, the rod of judgment and vengeance, as held in the hand of God, and shook over a city or nation; which has a voice in it to men, reproving them for their sins; commanding them to return from them; calling them to repentance and humiliation; teaching and instructing them in their duty; and giving cautions and warnings to others, lest the like should befall them; and this is the voice that is to be attended to: and it should be considered, that there is no affliction, calamity, or judgment, but is appointed by the Lord, the kind and nature, measure and duration, of it; what its end, issue, and use; and he that has appointed it is all-wise and all-knowing, unchangeable and invariable, all-powerful, and able to put his purposes and decrees into execution; nor can they be frustrated. The Targum of the whole is, "with the voice the prophets of the "Lord cry to the city; and teachers fear the name "(of the Lord); hear, O king and rulers, and the rest "of the people of the land."

Ver. 10. *Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked?* &c.] There are; they con-

[e] משפט judicium, V. L. Munster; jus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[f] לעיר ad suscitandum, Vatablus; ad expergefaciendum, Calvin; ad excitandum, Drusius. So Joseph Kimchi.

[g] תושיה vir constans, Pagninus; vir essentiæ, Gualtherus apud Tarnovium.

[h] יראה שמך timebit nomen tuum, Pagninus, Montanus. So the Targum.

[i] Nam quod res est, videt nomen tuum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius.

tinue there. This is the voice of the Lord by the prophet, and the language of the rod of correction to be heard, exposing the sins of the people, for which the Lord had a controversy with them; particularly their mammon of unrighteousness, the vast wealth, riches, and treasures, collected together by very wicked and unlawful ways and means; and which, instead of restoring them to the persons they had defrauded of them, they retained them in their houses, notwithstanding the reproofs of the prophets, and the corrections of the Almighty. Some render it, *is there not fire?* &c.[k]; that is, in the house of the wicked, because of the treasures of wickedness, that which consumes them; but Gussetius[l] interprets it of fornications and adulteries. Others render it, *is there yet a man?* &c.[m]; an honourable man, as Aben Ezra, who continues in his iniquity, after the Lord's voice cries to the city; but Abendana interprets it of the prophet himself, continuing to reprove the wicked for their treasures of wickedness, and their other sins. *And the scant measure that is abominable?* or *the ephah of leanness provoking to wrath*[n]; that is, a deficient measure, less than it should be; the *ephah* was a dry measure, and it was made small, as in Amos viii. 5. and held less than it should; and this brought leanness and poverty upon those to whom they sold by it, as well as ruin upon themselves in the issue; for such practices as they were abominable and detestable to God; they stirred up his wrath, and brought destruction on those that used them. The Targum is, "false measures that bring a curse."

Ver. 11. *Shall I count* them *pure with the wicked balances*, &c.] These are the words either of the prophet, or rather of God, signifying that he could not, and would not, allow, countenance, and approve of persons that used false scales or balances; or justify and reckon them just, as they would be thought to be, but condemn them, and pronounce them very wicked men, and deserving of punishment here and hereafter: *and with the bag of deceitful weights?* or *stones*[o]; which were used in weighing goods, and which were deceitful, when a heavier was used in buying, and a lighter in selling. So the Targum, "and with the bag, "in which are weights greater and lesser;" condemned in Deut. xxv. 13, 14.

Ver. 12. *For the rich men thereof are full of violence*, &c.] That is, the rich men of the city, to whom the voice of the Lord cried, ver. 9. Jerusalem or Samaria, or any or all the cities of Israel and Judah; the rich men of these cities, who had enough of the world, and were under no temptation to do an ill thing, to get money; and yet their hands and their houses, and their treasuries, as the Targum, were full of goods gotten by violent measures, by the oppression of the poor and needy: *and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies:* the rest of the inhabitants, who were not so rich as others, and who had it not in the power of their hands to oppress as others had; yet used deceitful and fraudulent methods to cheat their neighbours in buying and selling; and, to do this, did not stick to tell downright deliberate lies: *and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth;* say one thing, and mean another; deceive their neighbours with their tongues in trade and commerce; averring things for truth they know to be false.

Ver. 13. *Therefore also will I make thee sick in smiting thee*, &c.] With the rod to be heard, ver. 9. by sending among them some of his sore judgments, as famine, pestilence, the sword of the enemy, intestine wars, and the like; which should cause their kingdom, and state, and families, to decline and waste away, as a sickly and diseased body. So the Targum, "and I "brought upon thee illness and a stroke." The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render it, *and I began to smite thee;* as by Hazael, king of Syria, and Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, who had carried part of them captive. *In making* thee *desolate because of thy sins;* went on, not only to make them sick, and bring them into a declining state, but into utter desolation; as by Salmaneser, king of Assyria, who carried Israel captive; and by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, who led Judah captive, because of their sins of idolatry, injustice, and oppression, with others that abounded among them.

Ver. 14. *Thou shalt eat, but not be satisfied*, &c.] Either not having enough to eat, for the refreshing and satisfying of nature; or else a blessing being withheld from food, though eaten, and so not nourishing; or a voracious and insatiable appetite being given as a curse; the first sense seems best: *and thy casting down* shall be *in the midst of thee;* meaning they should be humbled and brought down, either by intestine discords and wars among themselves, or through the enemy being suffered to come into the midst of their country, and make havoc there; which would be as a sickness and disease in their bowels. So the Targum, "thou shalt have an illness in thy bowels." The Syriac version is, "a dysentery shall be in thine intestines;" a secret judgment wasting and destroying them. *And thou shalt take hold, but shalt not deliver; and that which thou deliverest will I give up to the sword;* the sense is, that they should take hold of their wives and children, and endeavour to save them from the sword of the enemy, and being carried captive: or should *remove* them[p], as the word is sometimes used, in order to secure them from them; or should *overtake*[q]; the enemy, carrying them captive; but should not be able by either of these methods to save them from being destroyed, or carried away by them; and even such as they should preserve or rescue for a while, yet these should be given up to the sword of the enemy, the same or another. Aben Ezra and Kimchi interpret this of their women conceiving, and not bringing forth; and, if they should, yet what they brought forth should be slain by the sword[r]. But the Targum and Jarchi incline to the former sense.

Ver. 15. *Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap*, &c.]

[k] עוד האש μὴ πῦρ, Sept.; adhuc ignis, V. L. So Joseph Kimchi.
[l] Ebr. Comment. p. 352.
[m] Adhuc num vir domo, Montanus; adhuc suntne viro domus improbi, some in Drusius. So R. Sol. Urbin, fol. 37. 2.
[n] ואיפת רזון זעומה et ephah macilentiæ indignatio a Deo proventura, Tarnovius; detestatus Domino, Pagninus; et ephah maciei abominatione digna, Burkius.

[o] אבני מרמה lapidum doli, Piscator; lapidum fraudis, Montanus.
[p] ותסג et amovebis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius; summovebis, Drusius, so Ben Melech; et removebis, Burkius.
[q] Assequeris, Syr.
[r] So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 35. 2.

Either that which is sown shall not spring up, but rot in the earth; or if it does spring up, and come to maturity, yet, before that, they should be removed into captivity, or slain by the sword, and their enemies should reap the increase of their land, their wheat and their corn: *thou shalt tread the olives;* in the olive-press, to get out the oil: *but thou shalt not anoint with oil;* as at feasts for refreshment, and at baths for health, this becoming another's property; or, it being a time of distress and mourning, would not be used, it being chiefly at festivals, and occasions of joy, that oil was used: *and sweet wine;* that is, shalt tread the grapes in the wine-press, to get out the sweet or new wine: *but shalt not drink wine;* for, before it is fit to drink, the enemy would have it in his possession; see Lev. xxvi. 16. and xxviii. 30. these are the punishments or corrections of the rod they are threatened with for their sins.

Ver. 16. *For the statutes of Omri are kept,* &c.] Who of a captain of the army was made king of Israel, and proved a wicked prince; he built Samaria, and set up idolatrous worship there, after the example of Jeroboam, in whose ways he walked, and, as it seems, established the same by laws and edicts; and which were every one of them observed by the Israelites, in the times of the prophet, though at the distance of many years from the first making of them, which aggravated their sin; nor would it be any excuse of them that what they practised was enjoined by royal authority, since it was contrary to the command of God; for the breach of which, and their observance of the statutes of such a wicked prince, they are threatened with the judgments of God; see 1 Kings xvi. 16, 24, 25, 26: *and all the works of the house of Ahab;* who was the son of Omri, and introduced the worship of Baal, and added to the idolatry of the calves, which he and his family practised; and the same works were now done by the people of Israel: *and ye walk in their counsels;* as they advised and directed the people to do in their days: *that I should make thee a desolation;* the city of Samaria, the metropolis of Israel, or the whole land, which was made a desolation by Salmaneser, an instrument in the hand of God; and this was not the intention and design of their walking in the counsels and after the example of their idolatrous kings, but the consequence and event of so doing: *and the inhabitants thereof an hissing;* either of Samaria, or of all the land, who should become the scorn and derision of men, when brought to ruin for their sins: *therefore ye shall bear the reproach of my people;* that which was threatened in the law to the people of God, when disobedient to him; or shameful punishment for profaning the name and character of the people of God they bore; or for reproaching and ill using the poor among the people of God; and so it is directed to the rich men before spoken of, and signifies the shame and ignominy they should bear, by being carried captive into a foreign land for their sins.

CHAP. VII.

THIS chapter begins with a lamentation of the prophet, in the name of the church and people of God, concerning the general depravity and corruption of the times in which he lived, ver. 1—6. then declares what he was determined to do for his relief in such circumstances, ver. 7. comforts himself and the church with a good hope and firm belief of its being otherwise and better with them, to the shame and confusion of their enemies that now rejoiced, though without just reason for it, ver. 8, 9, 10. with promises of deliverance, after a desolation of the land for some time, ver. 11, 12, 13. and with the answer returned to the prayers of the prophet, ver. 14, 15. which would issue in the astonishment of the world, and their subjection to the church of God, ver. 16, 17. and the chapter is concluded with admiration at the pardoning grace and mercy of God, and his faithfulness to his promises, ver. 18, 19, 20.

Ver. 1. *Woe is me,* &c.] Alas for me! unhappy man that I am, to live in such an age, and among such a people, as I do! this the prophet says in his own name, or in the name of the church and people of God in his time; so Isaiah, who was cotemporary with him, ch. vi. 5. see also Psal. cxx. 5, 6: *for I am as when they have gathered the summer-fruits, as the grape-gleanings of the vintage;* when there are only an apple or a pear or two, or such sort of fruit, and such a quantity of it left on the top of the tree, or on the outermost branches of it, after the rest are gathered in; or a few single grapes here and there, after the vintage is over; signifying either that he was like Elijah left alone, or however that the number of good men were very few; or that there were very few gathered in by his ministry, converted, taught, and instructed by it; or those that had the name of good men were but very indifferent, and not like those who were in times past; but were as refuse fruit left on trees, and dropped from thence when rotten, and when gathered up were good for little, and like single grapes, small and withered, and of no value; see Isa. xvii. 6: there is *no cluster to eat;* no large number or society of good men to converse with, only here and there a single person; and none that have an abundance of grace and goodness in them, and a large experience of spiritual and divine things; few that attend the ministry of the word; they don't come in clusters, in crowds; and fewer still that receive any advantage by it. *My soul desired the first ripe fruit;* the company and conversation of such good men as lived in former times; who had the first-fruits of the spirit, and arrived to a maturity of grace, and a lively exercise of it; and who were, in the age of the prophet, as scarce and rare as first ripe fruits, and as desirable as such were to a thirsty traveller; see Hos. ix. 10. The Targum is, "the prophet said, woe unto "me, because I am as when good men fail, in a time "in which merciful men perish from the earth; behold, as the summer-fruits, as the gleanings after the "vintage, there is no man in whom there are good "works: my soul desires good men."

Ver. 2. *The good man is perished out of the earth,*

&c.] Here the prophet expresses in plain words what he had before delivered in figurative terms. The *good* or *godly* man, as in Psal. xii. 1, is one that has received the grace of God, and blessings of grace from him, and lives a godly life and conversation; who has the good work of grace begun in him, and is found in the performance of good works, and does his duty both to God and man from godly principles; and particularly is kind and merciful to the poor and needy, and those in distress. The complaint is, that there were few, or scarce any, of this character in the earth, in the land of Israel, where there used to be great numbers of them, but now they were all dead and gone; for this is to be understood, not of the perishing of their graces or comforts, much less of their perishing in their sins, or perishing eternally, but of their corporeal death: *and there is none upright among men:* that are upright in heart and life; that have right spirits renewed in them, are Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile; and walk uprightly, according to the rule of the divine word, truly honest, faithful men; very few such were to be found, scarce any; see Psal. xii. 1. Isa. lvii. 1: *they all lie in wait for blood;* for the substance, wealth, and riches of men, which is as their blood and life; is their livelihood, that on which they live; this they wait for an opportunity to get from them, and, when it offers, greedily seize it; and stick not even to shed blood, and take away life, for the sake of gain: *they hunt every man his brother with a net:* as men lay nets for fish, and fowl, and beasts, and hunt them till they have got them into them; so these men laid snares, not for strangers only, but for their own brethren, to entangle them in, and cheat and defraud them of their substance; and this they would do, even to the destruction of them, as some[s] render it: for the word also signifies *anathema*, destruction, as well as a *net*. So the Targum, "betray or deliver his brother to destruction."

Ver. 3. *That they may do evil with both hands earnestly,* &c.] Or *well*[t], strenuously, diligently, to the utmost of their power, labouring at it with all their might and main; as wicked men generally are more industrious, and exert themselves more to do evil, than good men do to do good; and even weary themselves to commit iniquity: or, *instead of doing good,* as Marinus in Aben Ezra, take a great deal of pains to do evil; work with both hands at it, instead of doing good. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, *they prepare their hands for evil;* the Syriac version is, *their hands are ready to evil, and they do not do good;* with which agrees the Targum, "they do evil with their hands, and do not do good." Some make the sense to depend on what goes before and follows; *to do evil, both hands* are open and ready, and they hurt with them; *but to do good the prince asketh, and the judge for a reward*[u]; forward enough to do evil, but very backward to do any good office; and, if they do it, must be bribed, and have a reward for it, even persons of such high character; but this sense is not favoured by the accents; besides, by what follows, it seems as if the *prince*, by whom may be meant the king upon the throne, and the *judge* he that sits upon the bench under him, sought for bribes to do an ill thing; to give a cause wrong against a poor man, and in favour of a rich man that will bribe high: *and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire;* the depravity, corruption, and perverseness of his soul; who is either some great man at court, that, being encouraged by the example of the prince and judge, openly and publicly requires a bribe also to do an ill thing; and without any shame or blushing promises to do it, on that consideration; or a counsellor at the bar, who openly declares that he will speak in such a cause, though a bad one, and defend it, and not doubt of carrying it; or else this is some rich wicked man, that seeks to oppress his poor neighbour, and, being favoured by the prince and judge he has bribed, does without fear or shame speak out the wickedness of his heart, and what an ill design he has against his neighbour, whose mischief, hurt, and ruin, he seeks: *so they wrap it up together;* or, *twist it together*[w]; as cords are, which thereby become strong; and so these three work up this mischievous business, and strengthen and establish it; and such a threefold cord of wickedness is not easily broken or unravelled: or, *they perplex it*[x]; as thick branches of trees are implicated and wrapped together; so these agree to puzzle and perplex a cause, that they may have some shew of carrying it with justice and truth. So the Vulgate Latin version renders it, *they trouble it;* confound the matter, and make it dark, dubious, and difficult. The Targum is, *they corrupt it;* or deprave it; put an ill sense on things, and make a wrong construction of them.

Ver. 4. *The best of them is as a brier,* &c.] Good for nothing but for burning, very hurtful and mischievous, pricking and scratching those that have to do with them: *the most upright is sharper than a thorn-hedge;* which, if a man lays hold on to get over, or attempts to pass through, his hands will be pricked, his face scratched, and his clothes tore off his back; so the best of these princes, judges, and great men, who put on a shew of goodness, and pretended to do justice, yet fetched blood, and got money out of every one they were concerned with, and did them injury in one respect or another; or the best and uprightest of the people of the land in general, that made the greatest pretensions to religion and virtue, yet in their dealings were sharp, and biting, and tricking; and took every fraudulent method to cheat, and overreach, and hurt men in their property: *the day of thy watchmen;* either which the true prophets of the Lord, sometimes called watchmen, foretold should come, but were discredited and despised, will now most assuredly come; and it will be found to be true what they said should come to pass: or the day of the false prophets, as Kimchi and Ben Melech; either which they predicted as a good day, and now it should be seen whether it would be so or no; or the day of their punishment,

[s] חרם ad sectam, Tigurine version; anathema, cædes, Drusius; ad occisionem, ibid.
[t] להיטיב bene, Drusius.
[u] So Grotius.
[w] ויעבתוה contorquent, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius; contorquere solent, Burkius; contortuplicant, Junius, Grotius; so R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 38. 2.
[x] A radice עבת quæ intricare significat, atque confusum reddere, atque perplexum, Sanctius.

for their false prophecies and deception of the people: and *thy visitation cometh;* the time that God would punish the people in general for their iniquities, as well as their false prophets, princes, judges, and great men; who also may be designed by watchmen: *now shall be their perplexity:* the prince, the judge, and the great man, in just retaliation for their perplexing the cause of the poor; or of all the people, who would be surrounded and entangled with calamities and distresses, and not know which way to turn themselves, or how to get out of them.

Ver. 5. *Trust ye not in a friend,* &c.] This is not said to lessen the value of friendship; or to discourage the cultivation of it with agreeable persons; or to dissuade from a confidence in a real friend; or in the least to weaken it, and damp the pleasure of true friendship, which is one of the great blessings of life; but to set forth the sad degeneracy of the then present age, that men, who pretended to be friends, were so universally false and faithless, that there was no dependence to be had on them: *put ye not confidence in a guide:* in political matters, in civil affairs, as civil magistrates, judges, counsellors; or in domestic matters. The Targum renders it, in one near akin. Kimchi interprets it of an elder brother; and Aben Ezra of a husband, who is to his wife the guide of her youth; and in religious matters as prophets, priests who were false and deceitful. It may design a very intimate friend, a familiar acquaintance, who might of all men be thought to be confided in; of whom the word is used, Psal. lv. 13: *keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom;* from a wife, and much more from a concubine or harlot. The Targum is, "from the wife of thy covenant keep the words of "thy mouth;" divulge not the thoughts of thine heart, or disclose the secrets of it to one so near; take care of speaking treason against the prince, or ill of a neighbour; it may be got out of such an one, and who may be so base as to betray it; or utter not any thing whatever that is secret, the divulging of which may be detrimental; for, in such an age as this was, one in so near a relation might be wicked enough to discover it; see Eccl. x. 20.

Ver. 6. *For the son dishonoureth the father,* &c.] Speaks contemptibly of him; behaves rudely towards him; shews him no respect and reverence; exposes his failings, and makes him the object of his banter and ridicule; who ought to have honoured, reverenced, and obeyed him, being the instrument of his being, by whom he was brought up, fed, clothed, and provided for; base ingratitude! *the daughter riseth up against her mother;* by whom she has been used in the most tender and affectionate manner; this being still more unnatural, if possible, as being done by the female sex, usually more soft and pliable; but here, losing her natural affection, and forgetting both her relation and sex, replies to her mother, giving ill language; opposes and disobeys her, chides, wrangles, and scolds, and strives and litigates with her, as the Targum: or rises up as a witness against her, to her detriment, if not to the taking away of her life: *the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law:* this is not so much to be wondered at as the former instances, which serve to encourage and embolden those that are in such a relation to speak pertly and saucily; to reproach and make light of mothers-in-law, as the Targum; or slight and abuse them: *a man's enemies are the men of his own house;* his sons and his servants, who should honour his person, defend his property, and promote his interest; but, instead of that, do every thing that is injurious to him. These words are referred to by Christ, and used by him to describe the times in which he lived, Matt. x. 35, 36. and the prophet may be thought to have an eye to the same, whilst he is setting forth the badness of his own times; and the Jews seem to think he had a regard to them, since they say [r], that, when the Messiah comes, *the son shall dishonour his father,* &c.; plainly having this passage in view; and the whole agrees with the times of Christ, in which there were few good men; it was a wicked age, an adulterous generation of men, he lived among; great corruption there was in princes, priests, and people; in the civil and ecclesiastical rulers, and in all ranks and degrees of men; and he that ate bread with Christ, even Judas, lifted up his heel against him. The times in which Micah the prophet here speaks of seem to be the times of Ahaz, who was a wicked prince; and the former part of Hezekiah's reign, before a reformation was set on foot, or at least brought about, in whose reigns he prophesied; though some have thought he here predicts the sad times in the reign of Manasseh, which is not so probable.

Ver. 7. *Therefore I will look unto the Lord,* &c.] Here the prophet, in the name of the church and people of God, declares what he would do in such circumstances, since there was no dependence on men of any rank, in any relation or connexion with each other; he resolved to look alone to the Lord, and put his trust in him; look up to the Lord in prayer, use an humble freedom with him, place a holy confidence in him, expect all good things from him, and wait for them; look to Christ in the exercise of faith, which is, in New-Testament language, a looking to Jesus; and the Targum interprets this clause of the Word of the Lord, the essential Word, who is to be looked unto, and believed in, as the Son of God, who is the true God, and eternal life; as the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world; as the Mediator between God and men; as in all his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King; as the Lord our righteousness, and as the only Saviour and Redeemer of men; and that for all things; when in darkness, for light; when weak, for strength; when sick, for healing; when hungry, for food; when disconsolate, for comfort; in short, for all supplies of grace here, and for eternal glory and happiness hereafter; and though he is in heaven, and not to be seen with our bodily eyes, yet he is held forth in the word of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; and is to be seen there with an eye of faith: *I will wait for the God of my salvation;* who is the author both of temporal, and of spiritual, and eternal salvation; for the light of his countenance, when he hides himself; for the performance of promises he has made; for answers of prayer put up to him; for discoveries

[r] Misn. Sotah, c. 9. sect. 15.

of pardoning grace, having sinned against him; for help and assistance in all times of need; for the salvation of the Lord, for an application of it, for the joys and comforts of it; and for Christ the Saviour, his coming in the flesh, which all the prophets and Old-Testament saints were looking and waiting for: and who, doubtless, was upon the mind and in the view of the prophet when he uttered these words, *my God will hear me:* this is the language of faith, both to say that God was his God, and that he would hear and answer him; the former is the ground of the latter; God has an ear to hear when his people cry; and sooner or later it appears that he does hear, by giving an answer of peace unto them, which issues in their salvation they have been praying, looking, and waiting for. The Targum is, "my God will receive my "prayer."

Ver. 8. *Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy,* &c.] These are the words of the prophet in the name of the church, continued in an apostrophe or address to his and their enemy; by whom may be meant, literally, the Chaldeans or Edomites, or both, who rejoiced at the destruction of Jerusalem, and the calamities the people of the Jews were brought into at it; see Psal. cxxxvii. 7, 8. Obad. ver. 12. spiritually, Satan the great enemy of mankind, and especially of the church and people of God, to whom it is a pleasure to draw them into any sin or snare, and to do them any hurt and mischief; and also the men of the world, who hate and persecute the saints; and watch for their haltings, and rejoice at their falls into sin, and at any calamity and affliction that may attend them, though there is no just reason for it; since this will not always be the case of the saints, they will be in a better situation, and in more comfortable circumstances; and it will be the turn of their enemies to be afflicted, punished, and tormented: *when I fall, I shall arise;* or, *though I fall*[a], or *have fallen;* into outward afflictions and distresses, which come not by chance, but by divine appointment; or into the temptations of Satan, and by them, which sometimes is suffered for wise ends and purposes; or into sin, which even a good man, a truly righteous man, is frequently left unto; but then he does not fall from real goodness, from true grace, nor from his justifying righteousness, which is everlasting, and connected with eternal life: he may fall from a lively exercise of grace, from steadfastness in the faith, and a profession of it; but not from the principle of grace, nor a state of grace; or from the love and favour of God: he may fall, but not totally or finally, or so as to perish everlastingly; nor is he utterly cast down, the Lord upholds him, and raises him up again; he rises, as the church here believes she should, out of his present state and condition, into a more comfortable one; not in his own strength, but in the strength of the Lord, under a sense of sin, by the exercise of true repentance for it, and by faith in Christ, and in a view of pardoning grace and mercy; see Psal. xxxvii. 24. Prov. xxiv. 16: *when I sit in darkness;* or *though*[a]. The Targum is, "as it were in darkness;" not in a state of unregeneracy, which is a state of total darkness, but in affliction and distress; for, as light often signifies prosperity, so darkness adversity, any afflictive dispensation of Providence; and especially when this is attended with desertion, or the hidings of God's face; it is to be, not without any light of grace in the heart, or without the light of the word, or means of grace; but to be without the light of God's countenance; which is very uncomfortable, and makes dark providences darker still; see Isa. l. 10. yet, notwithstanding all this, *the Lord* shall be *a light unto me;* by delivering out of affliction; by lifting up the light of his countenance; by causing Christ the sun of righteousness to arise; by sending his Spirit to illuminate, refresh, and comfort; by his word, which is a lamp to the feet, a light to the path, a light shining in a dark place; see Psal. xxvii. 1. and cxii. 4. This passage is applied by the Jews[b] to the days of the Messiah.

Ver. 9. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord,* &c.] The Targum prefaces these words with "Jerusalem "saith;" and they are the words of the prophet, in the name of Jerusalem or the church, resolving in the strength of divine grace to bear the present affliction, which had at least some appearance of divine indignation in it; not against the persons of God's people, who are always the objects of his love, and towards whom there is no fury in him; but against their sins, which are displeasing and abominable to him; and this is not in a vindictive way, for such indignation they could never bear; nor can any creature stand before it, or bear up under it; and, besides, Christ has bore the wrath and indignation of God in this sense for them; but it here means the displicency and indignation of God in fatherly chastisements, consistent with the strongest love and affection for them; and to bear this is to be humble under the mighty hand of God, quietly to submit to it, and patiently to endure the affliction, without murmuring and repining, till the Lord pleases to remove it. The reason follows, *because I have sinned against him;* the best of men sin; sin is the cause and reason of all affliction and distress, whether temporal or spiritual. The consideration of this tends to make and keep good men humble, and quietly submit to the chastising rod of their heavenly Father, which they see it is right and proper should be used; and as knowing that they are chastised and afflicted less than their iniquities deserve; and that it is all for their good; a sense of sin stops their mouths, that they have nothing to say against God. The word חטאת here used sometimes signifies the offering an expiatory sacrifice for sin to God; and Gussetius[c] thinks this is the meaning of it here; and observes, that with the oblation of a contrite heart, and works of charity, the satisfaction of Christ is to be pleaded, and in our way to be offered up to God the Judge, through faith flying to it; whereby the mind is disposed to bear correction patiently, in hope that favour will quickly shine forth in help and deliverance: *until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me;* Christ the mighty Redeemer, and powerful and prevalent Mediator, not only pleads the cause of his people with God his Father, and obtains all blessings of grace for them; but he also

[a] כי נפלתי quamvis cecidi, Drusius, Burkius.
[a] כי אשב quamvis sedero, Drusius; quamvis sedeam, Burkius.

[b] Debarim Rabba, parash. 11. fol. 245. 2.
[c] Ebr. Comment. p. 922.

pleads their cause against their enemies, an ungodly people that strive with them, persecute and distress them; and will in his own time do them justice, and execute vengeance, his righteous judgments, on those that hate them, and rise up against them, as he will on all the antichristian party: *he will bring me forth to the light*: like a person taken out of prison, or out of a dungeon, to behold and enjoy the light of the sun and day. The sense is, that he will openly espouse the cause of his church, and give her honour and glory publicly before men; bring forth her righteousness as the light, and her judgment as the noon-day; and make her innocence appear as clear as the day, and bring her at last to the light of glory; see Psal. xxxvii. 6. Isa. lviii. 8, 10: and *I shall behold his righteousness*; the equity of his proceedings with his people, in chastising and afflicting them, that they are all right and good; his justice in punishing their enemies, and executing judgment on them; his goodness and beneficence to the saints, all his ways being mercy and truth; his faithfulness in the fulfilment of his promises; and the righteousness of Christ, which justifies them before God, renders them acceptable to him, will answer for them in a time to come, and introduce them into his everlasting kingdom and glory.

Ver. 10. *Then she that is mine enemy shall see it*, &c.] The Chaldeans and Edomites shall see the people of the Jews rising out of their calamities, brought out of the darkness of their captivity in Babylon, and enjoying the light of peace and prosperity in their own land. Some editions of the Targum, and Jarchi and Kimchi, have, in their glosses on this and the preceding verse, Rome, of whom they interpret this enemy, as Mr. Pocock observes; and so R. Elias[d] says the Targum is, *then shall Rome see*; by which they mean the Christians, in opposition to the Jews; otherwise it would not be amiss to interpret it of Rome Papal, or antichrist, in opposition to the church of God; seeing the antichristian party will see the witnesses of Christ, slain for his sake, rise again, and ascend to heaven, or be brought into a glorious and comfortable state; see Rev. xi. 12. and may be applied to any age of the church, and to any particular saints raised out of a state of darkness and affliction into a prosperous one, in the sight of their enemies, and in spite of them, to their great mortification; see Psal. xxiii. 4, 5, 6: *and shame shall cover her which said unto me, where is the Lord thy God?* as the Heathens, the Chaldeans, did to the Jews, Psal. cxv. 2. and which must be very cutting to them, as it was to David, Psal. xlii. 10. when they flouting and jeering said, where is thy God thou boastedst of, and didst put thy trust and confidence in, that he would deliver and save thee? what's become of him, and of thy confidence in him? The Targum is, "where art thou that art re-"deemed by the Word of the Lord thy God?" but when they shall see that the Lord God has returned unto them, and wrought salvation for them, they'll be ashamed of their flouts and jeers; and by reason of their sad disappointment, and the change of things for the worse to them, who now will be brought into calamity and distress themselves: *mine eyes shall behold her*: the enemy; their fall, as the Targum; being in a most despicable and ruinous condition, under the vengeance of the Almighty; and that with pleasure and satisfaction, not from a private spirit of revenge, but because of the glory of divine justice, which will be displayed in their righteous destruction; see Psal. lviii. 10: *now shall she be trodden down as the mire of the streets*: that is, entirely conquered, and utterly destroyed; reduced to the utmost meanness, and had in the greatest contempt: this was fulfilled when Babylon was taken by the Medes and Persians; and when the Edomites were conquered and brought into subjection to the Jews by the Maccabees; and will be the case of all the enemies of Christ and his church, of all the antichristian states, one day.

Ver. 11. In *the day that thy walls are to be built*, &c.] These words are not spoken to the enemy, as some think; either the Chaldeans, the walls of whose city, Babylon, being demolished by the Persians, it would be a long day or time ere they were rebuilt; and when their power of sending their decrees abroad among the nations would be far off: or to the enemy that should think to build up their walls with the spoils of Israel, in the time of Gog and Magog, and when their decree determined over the nations and Israel would also be far off; but they are the words of the prophet to the church and people of God, comforting them with observing, that there would be a day when the walls of Jerusalem, and the temple, which would lie in ruins during their captivity, would be rebuilt; and which was fulfilled in the times of Zorobabel and Nehemiah; and so the Targum, "at "that time the congregation of Israel shall be built;" and which had a further accomplishment, in a spiritual sense, in the first times of the Gospel, when the church of Christ was built up, and established in the world; and will still have a greater completion in the latter day, when the tabernacle of David, or church of Christ, shall be raised that is fallen, and its breaches closed, and ruins repaired, Amos ix. 11: in *that day shall the decree be far removed*: which, as it literally respects Jerusalem, and the rebuilding of that after seventy years captivity, may signify either the decree of God concerning that captivity, which would then cease, according to the time fixed by it; or the cruel laws and edicts of the Babylonians, which should no more bind and press the Jews, and be as a heavy yoke upon them; those statutes, which were not good, that were given them. So the Targum, "at that time the de-"crees of the nations shall cease;" or the decree of Artaxerxes, forbidding and hindering the rebuilding of the city: but if the phrase *far removed* signifies its being divulged and spread far abroad, as it is interpreted by some; then it may refer to the decree of Cyrus for rebuilding the city and temple; and which was revived and confirmed by Darius Hystaspis, and by Darius Longimanus, and which was published everywhere; and by means of which the Jews from all parts were encouraged to come up to their own land, and proselytes with them; and which sense suits well with what follows: and as this, in a spiritual sense, may have regard to the church of Christ in

[d] In Tishbi, p. 227.

Gospel times, it may signify the removal of human laws, traditions, rites, and ceremonies, respecting religious things, among the Gentiles, and their giving way to those of God and Christ; or the promulgation of the Gospel in all parts, called a decree, Psal. ii. 6. because a revelation of the decrees of God, respecting the salvation of men, and to which it owes its efficacy; by means of which many would be brought to the church, and the kingdom of Christ be enlarged, and spread everywhere, as follows:

Ver. 12. In *that day also he shall come even to thee, &c.*] Which words also are not directed to the enemy, as some interpret them; as to Chaldea or Babylon; and the sense be, that Cyrus should come thither, and take it; or any more remote enemy of the Jews in the latter day, to whom the day of the Lord should come, or his decree of vengeance or judgment upon them, or any enemy to waste and destroy them; but they are a continued address to Jerusalem or the church, signifying that *he*, the people of the Jews, the body of them, with the proselyted Gentiles, should come from all parts to Jerusalem to rebuild it upon the decree of Cyrus; and that multitudes of all, or at least many nations, should flock to the church of Christ, upon the publication of the Gospel: *from Assyria:* where many of the Jews, and even of the ten tribes, were, whither they were carried captive: *and* from *the fortified cities;* in Assyria, and other countries, where the Jews might be placed, either as prisoners, or to do servile work, as repairing the fortifications; or for the defence of the country, from which they were to be and were released upon Cyrus taking of Babylon; and was a type of the redemption by Christ from greater bondage. It may be rendered the cities of Egypt, as Kimchi observes, here and in 2 Kings xix. 24. Isa xix. 6. and so Ben Melech: it is interpreted by some Matzor, being the same with Mitzraim, which is the name for Egypt; and the sense would be more easy, as well as the words run more smoothly, thus, *shall come from Assyria even to the cities of Egypt:* and then it follows, *and* from *the fortress even to the river:* or from Egypt to the river Euphrates, which was one of the boundaries of the land of Israel: *and from sea to sea;* from the Persian sea to the Mediterranean sea, or from the Red sea thither, and from the several maritime parts where they inhabited: *and* from *mountain to mountain:* from Mount Taurus to Carmel, or Lebanon, or Hor; or from the several mountains to which they had fled for safety, and where they had dwelt. It may respect the extent of the church and kingdom of Christ in the latter day, enlarged by the numerous conversions of Jews and Gentiles in all parts of the world. The Jews shall be gathered from all places where they are, and join themselves to the church of Christ; and these several places, particularly Assyria, Egypt, and the islands of the sea, from whence they shall be brought, are mentioned in other prophecies; see Isa. xi. 11. Zech. x. 9, 10, 11. though this may respect, not barely the conversion and gathering of them to Christ and his church, but of the Gentiles also in those several countries, thus; they *shall come from Assyria, and the fortified cities;* that is, from the Turkish empire; the land of Assyria, and its fortified cities, being in the possession of the Turks, and in whose dominions many Jews at this day reside; and not only they, but multitudes in the Ottoman empire, shall be converted in the latter day, and become members of Christian churches; signified by the flocks of Kedar, and the rams of Nebaioth, that shall be gathered to the church, and minister there, Isa. lx. 7. and they shall come *from the fortress even to the river;* from every one of the fortified cities before mentioned to the river Euphrates, which will be dried up to make way for the kings or kingdoms of the east, for their conversion to Christ, and embracing his Gospel; even the large kingdoms of Persia, Tartary, China, *&c.* Rev. xvi. 12. or *from Egypt to the river Euphrates;* and so signifies the same as before, Egypt being part of the Turkish dominions; or else the Roman jurisdiction, spiritually called Egypt, may be meant, Rev. xi. 8. and in several Popish countries are many Jews, who will be called from thence; as well as many of the Papists themselves shall be called out of mystical Babylon, and embrace the true religion of Christ: *and from sea to sea;* this is a well-known description of the amplitude of Christ's church and kingdom in Gospel times, especially in the latter day; see Psal. lxxii. 8. Zech. ix. 10. or, as it may be rendered, *the sea from the sea*[e]; that is, the inhabitants of the sea, or of the islands of it, shall come from thence to the church, see Isa. xi. 11. these are the same with the abundance of the sea, that shall be converted to Christ, and join his people in the latter day, as in our isle and others, Isa. lx. 5: *and from mountain to mountain;* or rather, *and mountain* shall come *to the mountain*[f]; that is, the inhabitants of the mountain, or of Rome, that is situated on seven mountains, of mystical Babylon, the great mountain; these shall be called from hence to Mount Zion, the church of the living God, where Christ with the 144,000 will be; and which shall then be established on the top of the mountains, and all nations shall flow unto it, Rev. xiv. 1. Isa. ii. 2, 3. The Targum is, "at that time "the captives shall be gathered from Assyria, and "the strong cities, and from Churmini (or Armenia), "the great and the fortified cities, even unto Euphrates, and the western sea, and the mountains of "the mountain."

Ver. 13. *Notwithstanding the land shall be desolate, &c.*] Not the land of Chaldea, as some; or the land of the nations, as Jarchi and Kimchi; but the land of Israel. That part of it, which was possessed by the ten tribes, was made desolate by Salmaneser king of Assyria; and that which was inhabited by the two tribes, by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and this desolation was to be, *notwithstanding* the above prophecies, and prior to the fulfilment of them. So some render the words, as in the margin of our Bibles, *after the land hath been desolate*[g]; and it is observed, partly to prevent wicked men promising themselves impunity from the above prophecies; and partly to prevent despair in good men, when such a desolation should be made. And then again it was made desolate by the Romans,

[e] וים מים & mare a mari, Montanus, Burkius.
[f] והר ההר & mons veniet ad montem, Cocceius, Burkius.

[g] והיתה הארץ לשממה postquam fuerit hæc terra desolationi, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius, Drusius.

previous to the spread and establishment of the church of Christ, by the success of the Gospel in the Gentile world, in the first times of it; and by the conversion of the Jews, and bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles, in the last times of it. *Because of them that dwell therein, for the fruit of their doings*; because of the sins of the inhabitants of the land of Israel: the desolation made by the kings of Assyria and Babylon was for the idolatry of Israel and Judah, and other sins; and the desolation made by the Romans for the Jews' rejection of the Messiah.

Ver. 14. *Feed thy people with thy rod*, &c.] These are either the words of God the Father to Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, calling upon him to do his office as such; to feed the people he had given him, the sheep of his hand, the flock of his pasture, by his Spirit, and with his word and ordinances; see Zech. xi. 5. or of Christ to his ministers, his under-shepherds, to feed his sheep and his lambs, the people committed to their care and charge, with wholesome words, with sound and good doctrine, by faithfully preaching the Gospel, and administering the ordinances to them: or rather the words of the prophet, a prayer of his to God or Christ, to take care of the people of God in their desolate state, in captivity; to guide and lead them, protect and defend them, by his power and providence, as a shepherd directs, leads, governs, and preserves his flock with his pastoral crook or rod; or, as before, to feed the church of God as a shepherd does his flock, lead them into good pastures, and secure them from all their enemies: and this, being a prayer of faith, may be considered as a prophecy or prediction of what would be; and so some render the words, *thou shalt feed thy people*, &c.[h]. The Targum is, " feed thy people with thy word, the " people of thine inheritance, in the age which is to " be renewed;" in the new world, the world to come; plainly referring to the times of the Messiah. *The flock of thine heritage*; who are like to sheep for their harmlessness and innocence, and to a flock of them, being associated together, and folded in the church; and though but a little flock, yet the lot, the portion, the inheritance of Christ; all which is a strong reason for his feeding, keeping, and preserving them, being committed to his care and charge for that purpose: *which dwell solitary in the wood*; dwell alone in the world, which is like a wood and a wilderness; separated from the men of the world; distinguished by the grace of God, chosen and called out from among them, and different from them both in principle and practice: this may have respect to the Jews, in their dispersion, living separate from and unmixed with the nations of the world; or rather to their dwelling in safety and security under the protection of the great Shepherd, the Messiah, David their Prince, when they shall be returned to their own land in the latter day: *in the midst of Carmel*; or of a fruitful field, as Carmel was; enjoying all happiness and prosperity, temporal and spiritual: *let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old*; places in the land of Israel famous for rich and fat pastures; and so express the great plenty of good things wished for, and which will be enjoyed by the Jews when converted to Christ, and replaced in their own land; and are an emblem of those spiritual good things, and of those rich and green pastures of the word and ordinances, which the great Shepherd is desired to lead, and does lead, his people into; see Psal. xxiii. 1, 2. Ezek. xxxiv. 14. these places are now in the hand of the Turks, and so the words may be a petition for their conversion, as well as for the Jews, that this country may no more be inhabited by Heathens, but by the Israel of God, as Gulichius[i] very well observes.

Ver. 15. *According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt*, &c.] This is an answer of the Lord to the prayer of the prophet, assuring him, and the church he personates, and on whose account he applies, that there would be as great a deliverance wrought for them, and as wonderful things done, as when Israel was brought out of the land of Egypt, which was effected with a mighty hand, and an outstretched arm, and was attended with amazing events; as the plagues in Egypt; the passage of the Israelites through the Red sea, and the destruction of the Epyptians in it: *will I shew unto him marvellous things*; that is, unto the people of the Lord, the flock of his heritage, the solitary and peculiar people, fed and preserved by him: as the deliverance out of Egypt was the Lord's work, so the deliverance from Babylon; as the one was the work of his power upon the heart of Pharaoh to let the people go, so the other as great an act of his power working upon the mind of Cyrus, stirring him up to let the captives go free, without price or reward; yea, to furnish them with necessaries by the way, and to rebuild their city and temple: and as Pharaoh and his host were drowned in the Red sea, so the kingdom of Babylon was swallowed up by the Medes and Persians; yea, in some respects the latter deliverance exceeded the former, and erased the remembrance of it; see Jer. xvi. 14, 15. and that redemption by Christ, which both these were typical of, was greater and more marvellous than either, being a deliverance from, and an abolition and destruction of sin, Satan, the law, hell, and death, and attended with things the most wonderful and surprising; as the birth of Christ of a virgin; the miracles done by him in life, and at death; the doctrines of the Gospel preached by him and his apostles, and the amazing success of them, especially in the Gentile world, being testified and confirmed by signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost. This passage, both by ancient and modern Jews[k], is applied to the times of the Messiah. So in an ancient[l] book of theirs, speaking of the times of the Messiah, they say, " from " that day all the signs and wonders, and mighty " works, which the Lord did in Egypt, he will do " for Israel, as it is said, *according to the days of thy* " *coming out of the land of Egypt*, &c." It is also said, by a modern writer[m] of theirs, " because of the " miracles and wonders which shall be in the days of

[h] רעה pasce, so some in Vatablus.
[i] Apud Burkium in loc.
[k] Zohar in Gen. fol. 16. 1. 2. & in Exod. fol. 4. 2. & in Deut. 99. 2. & 118. 3. Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. c. 32. p. 277.
[l] Zohar in Exod. fol. 4. 2. Vid. ib. in Gen. fol. 16. 1. 2. & in Numb. fol. 99. 2. & in Deut. 118. 3.
[m] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. c. 32. p. 277.

"the Messiah, such as the gathering of the captives, "the resurrection of the dead, and the destruction of "Gog and Magog, besides other miracles and wonders, the end of the redemption is called the end of "wonders in Dan. xii. 6. and this is that which God "has promised by his prophets, particularly Micah, "ch. vii. 15. *according to the days*, &c.; and from what "follows, with the rest of the verses to the end of the "book, it is manifest that these promises are not "yet fulfilled, but will be fulfilled in the days of the "Messiah." From whence it appears, that it was the sense of the ancient Jews, as well as some modern ones, that miracles would be wrought in the days of the Messiah; though some of them reject them, and look not for them; particularly Maimonides[n] says, "let it not enter into thine heart that the King Messiah hath need to do signs and wonders; as that "he shall renew things in the world, or raise the "dead, and the like; these are things which fools "speak of; the thing is not so." But however, certain it is, the ancient Jews expected miracles to be done by the Messiah; hence some, in the times of Jesus, said, *when Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?* John vii. 31. and accordingly the miracles Jesus did were full proofs of his being the Messiah, and were wrought for that purpose, and owned as such; wherefore the above Jew, though he is right in the application of this passage to the times of the Messiah, yet is wrong in saying these promises are not yet fulfilled, since they have had a full accomplishment in the Messiah Jesus; nor is another to be looked for, or such miracles to be hereafter wrought.

Ver. 16. *The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might*, &c.] The Chaldeans or Babylonians, when they shall see the wonderful things done by the Lord in the deliverance of his people out of their hands, shall be ashamed of their own power and might, in which they trusted, and of which they boasted; but now shall be baffled and defeated, and not able to stop the progress of the arms of Cyrus, or detain the Jews any longer their captives; or they shall be confounded at the power and strength the Jews will have to repossess their land, rebuild their city and temple, under the encouragement and protection of the king of Persia; and as this may refer to a further accomplishment in Gospel times, it may respect the confusion the Gentile world would be in at the mighty power and spread of the Gospel, in the conversion of such multitudes by it, and in the abolition of the Pagan religion. Kimchi interprets this of the nations that shall be gathered together with Gog and Magog against Jerusalem in the latter day; see Ezek. xxxviii. 15, 16, 23, and xxxix. 21. *They shall lay their hand upon their mouth*: be silent, and boast no more of themselves; nor blaspheme God and his word; nor insult his people; nor contradict his Gospel, or open their mouths any more against his truths and his ordinances: *their ears shall be deaf*, hearing so much of the praises of God, of the success of his interest, and of the happiness of his people dinned in their ears, they will be stunned with it, and scarce know what they hear; become deaf with the continual noise of it, which will be disagreeable to them; and will choose to hear no more, and therefore through envy and grief will stop their ears at what is told them.

Ver. 17. *They shall lick the dust like a serpent*, &c.] Whose food is the dust of the earth, according to the curse pronounced on it, Gen. iii. 14. and which is either its natural food it chooses to live on, as some serpents however are said[o] to do; or, going upon its belly, it cannot but take in a good deal of the dust of the earth along with its food; and hereby is signified the low, mean, abject, and cursed estate and condition of the seed of the serpent, wicked and ungodly men, the enemies of Christ and his people; who will be forced to yield subjection to him and his church, and will pretend the most profound respect for them, and the highest veneration of them. The allusion seems to be to the manner of the eastern nations, who, in complimenting their kings and great men, bowed so low to the ground with their faces, as to take up with their mouths the very dust of it. Particularly it is said of the Persians, that they first kiss the pavement on which the king treads, before they speak unto him, as Quistorpius on the place relates; and Valerius Maximus[p] says, that when Darius Hystaspis was declared king by the neighing of his horse, the rest of the six candidates alighted from their horses, and prostrated their bodies to the ground, as is the manner of the Persians, and saluted him king; and Herodotus[q] observes the same custom among the Persians; and to this custom the poet Martial[r] refers; and Drusius says it is a custom in Asia to this day, that, when any go into the presence of a king, they kiss the ground, which is a token of the great veneration they have for him. The phrase is used of the enemies of the Messiah, and of the converted Jews and Gentiles at the latter day, and is expressive of their great submission to them; see Psal. lxxii. 9. Isa. xlix. 23. *They shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth*; who put out their heads and draw them in again upon the least notice or approach of danger; or like serpents, as Jarchi and Kimchi, which lurk in holes, and creep out of them on their bellies, or any other creeping things. The word[s] here used signifies a tremulous and tumultuous motion, like the wriggling of a worm out of the earth; or the hurry of ants, when their nests are kicked or thrown up: this is expressive of the confusion and perturbation of the enemies of the Lord and his people: of the Babylonians, who were obliged in a hurry to leave their palaces, as the Targum and Aben Ezra interpret their holes, and their fortresses and towers, and deliver them to the Medes and Persians; and of Gog and Magog, and the antichristian states, who will be obliged to abandon their places of abode, and creep out of sight, and be reduced to the lowest and meanest condition. *They shall be afraid of the Lord our God*; because of the glory of his majesty, the greatness of his

[n] Hilchot Melachim, c. 11. sect. 3.
[o] Vid. Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 1. c. 4. col. 27.
[p] L. 7. c. 2. sect. 2.
[q] Polymnia, sive l. 7. c. 13.

[r] Et turpes humilesque, supplicesque,
Pictorum sola basiate regum. Epigram. l. 10. Ep. 71.

[s] ירגזו contremiscent, Munster, Tigurine version, Cocceius; fremunt, sive tumultuabuntur, Calvin; trepide procedent, Burkius.

power, and for fear of his judgments: *and shall fear because of thee:* O God, or Israel, as Kimchi; the church of God, whom they despised and reproached before; but now shall be seized with a panic, and live in the utmost dread of, because of the power and glory of God in the midst of them, and lest they should fall a sacrifice to them.

Ver. 18. *Who is a God like unto thee,* &c.] There is no God besides him, none so great, so mighty, as he: none like him for the perfections of his nature; for the works of his hands; for the blessings of his goodness, both of providence and grace; and particularly for his pardoning grace and mercy, as follows: *that pardoneth iniquity:* that *lifts* it up, and *takes* it away, as the word [t] signifies; thus the Lord has taken the sins of his people off of them, and laid them on Christ, and he has bore them, and carried them away, as the antitype of the scape-goat, never to be seen and remembered any more; and whereas the guilt of sin lies sometimes as a heavy burden upon their consciences, he lifts it up, and takes it away, by sprinkling the blood of Christ upon them, and by applying his pardoning grace and mercy to them: pardon of sin is peculiar to God; none can forgive it but he against whom it is committed; forgiveness of sin is with him, promised by him in covenant, proclaimed in Christ, by him obtained and published in the Gospel: *and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?* the people of God are his portion, his lot, and his inheritance; they are a remnant according to the election of grace, chosen of God, taken into his covenant, redeemed by Christ, and called by grace, and brought to repent and believe; these God forgives, even all their transgressions, sins, and iniquities of every kind: which is here expressed by another word, *passing* them *by,* or *passing over* them: sin is a transgression or passing over the law, and pardon is a passing over sin; God taking no notice of it, as if he saw it not; not imputing it to his people, or calling them to an account for it; or condemning and punishing them according to the desert of it; but hiding his face from it, and covering it: *he retaineth not his anger for ever;* that which he seemed to have against his people, and appeared in some of the dispensations of his providence, is not continued and lengthened out, and especially for ever, but it disappears; he changes the course of his providence, and his conduct and behaviour to his people, and shews them his face and favour, and manifests his forgiving love; which is a turning himself from his anger; see Psal. lxxxv. 2, 3. Isa. xii. 1: *because he delighteth in mercy:* which is natural to him, abundant with him, and exercised according to his sovereign will and pleasure, very delightful to him; he takes pleasure in shewing mercy to miserable creatures, and in those that hope in it, Psal. cxlvii. 11. this is the spring of pardon, which streams through the blood of Christ.

Ver. 19. *He will turn again,* &c.] From his anger, and shew his face and favour; which is not inconsistent with his everlasting and unchangeable love; for anger is not opposite to love, and is only a displicency at sin, and not at the persons of his people; and, properly speaking, is not in God; is rather in appearance than in reality; when his people sin against him, he shews himself as if he was angry; he turns away from them, and withdraws his gracious presence and sensible communion from them; but when they are brought to a sense of sin, and acknowledgment of it, he returns to them, manifests his love to them again, and applies his pardoning grace, which is the thing believed would be done; it is only another expression of that, as all the rest that follow are: the prophet, or the church, dwells on this article of grace, and heaps up words to express it by, as if they could never say too much of it, or sufficiently explain it. The Targum is, "his "word shall return." *He will have compassion upon us;* the Lord is naturally compassionate; he is full of compassion, he has bowels of compassion; these are tender mercies, and never fail, and which are exercised in a sovereign way: pardon of sin flows from hence; every manifestation of it is a display thereof: sin brings afflictions on the saints, and then the Lord pities them, and is afflicted with them: sin grieves them, and he is as it were grieved for them; it wounds them, and then, as the good and compassionate Samaritan, he pours in the oil and wine of pardoning grace, and heals them; they are, whilst in this state, in such circumstances often as need his compassion, and they may be assured of it, Psal. lxxviii. 38. *He will subdue our iniquities;* which may be understood also as a further explanation of the grace of pardon: sin is an enemy to God and his people; it is too strong and mighty for them; it reigns over them in a state of nature; they are under the power of it, and can't get rid of it, its influence, guilt, and punishment; Christ has conquered it, made an end of it, and took it away; God tramples upon it, as a conqueror does upon the necks of his enemies; it is subdued by him, and is under his feet; which he treats with contempt, disdains to look upon, keeps it under, so that it shall never rise again to the condemnation of his people; he overcomes the provocation of it, removes the guilt by pardon, and secures from the punishment of it: or this may be considered as the effect of pardon; as what is done in consequence of it, by the spirit and grace of God in sanctification; when not only the deeds of the body are mortified through the spirit, or the outward conversation reformed, but the inward power of sin is weakened; it is laid under the restraints of efficacious grace, and is kept under by it; so that it shall not and cannot have the dominion over the saints again, of which they may be confident, Rom. vi. 14. *And thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea;* never to be seen any more; though they are seen with the eye of omniscience, and taken notice of by the eye of providence, yet not beheld with the eye of avenging justice, that being satisfied by Christ; besides, all the sins of God's people have been removed from them to Christ, and by him carried away into the land of oblivion; so that they are no more to be seen on them, who are through his blood and righteousness without fault, spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; and, being out of sight, they are out of mind, never remembered any more, and like things cast into the sea, destroyed and lost: perhaps there may be some allusion to the Egyptians drowned in the

[t] נשא tollens, Montanus, Tigurine version, Calvin; auferens, Drusius; qui aufers, Grotius.

Red sea; and what is cast into the sea, especially into the depths of it, is irrecoverable, not to be fetched up again, nor does it rise more; and so it is with the sins of God's people, forgiven for Christ's sake, even *all* of them; for they have all been bore by Christ, and are covered, blotted out, and pardoned, not one remains unforgiven; see Isa. xxxviii. 17. This is an apostrophe of the prophet unto God. The Targum is, "and he "will cast into the depths of the sea all the sins of "Israel;" and it may denote their being loathsome and abominable to him, and therefore here cast by him. It is very common in Jewish writings to say of any thing that is useless, abominable, accursed, and utterly rejected, that it is to be cast into the salt sea. For instance, "Aquila the proselyte divided an inheritance "with his brother (a Gentile), and he cast the profit "of it into the salt sea: three doctors there were; one "said, the price of the idol he cast into the salt sea; "another said, he cast the price of his part of the idol "into the salt sea; and the other said, he cast the idol "itself into the salt sea[a]." Again it is said[w], "a sin-"offering, whose owner is dead, goes into the salt "sea." The Heathens used sea-water for the purgation and expiation of sin; hence the poet[x], to aggravate the wickedness of a very wicked man, observes, that the ocean itself could not wash away his sins. And Cicero[y], speaking of the law of the Romans for the punishment of parricides, which ordered that they should be sewed up alive in sacks, and cast into the river, observes the wisdom and propriety of it; they would not, says he, have them cast naked into the river, lest, when they should be carried into the sea, they should pollute that by which other things that are defiled are thought to be expiated. So Iphigenia is made to say[z] that the sea washes away all the sins of men. These are the Jewish and Heathenish notions; whether there is any allusion to them may be considered; however, certain it is, that nothing short of the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, or the sea of Christ's blood, can wash away sin; that cleanses from all sin; and happy are they whose sins are cast in thither, or are expiated and purged away thereby!

Ver. 20. *Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob,* &c.] That is, the promise made to Jacob, the Lord would faithfully perform and make good to his posterity, natural and spiritual, especially to those who are Israelites indeed; and *the mercy to Abraham;* the gracious promises made to him, which sprung from mere grace and mercy; all respecting his natural and spiritual seed; and especially the promise of the coming of the Messiah, that seed of his in which all nations of the earth were to be blessed; and which is the eminent instance of the mercy and grace of God to Jews and Gentiles, that walk in the steps of Abraham; see Luke i. 68, 72, 73: *which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old:* or the promises both of multiplying the seed of Abraham, and of giving them the land of Canaan, and of the Messiah springing from them, were confirmed by an oath, Gen. xxii. 16, 17, 18. The Targum is, "thou wilt give the truth of Jacob to "his sons, as thou hast sworn to him in Beth-el; the "goodness of Abraham to his seed after him, as thou "hast sworn to him between the pieces; thou wilt "remember to us the binding of Isaac, who was bound "upon the altar before thee; thou wilt do with us the "good things which thou hast sworn to our fathers, "from the days of old;" which Kimchi interprets of the three fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

N A H U M.

THIS book is called, in the Vulgate Latin version, *the Prophecy of Nahum;* and in the Syriac and Arabic versions, *the Prophecy of the Prophet Nahum:* and in ch. i. 1, it is called *the Book of the Vision of Nahum*: which is very singular; and from whence we learn of what place this prophet was; but of this more will be said on that verse. His name signifies *consolation*: and though the subject of his prophecy chiefly relates to the destruction of the Assyrian empire, and of Nineveh, the chief city of it; yet this was a comfort to the people of the Jews, that an enemy so powerful, and who was so troublesome to them, and whom they dreaded, should one day be destroyed. In what age Nahum lived is not said; and writers very much disagree about it. Some make him to be the most ancient of all the prophets; who suppose him to prophesy of the destruction of Nineveh, before the reigns of Joash king of Judah, and Jehu king of Israel, as Huetius[a] observes; and others bring him down as low, placing him after Ezekiel, in the times of Zedekiah, as Clemens of Alexandria[b]; neither of which is likely. The Jewish chronologers[c] generally make him to live in the times of Manasseh, and so Abarbinel: but Josephus[d], with more probability, puts him in the times of Jotham; though perhaps what the greater number of interpreters give into may be rightest; as that he lived

[a] T. Hieros. Demai, fol. 25. 4.
[w] Ibid. Sotah, fol. 19. 4. Vid. ibid. Avoda Zara, fol. 99. 2. & Nazir, fol. 13. 1.
[x] Suscipit, O Gelli, quantum non ultima Thetis,
Nec genitor lympharum abluit Oceanus. Catullus.
[y] Oratio 2. pro Sexto Roscio.
[z] Euripides in Tauro.
[a] Demonstr. Evangel. prop. 4. p. 298.
[b] Strom. l. 1. p. 329.
[c] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 20. p. 55. & Zuta, p. 105. Juchasin, fol. 12. 2. Tzemach David, fol. 15. 1. Shalsheleth Hakabala, fol. 12. 1.
[d] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 11. sect. 2.

in the times of Hezekiah, and was cotemporary with Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, and Micah; and that this prophecy was delivered out after the ten tribes were carried captive by the king of Assyria, which was in the sixth year of Hezekiah, and before Sennacherib's invasion of Judea, and siege of Jerusalem, which was in the fourteenth year of his reign; and which is thought to be referred to in the *first* chapter of this prophecy. Mr. Whiston[e] places him in A. M. 3510, and of the Julian period 3988, and before the era of Christ 726; and says that he foretold the destruction of Nineveh 115 years before it came to pass, so says Josephus[f]. How long this prophet lived, and where he died, and was buried, is uncertain. Pseudo-Epiphanius[g] says he died and was buried in Begabar. Isidore[h] says it was in Bethafarim; both which are to be corrected by Dorotheus, who calls the place Bethabara, as Huetius[i] observes; the same where John was baptizing, John i. 28. but Benjamin of Tudela[k] says his grave was to be seen in a place called Ein-siphla, in the land of Chaldea; and speaks of a synagogue of this prophet in the province of Assyria[l]; but on these things we cannot depend. Of the authority of this prophecy there need be no doubt, as appears from the inscription of the book, the sublimity and majesty of the style, and its agreement with other prophets; see ch. i. 15. compared with Isa. lii. 7. and the accomplishment of the prophecies contained in it, which respect the ruin of the Assyrian empire, and particularly Nineveh, the metropolis of it; the cause of which were their sins and transgressions, the inhabitants thereof were guilty of, and are pointed at in it.

CHAP. I.

THIS chapter begins with the title of the book, shewing the subject-matter of it; and describing the penman of it by his name and country, ver. 1. which is followed with a preface to the whole book; setting forth the majesty of a jealous and revenging God; the power of his wrath and fury; of which instances are given in exciting tempests; drying up the sea and the rivers; making the most fruitful mountains barren, which tremble before him; yea, even the whole world, and the inhabitants thereof, his indignation being intolerable; and yet he is slow to anger, good to them that trust in him, whom he knows, and whose protection he is in a time of trouble, ver. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Next the destruction of the Assyrian empire, and of the city of Nineveh, is prophesied of; and is represented as an utter and an entire destruction, and which would come upon them suddenly and unawares, whilst they were in their cups, ver. 8, 9, 10. A particular person among them is spoken of, described as a designing wicked man, an enemy to the Lord and his people, thought to be Sennacherib king of Assyria, ver. 11. from whose evil designs, yoke and bondage, the Jews should be delivered; and he and his posterity be cut off, because of his vileness, ver. 12, 13, 14. and the chapter is concluded with tidings of joy to Judah, who are exhorted to keep their feasts and perform their vows on this occasion, ver. 15.

Ver. 1. *The burden of Nineveh*, &c.] Of the city of Nineveh, and the greatness of it, see the notes on Jonah i. 2. and iii. 3. Jonah was sent to this city to threaten it with ruin for its sins; at that time the king and all his people humbled themselves and repented, and the threatened destruction was averted; but they relapsing to their former iniquities, this prophet foretels what would be their certain fate; very rightly therefore the Targum, and some other Jewish writings[m], observe, that Jonah prophesied against this city of old; and that Nahum prophesied after him a considerable time, perhaps at a hundred years distance. This prophecy is called a *burden*; it was taken up by the prophet at the command of the Lord, and was carried or sent by him to Nineveh; and was a hard, heavy, grievous, and burdensome prophecy to that city, predicting its utter ruin and desolation; and which, as Josephus[n] says, came to pass 115 years after this prophecy; and which event is placed by the learned Usher[o] in the year of the world 3378, and of the Julian period 4088, and which was 626 years before Christ; and by others[p] in the year of the world 3403, of the flood 1747, before Christ 601; but by Dean Prideaux[q] and Mr. Whiston[r], in the year before Christ 612: *the book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite*; no other prophecy is called a *book* but this, as Abarbinel observes; and gives this reason for it, because the other prophets immediately declared their prophecies, as Jonah; but Nahum never went to the Ninevites, but wrote his prophecy in a book, and sent it to them. It is called *the book of the vision*; what it contains being made known to him by the Lord in a vision, as was common; hence the prophets are called seers; and the prophet is described by the place of his birth, an Elkoshite; though some think he is so called from his father, whose name was Helkesi, and said to be a prophet too, as Jerom relates; and with this agrees the Targum, which calls him Nahum of the house or family of Koshi; but Jarchi says that Elkosh was the name of his city; Aben Ezra and Kimchi are in doubt which to refer it to, whether to his city, or to his ancestors; but there seems no reason to doubt but that he is so called from his native place; since Jerom[s] says, that there was a village in Galilee called Helkesi in his days, and which he had seen; though scarce any traces of the old

[e] Chronological Tables, cent. 8.
[f] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 11. sect. 3.
[g] De Proph. Vit. & Inter. c. 17.
[h] De Vit. & Mort. Sanct. c. 46.
[i] Ut supra.
[k] Itinerarium, p. 60.
[l] Ibid. p. 62.

[m] Tzemach David, fol 15. 1.
[n] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 11. sect. 3.
[o] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3378.
[p] Universal History, vol. 4. p. 331.
[q] Connexion, &c. par. 1. B. 1. p. 47, 48.
[r] Chronological Tables, cent. 9.
[s] Proœm. in Nahum.

buildings could be discerned, it was so fallen to ruin, yet known to the Jews; and was shewn him by one that went about with him; and which is, by Hesychius[t] the presbyter, placed in the tribe of Simeon. This is another instance, besides that of Jonah, disproving the assertion of the Jews, that no prophet rose out of Galilee, John vii. 52.

Ver. 2. *God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth,* &c.] He is jealous of his own honour and glory, and for his own worship and ordinances; and will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images; and therefore will punish all idolaters, and particularly the idolatrous Assyrians: he is jealous for his people, and cannot bear to see them injured; and will avenge the affronts that are offered, and the indignities done unto them: *the Lord revengeth, and is furious:* or, is *master of wrath*[u]; full of it, or has it at his command; can restrain it, and let it out as he pleases, which man cannot do; a furious and passionate man, who has no rule over his spirit. The Lord's revenging is repeated for the confirmation of it; yea, it is a third time observed, as follows; which some of the Jewish writers think has respect to the three times the king of Assyria carried the people of Israel captive, and for which the Lord would be revenged on him, and punish him: *the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries;* on all his adversaries; particularly the Assyrians are here meant, who were both the enemies of him and of his people. The Targum explains it, "that hate "his people:" vengeance belongs to the Lord, and he will repay it sooner or later; if not immediately, he will hereafter; for it follows: *and he reserveth* wrath *for his enemies;* and them for that; if not in this world, yet in the world to come; he lays it up among his treasures, and brings it forth at his pleasure. The word *wrath* is not in the text; it is not said what he reserves for the enemies of himself and church; it is inconceivable and inexpressible.

Ver. 3. *The Lord is slow to anger,* &c.] He is not in haste to execute it; he takes time for it, and gives men space for repentance. Ninevah had had a proof of this when it repented at the preaching of Jonah, upon which the Lord deferred the execution of his wrath; but lest they should presume upon this, and conclude the Lord would always bear with them, though they had returned to their former impieties; they are let to know, that this his forbearance was not owing to want of power or will in him to punish: since he is *great in power, and will not at all acquit* the wicked; he is able to execute the wrath he threatens, and will by no means clear the guilty, or let them go free and unpunished; though he moves slowly, as he may seem in the execution of his judgments, yet they shall surely be brought on his enemies, and be fully accomplished: *the Lord* hath *his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds* are *the dust of his feet;* he spoke to Job out of the whirlwind; he descended on Mount Sinai in a storm and tempest; and the clouds are his chariots; in which he rides swiftly; and which, for their appearance and number, are like the dust raised by a multitude of horsemen riding full speed. The wrath of God may be compared to a whirlwind, and a storm, which is sometimes hastily and suddenly executed upon men: respect seems to be had to the armies of the Medes and Chaldeans against the Assyrians; who, as the Babylonians against the Jews, came up as clouds, and their chariots as the whirlwind, Jer. iv. 13. and the figures beautifully describe the numbers of them, the force with which they came; and in an elegant manner represent the vast quantity of dust raised by an army in full march; at the head of which was the Lord himself, ordering, directing, and succeeding, before whom none can stand.

Ver. 4. *He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry,* &c.] As he did the Red sea, when the children of Israel passed through it as on dry land; which shews his power and sovereignty over it; that it is at his command, as a servant at his master's; and since the wind and sea obey him, what is it he cannot do? see Isa. l. 2. and li. 10: *and drieth up all the rivers;* that is, he can do it if he will; he divided the waters of Jordan, through the midst of which the Israelites passed on dry ground; and will dry up the river Euphrates, to make way for the kings of the east; and as for Tigris, on the banks of which the city of Nineveh stood, of which the inhabitants boasted, and in which they trusted for their security, he could dry up, and make way for the enemy to enter in; or make that their enemy, and overflow them with it, as he did; see ver. 8. ch. ii. 8. By the *sea* and *rivers* may be meant the whole Assyrian empire, and many nations and people, as Jarchi and Abarbinel interpret it, of whom it consisted; see Jer. li. 36. Rev. xvii. 15: *Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth;* when the Lord restrains the heavens from giving rain, then Bashan, famous for its fat pastures and fruitful meadows, and Carmel for its rich cornfields, and Lebanon for its tall shadowy cedars, these, and the glory of all, wither and fade away, being parched and dried up for want of moisture. These were places in the land of Israel, but may be put for like-flourishing and fruitful hills and countries in the land of Assyria, which should become desolate; see Psal. cvii. 33, 34.

Ver. 5. *The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt,* &c.] As Sinai of old did, when the Lord descended on it, Exod. xix. 18. Judg. v. 5. *Mountains* may figuratively signify kings and princes; and *hills* large countries, as Jarchi and Abarbinel observe, and the inhabitants of them; particularly the kingdoms and nations belonging to the Assyrian empire, which would tremble and quake, and their hearts melt with fear, when they should hear of the destruction of Nineveh their chief city; and of the devastation made by the enemy there and in other parts, under the direction of the Lord of hosts; his power and providence succeeding him: *and the earth is burnt at his presence;* either when he withholds rain from it, and so it becomes parched and burnt up with the heat of the sun; or when he rains fire and brimstone on it, as he did on Sodom and Gomorrah; or consumes any part of it

[t] Apud Reland. Palestina Illustrata, tom. 2. p. 712.
[u] בעל חמה dominus iræ, Calvin, Vatablus, Grotius; dominus excandescentiæ, Piscator, Tarnovius; dominus iræ æstuantis, aer ferveris, Burkius.

with thunder and lightning, as he sometimes does; nay, if he but touch the mountains, they smoke; see Psal. civ. 32: *yea, the world, and all that dwell therein*: as in the last day, at the general conflagration, when the world, and all the wicked inhabitants of it, will be burnt up; see 2 Pet. iii. 10.

Ver. 6. *Who can stand before his indignation?* &c.] No creature whatever; no man nor body of men; not Nineveh, and the inhabitants of it; nor the whole Assyrian empire: *and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger?* not the great men of the earth; not kings or generals of armies; not kingdoms and nations, ever so numerous and powerful; but all must be consumed by him, who is a consuming fire; see Jer. x. 10. Rev. vi. 15, 16, 17: *his fury is poured out like fire*: or like metal that is melted by fire, and poured out by the force of it; or like fire of lightning poured out of the heavens, which is quick, powerful, and penetrating, and there is no resisting it: *and the rocks are thrown down by him*: by the Lord, by his wrath and fury: kingdoms that seemed as strong and immovable as rocks and mountains are thrown down; as such have been by the force of fire bursting from the midst of them, as Ætna, Vesuvius, and others.

Ver. 7. *The Lord is good*, &c.] To Israel, as the Targum adds; to Hezekiah and his people, that betook themselves to him, and put their trust in him; whom he defended and preserved from the king of Assyria, to whom he was dreadful and terrible, destroying his army in one night by an angel; and so delivered the king of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from that terror that had seized them, and that danger they were exposed unto; and so the Lord is good in himself, in the perfections of his nature, in the works of his hands, in all his persons to his people, that fear him, trust in him, and seek him, and wait for him, and on him: *a strong hold in the day of trouble*: or, he is *good for a strong hold* [x], &c.; it was a day of trouble, rebuke, and blasphemy, with Hezekiah and his people, when they were besieged by the army of Sennacherib king of Assyria, and had received from Rabshakeh by his orders a railing and reproaching letter; and then the Lord was a strong hold to them, to whom they betook themselves, and he protected and defended them. The whole time of this life is a time of trouble to the saints, though it is but a day, a short time; in which they meet with much from their own corrupt hearts, and the sin that dwells in them; from Satan and his temptations; from carnal professors, their principles and practices; and from a profane and persecuting world; and from the Lord himself, who sometimes lays his afflicting hand upon them, and hides his face from them; and yet he is their rock and their refuge, their strong tower and place of defence; where they find safety and plenty in all their times of distress and want: *and he knoweth them that trust in him*: in his word, as the Targum; and they are such that know him, and are sensible of the vanity of all other objects of trust; who betake themselves to him for shelter and protection; lean and stay themselves upon him, and commit all unto him, and expect all from him: these he knows, loves, and has the strongest affection for; he approves of them, and commends their faith and confidence; he takes notice of them, visits them, and makes himself known unto them, even in their adversity; he owns and acknowledges them as his own, claims his right in them now, and will confess them hereafter; and he takes care of them that they perish not, whoever else do; see Psal. i. 6. 2 Tim. ii. 18, 19. he knows the necessities of those that trust in him, as Jarchi; he knows them for their good, takes care of them, provides for them, and watches over them, as Kimchi. The ancients formerly had their γνωστηρας and μαρτυρας, *notores* [x], such as knew them, and were their patrons and defenders; as when a Roman citizen was condemned to be whipped or crucified in a province where he was not known, and claimed the Roman privileges, such persons were his witnesses and advocates; and thus the Lord is represented as one that knows his people, and is their patron and advocate. The goodness of God expressed in this text is set off with a foil by the terribleness of his wrath and vengeance against his enemies.

Ver. 8. *But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof*, &c.] Of Nineveh, against whom this prophecy was, and upon whom it lay as a burden, ver. 1. and now though the Lord was good to them that trust in him, and a strong hold to them in a time of trouble; yet he was determined to destroy their enemies the Assyrians, and Nineveh their chief city; and that by the means of a powerful army, which, like a flood or inundation of water breaking in, overruns and carries all before it; and very fitly may the Medes and Babylonians, who joined together in an expedition against Nineveh, be compared to such a flood for their number and force; since, as the historian tells [y] us, they were no less than four hundred thousand men: though this may be literally understood; for as the same writer [z] observes, "there "was an oracle received by the Ninevites from their "ancestors, that Nineveh could never be taken by "any, unless the river (on which it stood) first be- "came an enemy to it; and so it was, that, in the "third year of the siege, the river, being swelled with "continual rains, overflowed part of the city, and "broke down the wall for the space of twenty fur- "longs; hence the king concluded the oracle was ful- "filled, and gave up all hopes of safety; and through "the breach of the wall the enemy entered, and took "the city;" and an *utter end* was made of it, and of the place of it, insomuch that historians and geographers disagree about it; some say it was situated upon the river Euphrates, others upon the river Tigris, which is the rightest; some say on the east of that river, others on the west; some will have it to be above the river Lycus, and others below it; so true is that of Lucian [a], that Nineveh is now entirely lost, and no traces of it remain; nor can one easily say where it once was; and travellers in general, both ancient and

[*] טוב יהוה למעוז bonus Dominus ad robur, Burkius; bonus est Jehovah in arcem, Cocceius.

[x] Dannhaver, apud Burkium in loc. Vid. Turnebi Adversar. l. 29. c. 26.

[y] Diodor. Sicul. l. 2. p. 111. Ed. Rhodom.

[z] Ibid. p. 110, 114.

[a] Ἱστορες, sive contemplantes, in fine.

modern, agree that it lies wholly in ruins, and is a heap of rubbish. Benjamin Tudelensis[b], who travelled into these parts in the twelfth century, relates, that between Almozal or Mosul, and Nineveh, is only a bridge, and it (Nineveh) is a waste; but there are villages, and many towers. Haitho, an Armenian[c], who wrote more than a hundred years after the former, says, "this city (Nineveh) at present is wholly "destroyed; but, by what yet appears in it, it may "be firmly believed that it was one of the greatest "cities in the world." Monsieur Thevenot[d], who was upon the spot in the last century, observes, "on "the other side of the river (Tigris, from that on "which Mosul stands) at the end of the bridge be-"gins the place, where, in ancient times, stood the "famous city of Nineveh.—There is nothing of it, "(adds he) now to be seen, but some hillocks, which "(they say) are its foundations, the houses being "underneath; and these reach a good way below the "city of Mosul:" *and darkness shall pursue his enemies*; the enemies of God and his people, who would make such a devastation of Nineveh; even he would cause all manner of calamities, often signified in Scripture by *darkness*, to follow and overtake them; so that they should be brought into the most uncomfortable and distressed condition imaginable.

Ver. 9. *What do ye imagine against the Lord?* &c.] O ye Ninevites or Assyrians; do you think you can frustrate the designs of the Lord, resist his power, and hinder him from executing what he has threatened and has determined to do? or what mischief is it you devise against his people, which is the same as against himself? can you believe that you shall prosper and succeed, and your schemes be carried into execution, when he, the all-wise and all-powerful Being, opposes you? *he will make an utter end*; of you, as before declared, and will save his people; which may be depended on will certainly be the case: *affliction shall not rise up the second time*; either this should be the last effort the Assyrians would make upon the Jews, which they made under Sennacherib, and this the last time they would afflict them; or rather their own destruction should be so complete, that there would be no need to repeat the stroke, or give another blow; the business would be done at once. This seems to contradict a notion of some historians and chronologers, who suppose that Nineveh was destroyed at two different times, and by different persons of the same nations; and so the whole Assyrian empire was twice ruined, which is not likely in itself, and seems contrary to this passage; for though some ascribe it to Arbaces the Mede, and Belesis the Babylonian, as Diodorus Siculus[e]; and others to Cyaxares the Mede, as Herodotus[f], and to Nebuchadnezzar the first, or Nabopolassar the Babylonian, in a later period; so Tobit[g] says it was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, and Ahasuerus, the same with the Cyaxares of Herodotus; yet all seem to agree that it was taken by the conjunct forces of the Medes and Babylonians; and there are some things similar[h] in all these accounts, which shew that there was but one destruction of Nineveh, and of the Assyrian empire.

Ver. 10. *For while they be folden together as thorns*, &c.] Like them, useless and unprofitable, hurtful and pernicious, fit only for burning, and, being bundled together, are prepared for it; and which is not only expressive of the bad qualities of the Ninevites, and of the danger they were in, and what they deserved; but of the certainty of their ruin, no more being able to save themselves from it, than a bundle of thorns from the devouring fire: *and while they are drunken as drunkards*; dead drunk, no more able to help themselves than a drunken man that is fallen; or who were as easily thrown down as a drunken man is with the least touch; though there is no need to have recourse to a figurative sense, since the Ninevites were actually drunk when they were attacked by their enemy, as the historian relates[i]; that the king of Assyria being elated with his fortune, and thinking himself secure, feasted his army, and gave them large quantities of wine; and while the whole army were indulging themselves, the enemy, having notice of their negligence and drunkenness by deserters, fell upon them unawares in the night, when disordered and unprepared, and made a great slaughter among them, and forced the rest into the city, and in a little time took it: *they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry*; as easily, and as inevitably, and irrecoverably.

Ver. 11. *There is one come out of thee*, &c.] That is, out of Nineveh, as the Targum explains it; meaning Sennacherib, who had his royal seat and palace there; or Rabshakeh, that was sent from hence by him with a railing and blaspheming letter to the king of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. This is said to be at the present time of writing this prophecy, though it was after it, because of the certainty of it, as is usual in prophetic language; unless it can be thought that this prophecy was delivered out exactly at the time when Sennacherib had entered Judea, and was before the walls of Jerusalem; but not yet discomfited, as after predicted: *that imagineth evil against the Lord*: against the people of the Lord, as the Targum; formed a scheme to invade the land of Judea, take the fenced cities thereof, and seize upon Jerusalem the metropolis of the nation, and carry the king, princes, and all the people captive, as Salmaneser his father had carried away the ten tribes: *a wicked counsellor*: or, *a counsellor of Belial*[k]; who, by Rabshakeh, advised Israel not to regard their king, nor trust in their God, but surrender themselves up to him, 2 Kings xviii. 29. 30. 31.

Ver. 12. *Thus saith the Lord, though they be quiet, and likewise many*, &c.] The Assyrian army under Sennacherib before Jerusalem, though they were quiet and secure, and thought themselves out of all danger; not at all fearing that the besieged would sally out against them, they being so numerous, and therefore

[b] Itinerarium, p. 62.
[c] Apud Bochart Phaleg. l. 4. c. 20. p. 255.
[d] Travels, par. 1. B. 1. c. 11. p. 52.
[e] Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 110, 111.
[f] L. 1 sive Clio, c. 106.
[g] Ch. 14. 15.

[h] See the Universal History, vol. 4. c. 9. sect. 5. & vol 5. p. 22. Margin, & Nicolai Abrami Pharus Vet. Test. l. 6. c. 19. p. 165.
[i] Diodor. Sicul. l. 2. p. 112.
[k] יועץ בליעל consulens Belijahal, Montanus; consiliarius Belijaal, Burkius.

betook themselves to sleep and rest: *yet thus shall they be cut down*, or *shorn* [l]; as the wool is shorn off the back of a sheep with sheers; or grass or corn is mowed with a scythe; or else as the hair of a man's head and beard are shaved with a razor; which sometimes was done, not only in a way of ignominy and contempt, as David's servants were served by Hanun, 2 Sam. x. 4. but as a token of servitude; hence those words of the poet [m], "after thou art a servant, dost thou let thy "hair grow?" upon which it is observed [n], that it belongs to freemen to let the hair grow; and so the philosopher says [o], to let the hair grow, or to nourish it, is commendable with a Lacedemonian, for it is a sign of liberty; for it is not for him who lets his hair grow to do any servile-work; and it was usual with conquerors to shave the conquered, and such as were carried captives [p], which some think is referred to in Deut. xxxii. 42. and render the latter clause of that verse, "and there shall be captivity, by reason of the "head of nakedness of the enemy;" that is, there should be captives whose heads should be made bare, or shaved by the enemy the conqueror [q]; hence the king of Assyria, when a conqueror, is compared to a sharp razor, that should shave the head, and feet, and beard, even all sorts of people, Isa. vii. 20. but now he and his army should be shaved themselves; that is, conquered, slain, or taken captives, and become slaves, and treated with contempt; all which may be taken into the sense of this phrase, and serve to illustrate it: *when he shall pass through*; when the angel should pass through the camp of the Assyrians, then were they cut down by him in great numbers, a hundred and fourscore and five thousand slain at once, 2 Kings xix. 35: *though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more*; or *any longer* [r]; though the Lord had afflicted the people of the Jews by the Assyrian king, the rod of his anger, again and again, yet after this he would afflict them no more by him; for otherwise they were afflicted afterwards, yet not by the Assyrians, but by the Babylonians, Syrians, and Romans. Some understand this, as before, of the Ninevites and Assyrians, that should be utterly destroyed at once, and their affliction should not be a second time: see ver. 9. so Abarbinel: or, *I will not hear thee any more* [s]; as he did formerly, when they repented at the preaching of Jonah.

Ver. 13. *For now will I break his yoke from off thee, &c.*] The Assyrian yoke from off the Jews, who had been obliged to pay tribute, or send presents to the king of Assyria, from the times of Ahaz; and were in bondage, whilst shut up and besieged by his army, and the country all around laid under contribution: from all which they were delivered when his army was in that dreadful manner destroyed: *and will burst thy bonds in sunder*, and set thee entirely free from the bondage of the enemy, and all fear of it; a type of that freedom from the yoke of sin, Satan, and the law, which the people of God have by Jesus Christ.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord hath given a commandment concerning thee, &c.*] This is directed to Sennacherib king of Assyria, as the Targum expresses it; and so Jarchi and Kimchi; and signifies the decree of God concerning him, what he had determined to do with him, and how things would be ordered in Providence towards him, agreeably to his design and resolution: *that no more of thy name be sown*: which is not to be understood that he should have no son and heir to succeed him; for Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead, 2 Kings xix. 37. and after him, according to Ptolemy's canon, Saosduchinus and Chyniladanus; but the memory of his name should not be spread in the earth; or the fame of it, with any marks of honour and glory, but of shame and disgrace. So the Targum, "neither shall be any memory of thy name any more:" *out of the house of thy gods will I cut off the graven image and the molten image*: called *the house of Nisroch his god*, 2 Kings xix. 37. where he was slain; and some say that after that it ceased to be a place of worship, being polluted with his blood. Josephus [t] calls it his own temple, where he usually worshipped, for which he had a peculiar regard, and for his god Nisroch; but who this deity was is not certain. Selden says [u], he knew nothing, nor had read any thing of him, but what is mentioned in the Scripture. Some of the Jewish writers [w] take it to be a plank of Noah's ark; and Mr. Basnage [x] is of opinion that it is Janus represented by Noah's ark, who had two faces, before and behind; a fit emblem of Noah, who saw two worlds, one before, and another after the flood. Some say Dagon the god of the Philistines is meant, which is not likely: see the note on Isa. xxxvii. 38. but, be he who he will, there were other idols besides him, both graven and molten, in this temple, as is here expressed; very probably here stood an image of Belus or Pul, the first Assyrian monarch, and who was deified; and perhaps Adrammelech the god of the Sepharvites was another, since one of Sennacherib's sons bore this name; and it was usual with the Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Babylonians, to give the names of their gods to their princes, or insert them in theirs: here also might be the Assyrian Venus, Derceto, Semiramis, and others: fishes also were worshipped by the Assyrians, in honour of Derceto; and doves in remembrance of Semiramis, said to be nourished by one in her infancy, and turned into one at her death; hence those creatures became sacred in Assyria, and were not suffered to be touched and killed, as Philo observed at Ascalon; see the note on Hos. xi. 11. and Lucian [y] at Hieropolis in Syria: where, he says, of all birds, they think the dove most holy; so that they count it very unlawful to touch them; and if by chance they do, they reckon themselves unclean that whole day: hence

[l] ונגזו tonsi, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[m] Εἶτα δῆτα δοῦλος ὢν κομᾷς; Aristophanes in Avibus, p. 384.
[n] Scholia Graec. in ib.
[o] Aristotel. Rhetor. l. 1. c. 9.
[p] Tunc comas imo Barathri claudere recessu. Claudian in Ruffin. l. 1. prope finem. Vid. Barthium in ib.
[q] Lydius de Re Militari, l. 6. c. 6. p. 237.
[r] לא עוד non ultra, Pagninus, Montanus; non amplius, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.
[s] לא אענך עוד non exaudiam te amplius, Burkius.
[t] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 1. sect. 5.
[u] De Dis Syris, Syntagm. 2. c. 10. p. 329.
[w] Vid. Jarchi in Isaiam, c. 37. 38.
[x] In Calmet's Dictionary, in the word Samaritans.
[y] De Dea Syria.

you may see them frequently in their houses conversing familiarly with them, generally feeding on the ground, without any fear; and he also says [a], the Assyrians sacrifice to a dove, and which he must have known, since he himself was an Assyrian, as he tells us; but, whatever these graven and molten images were, it is here predicted they should be utterly demolished. The sense is, that whereas Sennacherib's empire should be destroyed, and his capital taken, the temple where he worshipped would be defaced, and all his gods he gloried of, all his images, both graven and molten, would be cut to pieces, falling into the conqueror's hands, as was usual in such cases; these would not be able to defend him or his, or secure them from the vengeance of God, whom he had blasphemed: *I will make thy grave, for thou art vile*: the Targum is, "there will I put thy grave;" that is, in the house of thy god, as Aben Ezra, Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, interpret it; where he was slain by two of his sons, as before observed; and this judgment came upon him by the will of God, because he was a loose vile creature; because he had vilified the true God, and reproached him, as unable to deliver Hezekiah and his people out of his hands. The Targum paraphrases it, "because this is easy before me;" what the Lord could easily do, make his idol-temple his grave; or, however, take away his life, and lay his honour in the dust: or it may be rendered, *I will put upon thy grave that thou art vile* [z]; he, who thought to have a superb monument over his grave, and an epitaph inscribed on it to his immortal honour, as kings used to have; this shall be the sepulchral inscription, "here lies a vile, "wicked, and contemptible man;" so Abarbinel. There was a statue of this king in an Egyptian temple, as Herodotus [b] relates, according, as many think, with this inscription on it, "whosoever looks on me, let him be "religious;" though I rather think it was a statue of Sethon the priest of Vulcan, and last king of Egypt. Here ends the first chapter in some Hebrew copies, and in the Syriac and Arabic versions, and in Aben Ezra.

Ver. 15. *Behold upon the mountains*, &c.] Of the land of Israel, as the Targum; or those about Jerusalem: *the feet of him that bringeth good tidings*; see how they come one after another with the news of the havoc and slaughter made in the army of Sennacherib by an angel in one night; of his flight, and of the death of him by the hands of his two sons; and, after that, of the destruction of Nineveh, and of the whole Assyrian empire; all which were good tidings to the Jews, to whom the Assyrians were implacable enemies, and whose power the Jews dreaded; and therefore it must be good news to them to hear of their defeat and ruin, and the messengers that brought it must be welcome to them: *that publisheth peace*; to the Jewish nation, who might from hence hope for peaceable and prosperous times: like expressions with these are used in Isa. lii. 7. on account of the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; and are applied by the apostle to Gospel times and Gospel preachers, Rom. x. 15. as these may also, and express the good tidings of victory obtained by Christ over sin, Satan, the world, hell and death; and of salvation wrought out, and peace made by him; it being usual for the prophets abruptly and at once to rise from temporal to spiritual and eternal things, particularly to what concern the Messiah, and the Gospel dispensation; see the note on Isa. lii. 7: *O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts*; of the passover, pentecost, and tabernacles; which had been interrupted or omitted through the invasion of the land, and the siege of Jerusalem, by the enemy; but now, he being gone and slain, they had full liberty, and were at leisure to attend these solemnities: *perform thy vows*; which they had made when in distress, when the enemy was in their land, and before their city; promising what they would do, if it pleased God to deliver them out of his hands, and now they were delivered; and therefore it was incumbent on them to make good their promises, and especially to offer up their thanksgivings to God for such a mercy; see Psal. l. 14. and lxvi. 13, 14. Eccles. v. 4, 5: *for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off*; or Belial, the counsellor of Belial, as in ver. 11. the king of Assyria; who, though he had passed through their land, had invaded it, and made devastation in it, should do so no more; being dead, cut off in a judicial way, through the just judgment of God, suffering his sons to take away his life whilst in the midst of his idolatrous worship; and this may reach, not only to him, and his seed after him, being wholly cut off, but to the whole Assyrian empire, who should none of them ever give any further trouble to Judah.

CHAP. II.

THIS chapter gives an account of the destruction of the city of Nineveh; describes the instruments of it as very terrible and powerful, and not to be resisted, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. The manner of taking it, the flight of its inhabitants, and the spoil of its riches and treasures, ver. 5—10. and the king and the princes thereof, compared to a lion, and a lion's whelp, are insulted as being without a den or dwelling-place, because of their cruelty and ravening, for which the Lord was against them, and threatened them with utter ruin, which he brought upon them, ver. 11, 12, 13.

Ver. 1. *He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face*, &c.] O Nineveh, or land of Assyria; for this is not to be understood of Sennacherib's coming up against Jerusalem, as Kimchi; but of Nebuchadnezzar against Nineveh, as Aben Ezra; not Nebuchadnezzar the great, who, the Jewish chronologers say [c], took Nineveh in the first year of his reign;

[a] In Jupiter Tragœdus.
[z] אשים קברך כי קלות.
[b] Ἐς ἐμέ τις ὁρέων, εὐσεβὴς ἔστω. Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 141.
[c] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 24. p. 69.

but his father, Nebuchadnezzar the first, called Nabopolassar, who, with Cyaxares or Ahasuerus the Mede, joined their forces against Nineveh, and took it, Tobit xiv. 15. and these together, the Chaldeans and Medes, are the *dasher in pieces*; or, *the hammer*[e], as the word may be rendered; and so Babylon, over which one of these kings reigned, is called the hammer of the whole earth, Jer. l. 23. these came up openly, boldly, to the face of the king of Assyria, attacked him in his metropolis, not fearing his strength and numbers: *keep the munition*; this and what follow are spoken ironically to the Assyrian king, and inhabitants of Nineveh, to take care of their towers and garrisons, and fortify them, and fill them with soldiers: *and watch the way*; in which the enemy came; secure the passes and avenues that lead to their city; stop his march, and prevent his access: *make* thy *loins strong*: put on armour, gird on the sword, prepare for war: *fortify* thy *power mightily*; increase thine army, exert all thy strength and courage, and do all that is in thy power to do, to oppose the enemy, and defend thyself; and when all is done, it will be in vain.

Ver. 2. *For the Lord hath turned away the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel*, &c.] Or, *will render* a recompense for, or revenge *the pride of Jacob*[e]; all that insolence, and those injuries done in a proud and haughty manner by Sennacherib king of Assyria to the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; invading their land, taking their fenced cities, and besieging their metropolis; and in an audacious manner threatening them with utter destruction, unless they surrendered; and also by Salmaneser, another king of Assyria, who had besieged and took Samaria the capital city of Israel or the ten tribes, and had carried them captive; and now Assyria, though it had been the rod of God's anger, and the instrument of his chastisement and correction of his people, must in its turn suffer and smart for all this: *for the emptiers have emptied them out*: the Assyrians, partly by their exactions and tributes they demanded, and partly by their spoil and plunder, had stripped Israel and Judah of all, or the greatest part, of their substance, wealth, and treasure: *and marred their vine-branches*; their children, their sons and daughters, slaying them, or carrying them captive. Israel and Judah are often compared to a vine, and so their posterity to branches: or *corrupted*[f] them, with superstition and idolatry. The Targum interprets it of their renowned cities; these, and towns and villages, being to the land as branches to the vine; and which had been ransacked and pillaged by the Assyrians, and now they should be paid in their own coin.

Ver. 3. *The shield of his mighty men is made red*, &c.] The shields of the soldiers in the armies of the Babylonians and Medes, those dashers in pieces that would come up against Nineveh, should be red; either with the blood of the slain, or thus coloured on purpose to inject terror to their enemies; or this may express the lustre of them, which being gilded, or made of gold or brass, in the rays of the sun glittered, and looked of a fiery red; see 1 Maccab. vi. 39: *the valiant men are in scarlet*; the generals and other officers of the army were clothed in scarlet; partly to shew their greatness and nobleness, and partly to strike their enemies with terror, and to hide their blood should they be wounded, and so keep up their own spirits, and not encourage their enemies: *the chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of his preparation*; that is, when the Medes and Chaldeans, under their respective commander or commanders, shall prepare for the siege of the city, and to make their onset and attack upon it, the chariots used by them in war, which was common in those times, would have flaming torches in them; either to guide them in the night, or to set fire to houses or tents they should meet with, or to terrify the enemy: or *the chariots* shall be *as flaming torches*[g]; they should run with such swiftness, that the wheels, being of iron, or cased with it, should strike fire upon the stones in such quantities, that they should look like torches flaming: *and the fir-trees shall be terribly shaken*; with the motion of the chariots; or this may be interpreted of spears and lances, and such-like instruments of war, made of fir; which should be in such great numbers, and with so much activity used against the Ninevites, that it would look like shaking a forest of fir-trees. The Targum interprets these of the great men and generals of their armies glittering in died garments; and Kimchi's father, of the princes and great men of the city of Nineveh, who would be seized with terror, and reel about like drunken men; and so all that follows in the next verse.

Ver. 4. *The chariots shall rage in the streets*, &c.] In the streets of Nineveh when taken; where they shall be drove in a furious manner from place to place, the men in them breathing out slaughter and death wherever they came. Kimchi understands this of the chariots of the Ninevites; who shall drive about in them in the streets of the city like madmen; not daring to go out to fight the enemy, being mightier and more numerous than they. *They shall justle one against another in the broad ways*: because of their numbers, and the haste they shall make to spoil and plunder the city; or the Ninevites shall justle one against another, in their hurry and confusion to make their escape. *They shall seem like torches*; either the chariots of the Medes and Chaldeans, for the reasons given in the preceding verse; or they themselves, because of their fierceness and cruelty; or the faces of the Ninevites, being covered with shame, so Kimchi; see Isa. xiii. 8. *They shall run like the lightnings*; exceeding swiftly, with irresistible force and power; the above writer interprets this of the Ninevites also, running from one end of their city to the other in the utmost confusion, not knowing what to do; but the whole of these two verses seem to be a description of their enemies.

Ver. 5. *He shall recount his worthies*, &c.] Either the dasher in pieces, ver. 1, the kings of Babylon and Media, shall call together their general officers, and

[e] מפיץ malleus, Drusius, Tarnovius.
[e] כי שב יהוה את גאון יעקב ulciscitur enim Jehova adhibitam in Jacobæos superbiam, Castalio; repetit Deus Assyriis illam superbiam quam ipse in Jacobo & Israele exercuit, Grotius; quia reddidit superbiam, &c. Tigurus.

[f] שחתו corruperunt, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Vatablus, Burkius.
[g] So ב is sometimes used as כ. See Nold. Concord. Ebr. Part. p. 164. No. 728. So Piscator, and the Tigurine version.

muster the forces under them, and put them in mind of their duty, and recount the actions of their ancestors in former times, in order to animate and encourage them to the siege and attack of the city of Nineveh; or the king of Assyria shall recount and muster up his nobles, and the troops under them, to sally out against the enemy, and meet him in the field, and give him battle: *they shall stumble in their walk*: being many, and in haste to obey the orders of their commander, shall stumble and fall upon one another; or else the Ninevites in their march out against the enemy shall be discomfited and flee before him, or be dispirited and flee back again: *they shall make haste to the wall thereof*; of Nineveh; that is, the Medes and Chaldeans shall make haste thither, to break it down or scale it; or the Ninevites, failing in their sally out, shall betake themselves in all haste to their city-walls, and defend themselves under the protection of them: *and the defence shall be prepared*; or the *covering*; the word [k] used has the signification of a booth or tent, to cover and protect; here it signifies something that was prepared, either by the besiegers, to cover them from the darts and stones of the besieged, as they made their approaches to the walls; or which the besieged covered themselves with from the assaults of the besiegers; rather the former.

Ver. 6. *The gates of the rivers shall be opened*, &c.] Of Diava and Adiava, or Lycus and Caprus, between which, according to some writers[i], Nineveh was situated; or the gates of the city, which lay nearest to the river Tigris, are meant; or that river itself, the plural for the singular, which overflowing, brake down the walls of the city 20 furlongs, and opened a way for the Medes and Chaldeans to enter in; of which see ch. i. 8: *and the palace shall be dissolved*; by the inundation, or destroyed by the enemy: meaning the palace of the king, which might be situated near the river; or the temple of Nisroch the Assyrian deity, or Jupiter Belus; for the same word [k] signifies a temple as well as palace.

Ver. 7. *And Huzzab shall be led away captive*, &c.] The Targum translates it the queen; and Jarchi and Aben Ezra, after R. Samuel, take it to be the name of the queen of Assyria; so called, as every queen might, from her standing at the king's right hand, Psal. xlv. 9. who, when the royal palace was destroyed, was taken out, and carried captive with the rest, who before was in a well-settled and tranquil state and condition: or perhaps the king himself is designed, who may be represented as a woman, as follows, for his effeminancy; conversing only with women; imitating their voice; wearing their apparel; and doing their work, spinning, &c. which is the character historians [l] give of the last king of the Assyrians: some [m] take it to be the idol Venus, worshipped by the Ninevites: though it may be meant either of the palace itself, as Kimchi's father, which was firm and well established; or rather Nineveh itself, thought to be stable and secure, the inhabitants of which should be carried into a strange land: *she shall be brought up*: the queen, or the king, out of the palace or private retirement, where they were in peace and safety; or Nineveh, and the inhabitants of it, out of their secure state and condition: *and her maids shall lead her*; her maids of honour, supporting her on the right hand and left, ready to sink and faint under her misfortunes: this may also be understood of towns and villages, and the inhabitants of them, that should go into captivity along with Nineveh: *as with the voice of doves, tabering upon their breasts*; mourning like doves, inwardly and secretly, not daring to express their sorrow more publicly, because of their enemies; but knocking and beating upon their breasts, as men do upon tabrets or drums, thereby expressing the inward grief of their minds; see Ezek. vii. 16.

Ver. 8. *But Nineveh is of old like a pool of water*, &c.] This was a very ancient city, built by Nimrod, as some say; or rather by Ashur, as appears from Gen. x. 10, 11. and it was like a fish-pool, full of people, as it was in the times of Jonah, who for their number may be compared both to water and to fish; and likewise full of wealth and riches, which for their instability may be signified by water also; and moreover, like a pool of standing water, had never been liable to any commotions and disturbances, but had remained from the beginning in a tranquil and prosperous state; besides, some regard may be had in a literal sense to its situation, being watered by the river Tigris, and which was for its profit and defence: so some copies of the Septuagint read the words, "Nineveh is like a pool of "water, the waters are her walls:" and the Syriac version is, "Nineveh is as a lake of water, and is among "the waters;" see ver. 6: *yet they shall flee away*: the waters out of the pool, the sluices being opened, or the banks broken down; or the people out of the city, breaches being made in its walls, or its gates opened, and the enemy entering; when every one would flee for his life, and make his escape in the best manner he could: *stand, stand*, shall they cry; either the generals and officers of the king of Assyria's army, to the soldiers running away; or the more courageous inhabitants of the city, to those that were timorous and seized with a panic, fleeing in the utmost consternation; or the enemy, as Kimchi, who shall call to them to stop, promising to spare their lives upon a surrender of them to them: *but none shall look back*; and stand to hear what is said unto them, but make the best of their way, and flee with all their might and main.

Ver. 9. *Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold*, &c.] Of which there was a great quantity in this rich and populous city: these are the words of the prophet, or of the Lord by the prophet, to the Medes and Chaldeans, to seize the spoil of the city, now fallen into their hands; suggesting that this was by the order and will of God, though they saw it not: or of the generals of the army of the Medes and Babylonians, giving leave to the common soldiers to take part of the plunder, there being enough for them all, officers and private men: *for there is none end of the store and glory out of all the pleasant furniture*; no end of the wealth which had been hoarded up, and of their household

[k] המסכך operimentum, Pagninus, Montanus; integumentum, Calvin; testudo, Vatablus, Grotius, Cocceius, Burkius.

[i] Vid. Fuller. Miscel. Sacr. l. 3. c. 6.

[k] ההיכל templum, V. L. Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Cocceius.

[l] Diodor. Sicul. l. 2. p. 109, 110.

[m] Gebhardus apud Burkium in loc.

goods and rich apparel, which their coffers, houses, and wardrobes, were full of, the value of which could not be told. The king of Assyria, perceiving that he, his family, and his wealth, were like to fall into the hands of the enemy, caused a pile of wood to be raised, and in it heaped his gold, silver, and royal apparel, and, enclosing himself, his eunuchs, and concubines in it, set fire to it, and destroyed himself and them. It is said[u] there were no less in this pile than a thousand myriads of talents of gold, which are about fourteen hundred millions sterling, and ten times as many talents of silver, together with apparel and furniture unspeakable; and yet, after all this, the princes of the Babylonians and Medes carried off vast quantities. The Babylonian prince loaded several ships with the ashes of the pile, and a large quantity of gold and silver, discovered to him by an eunuch, a deserter; and the Median prince, what of the gold and silver left out of the pile, which were many talents, that fell into his hands, he sent to Ecbatana, the royal city of Media[w].

Ver. 10. *She is empty, and void, and waste, &c.*] The city of Nineveh, empty of inhabitants, being killed, or having fled; and stripped of all its treasures and riches by the enemies; its walls and houses demolished and pulled down, and laid in ruins, and become a heap of rubbish; see the note on ch. i. 8. Various words are here used to ascertain and confirm the thing; and there is an elegant paronomasia or likeness of sounds, which our language will not express: *and the heart melteth*: the heart of every inhabitant of Nineveh melted with fear at the approach of their enemies, their entrance into the city, and plunder of it; flowed like water, or melted like wax; see Psal. xxii. 14: *and the knees smite together*: like people in a fright, and when a panic has seized them; and as it was with Belshazzar, Dan. v. 6: *and much pain is in all loins*: like that of women in travail; or of persons in a sudden fright, which gives them a pain in their backs at once: *and the faces of them all gather blackness*: like a pot, as the Targum adds; being in great distress and disconsolation, which make men appear in a dismal hue, and their countenances look very dark and gloomy; see Joel ii. 6.

Ver. 11. *Where is the dwelling of the lions? &c.*] Of the kings of Assyria, comparable to lions for their strength, courage, and cruelty, tyranny, and oppression; such as Pul, Tiglath-pileser, Salmaneser, and Sennacherib. So the Targum, "where are the habi-"tations of kings?" these are the words, either of the prophet, or of the people that had seen this city in its glory, and now see it in its ruins; and so desolate and waste, as that it could scarcely be said where it once stood: *and the feeding-place of the young lions?* the sons of the kings of Assyria, the princes of the blood, and who were of the same blood, temper, and disposition of their ancestors, and were born, brought up, and educated, in Nineveh, the royal city. So the Targum, "and the dwelling-houses of the princes," or governors: *where the lion*, even *the old lion, walked*; not Nebuchadnezzar, as Jerom, who entered into Nineveh the den of those lions, or seat of the Assyrians, and took it, and walked about in it, as the conqueror and possessor of it; but rather Nimrod, that old lion and tyrant, if he was the first founder of this city, as some say; though it does not seem so much to design any particular person, but the kings of Assyria in general, even the most cruel and savage, as the old lion is. So the Targum in the plural number, "whither the kings "went;" *and the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid*; there were none to resist their power, curb their insolence, and put a stop to their cruelty and oppression; or make them afraid of pursuing such methods. The Targum is, "there they leave their children, even "as a lion that continues in hunting with confidence, "and there is none that terrifies."

Ver. 12. *The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, &c.*] The metaphor is still continued; and the kings of Assyria are compared to lions that hunt for their prey, and, having found it, tear it in pieces, and carry home a sufficiency for their whelps. It is a notion that is advanced by some writers, as Herodotus[x], that the lioness, the strongest and boldest creature, brings forth but once in its life, and then but one; which Gellius[y] confutes by the testimonies of Homer and Aristotle; and it appears from the prophet here to be a false one, as well as from Ezek. xix. 2, 3. thus the Assyrians made war on other nations, and pillaged and plundered them, to enlarge their dominions, provide for their posterity, and enrich their children: *and strangled for his lionesses*; that is, strangled other beasts, as the lion first does, when it seizes a creature, and then tears it in pieces, and brings it to the she-lion in the den with its whelps. These *lionesses* design the wives and concubines of the kings of Assyria, among whom they parted the spoils of their neighbours. So the Targum, "kings bring rapine to "their wives, and a prey to their children;" that is, riches, which they have taken from others by force and rapine: thus Cicero[z] observes of the kings of Persia and Syria, that they had many wives, and gave cities to them after this manner; this city for their head-dress, this for the neck, and the other for the hair; the expenses of them: *and filled his holes with prey, and his dens with ravine*: as the lion fills his dens and lurking-holes with the prey he has seized and ravened; so the kings of Assyria filled their palaces, treasures, magazines, towers, cities, and towns, with the wealth and riches they took by force from other nations; as the Targum, "and they filled their treasuries with rapine, "and their palaces with spoil."

Ver. 13. *Behold, I am against thee, saith the Lord of hosts, &c.*] Against Nineveh, and the whole Assyrian empire, for such rapine, violence, and oppression, their kings had been guilty of; and if he, who is the Lord of hosts, of all the armies of heaven and earth, was against them, nothing but ruin must inevitably ensue: or, *I come unto thee*[a]; or will shortly come unto thee, and reckon with thee for all this; will visit thee in a way of wrath and vengeance. The Targum is, "behold, "I will send my fury upon thee:" *and I will burn her*

[u] Athenaeus apud Rollin's Ancient History, &c. vol. 2. p. 31, 32. See the Universal History, vol. 4. p. 200.
[w] Diodor. Sicul. l. 2. p. 114, 115.
[x] Thalia, sive l. 3. c. 108.
[y] Noctes Atticae, l. 13. c. 7.
[z] Orat. 8. in Verrem, l. 3. p. 289.
[a] הנני אליך ad te venturus sum, Vatablus; ego ad te venio, Drusius.

chariots in the smoke; either those in which the inhabitants of Nineveh rode in great splendour about the city; or those which were used in war with their enemies; and this he would do *in the smoke*; or, *unto smoke*, as the Vulgate Latin version; or, *into smoke*, as the Syriac [t]; easily, quickly, at once, suddenly, so that they should evaporate into smoke, and be no more: or, with fire, as the Targum; that is, as Kimchi interpets it, with a great fire, whose smoke is seen afar off; and may be figuratively understood of the smoke of divine wrath, as Aben Ezra explains it: *and the sword shall devour thy young lions*; the swords of the Medes and Chaldeans shall destroy the princes, the sons of their king. The Targum interprets this of towns or villages destroyed thereby: *and I will cut off thy prey from the earth*; cut them off that they should no more prey upon their neighbours; and what they had got should be taken away from them, and be of no use to them: *and the voice of thy messengers shall no more be heard*; in foreign courts, demanding homage and subjection; exacting and collecting tribute; blaspheming the God of heaven, and menacing his people, as Rabshakeh, a messenger of one of these kings, did; and which is mentioned by most of the Jewish commentators as being then a recent thing. Some render it, *the voice*, or *noise of thy jaw-teeth* [u]; alluding to the lion's breaking the bones of its prey, which is done with a great noise; signifying that such cruelty and oppression the Assyrians had been guilty of should be used no more; or rather, as R. Judah ben Balaam observes, as it signifies the noise of the teeth devouring the prey, it is as if it was said, I will cut off thy prey from the earth; and Ben Melech says that, in the Persian language, grinding-stones are expressed by this word, and teeth are called grinders; see Eccl. xii. 3.

CHAP. III.

IN this chapter is contained the prophecy of the destruction of Nineveh, and with it the whole Assyrian empire; the causes of which, besides those before mentioned, were the murders, lies, and robberies it was full of, ver. 1. for which it should be swiftly and cruelly destroyed, ver. 2, 3. as also its whoredoms and witchcrafts, or idolatry, by which nations and families were seduced, ver. 4. and hence she should be treated as a harlot, her nakedness exposed, and she cast out with contempt, and mocked at by all, ver. 5, 6, 7. and all those things she placed her confidence in are shewn to be of no avail; as her situation and fortresses, as she might learn from the case of No Amon, ver. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. nor the number of her inhabitants, which were weak as women; nor even her merchants, captains, nobles, and king himself, ver. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. nor the people she was in alliance with, who would now mock at her, her case being irrecoverable and incurable, ver. 19.

Ver. 1. *Woe to the bloody city*, &c.] Nineveh, in which many murders were daily committed; innocent blood shed; the lives of men taken away, under the colour of justice, by false witnesses, and other unlawful methods; and which was continually making war with neighbouring nations, and shedding their blood, which it stuck not at, to enlarge its wealth and dominions; and therefore *woe* is denounced against it; and it is threatened with the righteous judgments of God, with all sorts of calamity and distress: or, *O bloody city*, as the Septuagint; for the word used is vocative, and expressive of calling, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi observe: *it is all full of lies* and *robbery*; the palace and court; the houses of noblemen and common persons were full of flattery and deceit; men of high degree were a lie, and men of low degree vanity; no man could trust another, or believe what he said; there were no truth, honesty, and faithfulness, in conversation or commerce; their warehouses were full of goods, got by rapine and violence; and their streets full of robbers and robberies: *the prey departeth not*; they go on in making a prey of their neighbours, in pillaging and plundering their substance; they repent not of such evil practices, nor desist from them; or because of the above sins they shall fall a prey to the enemy, who will not cease plundering them till he has utterly stripped them of all they have; and who is represented in the next verse as just at hand.

Ver. 2. *The noise of a whip*, &c.] Of a horseman or chariot-driver whipping his horses to make speed to Nineveh, and enter into it, so near as to be heard by the inhabitants of it; and is thus represented in order to strike terror into them: *and the noise of the rattling of the wheels*; that is, of the chariots upon the stones, whose drivers drove Jehu-like, making the utmost haste they could to get in first, and seize the prey: *and of the pransing horses*; or bounding steeds, upon a full gallop; either with horsemen on them riding full speed to partake of the booty; or in chariots, in which they caper and pranse, and shake the ground as they go; hence it follows: *and of the jumping chariots*; which, through the swiftness of the motion, seem to leap and dance as they run along.

Ver. 3. *The horseman lifteth up both the bright sword and the glittering spear*, &c.] Or, *the flame of the sword and the lightning of the spear* [w]; he rides with a drawn sword, which, being brandished to and fro, looks like a flame of fire; or with a spear made of polished iron, or steel, which, when vibrated and moved to and fro, glitters like lightning; a large number of which entering the city must be terrible to the inhabitants of it: *and there is a multitude of slain, and a great number of carcasses*; of dead men lying in the streets, pierced and slain with the bright sword and glittering spear of the Medes and Chaldeans: *and there is none end of their*

[t] בעשן in fumum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[u] קול מלאכבה vox dentium molarium, Calvin.
[w] להב חרב וברק חנית flammam gladii & fulgorem hastæ, Piscator; flammam gladii & fulgur hastæ, Cocceius; flamma gladii & fulgur lanceæ, Burkius.

corpses; the number of them could not be told; they lay so thick in all parts of the city, that there was no telling them: *they stumble upon their corpses*: the Ninevites in fleeing, and endeavouring to make their escape, and the Medes and Chaldeans pursuing them.

Ver. 4. *Because of the multitudes of the whoredoms of the well-favoured harlot*, &c.] Meaning Nineveh; which, as it was an ancient city, was a well-built one; full of stately and beautiful buildings, the seat of the kings of Assyria, and the metropolis of the nation, and abounded with wealth and riches; perhaps here may be an allusion to the name of the city, and to the signification of it; for Nineveh may have its name from the beauty of it, and be read, in Hebrew, נאי נוה or נוי, and may signify a beautiful or pleasant habitation; so Hillerus [x] and Cocceius [y] give the etymology of it; which agrees with its delightful situation on the banks of the river Tigris, and the stately edifices in it, as the king's palace, and others; just as Zion is said to be *beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth*, Psal. xlviii. 2. and the epithet of *well-favoured* well agrees with a harlot, whose beauty is engaging and insnaring, as Lais, and others; particularly Semiramis, the wife of Ninus, from whom it is generally thought Nineveh had its name, was first a harlot, and one of exceeding beauty, who surpassed all others in it; on account of which she was beloved by the king of Assyria, and after a short time made his wife, and then he delivered the government of the kingdom to her [z]; yea, Sardanapalus the last, and at this time the present king of the Assyrians, was very effeminate, used to dress himself in women's clothes, imitate a woman's voice, and paint his face, and even his whole body; and, by other tricks and enticements of harlots, made himself more lascivious, and behaved more lewdly, than any harlot [a]; in short, all the Assyrian women must be harlots, since they were obliged once in their life-time to lie with a stranger in the temple of Venus, whom the Assyrians call Mylitta, as Herodotus [b] and Strabo [c] relate; to all which here may be an allusion: and particularly the inhabitants of this city had all the arts of address and insinuation to deceive others, as harlots have; and both men and women very probably were given to whoredom and adultery in a literal sense, as is generally the case where luxury and intemperance abound; and especially were grossly guilty of idolatry, which in Scripture is frequently expressed by whoredom and adultery; worshipping Bel, Nisroch, and other deities, and which was highly provoking to God; and therefore, for these things, his judgments came upon them, before and after described: the *mistress of witchcrafts*: thoroughly versed in such wicked and devilish practices, literally understood; see Isa. xlvii. 9, 12. for the Assyrians, as well as the Babylonians and Chaldeans, were addicted to such diabolical arts, as appears from a passage in Theocritus [d], which Grotius has also quoted; where one is represented saying that she kept in her box or chest very pernicious poisons, which she had learned from an Assyrian guest. The allusion seems to be to philters, and other tricks used by harlots to besot young men, and bewitch and captivate them: likewise this city and its inhabitants were well versed in all the arts of flattery, deceit, and carnal policy; and in all the charms of wealth, riches, luxury, and sensuality, the pomp of superstition and idolatry, to draw in kingdoms and nations into subjection to them: *that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts*; enslaved whole kingdoms, and brought them under her power and dominion, to be her vassals; and was the instrument, not only of corporeal servitude, but of their selling themselves to work wickedness, by committing spiritual fornication or idolatry; into which multitudes were led by her influence and example, and particularly the kingdoms and families of Israel and Judah; see 2 Kings xvi. 10. Ezek. xxiii. 5, 7, 11, 12. In these whoredoms and witchcrafts, as well as in her bloodthirstiness, lies, and oppression, Nineveh was a type of the whore of Rome; see Rev. xvii. 1, 2, 5, 6. and xviii. 23.

Ver. 5. *Behold, I am against thee, saith the Lord of hosts*, &c.] Because her doings were against him; see the note on ch. ii. 13: *and I will discover thy skirts upon thy face*; turn up the skirts of her garments over her head, and thereby discover what should be concealed, than which nothing is more disagreeable and abominable to modest persons; it is here threatened she should be used in character as a harlot, or as women oftentimes are by rude soldiers, when a city is taken by them: *and I will shew the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame*; all her charms shall be taken away, and she become odious as a harlot to her former lovers; all her impostures, arts, and tricks, and shameful actions, will be discovered; and her aims and views at universal monarchy will be seen, and her weakness to effect it made to appear; and, upon the whole, will become the object of the scorn and derision of kingdoms and nations.

Ver. 6. *And I will cast abominable filth upon thee*, &c.] As dirt and dung, or any or every thing that is abominable and filthy; and which is thrown at harlots publicly disgraced, and as used to be at persons when carted. The meaning is, that this city and its inhabitants should be stripped of every thing that was great and glorious in them, and should be reduced to the utmost shame and ignominy: *and make thee vile*; mean, abject, contemptible, the offscouring of all things; rejected and disesteemed of all; had in no manner of repute or account, but in the utmost abhorrence: *and I will set thee as a gazing-stock*; to be looked and laughed at: or, *for an example* [e]; to others, that they may shun the evils and abominations Nineveh had been guilty of, or expect the same disgrace and punishment. Kimchi interprets it *as dung* [f]; to be no more reckoned of than that, or to be made a dunghil of; and so many others interpret it: or, *for a looking-glass* [g]: that others may look into, and take

[x] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 304, 431, 858.
[y] Comment. in Jonam, c. 1. 2.
[z] Diodor. Sicul. l. 2. p. 93. 107. Ed. Rhedeman.
[a] Ibid. p. 109, 110.
[b] Clio, sive l. 1. c. 199.
[c] Geograph. l. 16. p. 513.

[d] Pharmaceutria, sive Idyll. 2. prope finem.
[e] כראי or παράδειγμα, Sept.; in exemplum, Drusius, Tarnovius; sicut spectaculum, Burkius.
[f] Tanquam stercus, Munster, Montanus, Vatablus, Calvin, Cocceius.
[g] Ut speculum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Quistorpius.

warning, and avoid the sins that have brought on such calamities.

Ver. 7. *And it shall come to pass, that all they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, &c.*] As something loathsome and abominable, not fit to be come near unto, or touched; and as astonished and amazed at an object so forlorn and miserable, and lest they should partake of the same punishment: *and say, Nineveh is laid waste:* utterly destroyed; its walls broke down, its houses demolished, its substance plundered, and its inhabitants killed, or carried captive; who could have thought it, when it was once so stately, rich, and powerful? but so it is indeed! *who shall bemoan her?* there are none left in her to do it; and as for others, her neighbours, whom she has oppressed and cruelly used, these will laugh and rejoice, instead of lamenting her case: *whence shall I seek comforters for thee?* none from among her inhabitants, being all destroyed, or carried into a foreign land; and none from among the nations round about, who will rather deride and insult than pity and comfort; so wretched and miserable would her case be!

Ver. 8. *Art thou better than populous No, &c.*] Or No Amon, a city in Egypt so called, not because the kings of Egypt were nursed and brought up there, as Jarchi and Abarbinel; see Prov. viii. 30. but from Ham the son of Noah, whose land Egypt was; or from Jupiter Ammon, worshipped there. No Amon signifies the mansion or palace of Ham, or Hamon: the Egyptians, as Herodotus says[h], call Jupiter by the name of Ammon. The Targum interprets it of Alexandria the great, a city so called long after this, when it was rebuilt by Alexander the great; so Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, understand it: others take Diospolis or Thebes to be meant, famous in Homer[i] for its hundred gates; though some think this was not the number of the gates of the city, but of the temples in it; and others are of opinion that these were so many palaces of princes[k]. The city was built by Osiris; or, according to others, by Busiris, and seems more likely to be the place here meant; since here was a temple dedicated to Jupiter, called by the Egyptians Ammon, as Diodorus Siculus[l] relates, and was a very large and populous city. Indeed, according to the above-historian, it was in compass but a hundred and forty furlongs[m]; which is to be understood of the city when first built, and before it was enlarged; for it must have been a great deal larger in after-times, if we may judge of it by its ruins. Strabo[n], who was an eye-witness of them quickly after its last destruction by Cornelius Gallus, says, the footsteps of its largeness were seen fourscore furlongs in length, or ten miles; and even this was but small, in comparison of what it was before it was destroyed by Cambyses, when it is said to reach four hundred and twenty furlongs, or fifty-two miles and a half[o]. It was the metropolis of all Egypt; and formerly the whole country was called after its name, as Herodotus[p] observes. The accounts given of its inhabitants are incredible, and particularly of the soldiers it sent out; according to the epitaph of Rhampses, seven hundred thousand soldiers dwelt in it; which number Diodorus Siculus[q] gives to all the people in Egypt; but, though it may seem too large for Thebes, must be too little for all Egypt; especially if what Agrippa in Josephus[r] says is right, that Egypt, from Ethiopia and the borders of India to Alexandria, had no less than 7,500,000 inhabitants: however, if Pomponius Mela[s] may be credited, when it was necessary, the hundred palaces in Thebes could each of them send out ten thousand armed men, or, as some say, twenty thousand; and if what Diodorus Siculus[t] affirms is true, that twenty thousand chariots used to go out from thence to war, this shews it to have been a very populous city indeed, and might well be called *populous No*; but now it is utterly destroyed, first by the Assyrians and Babylonians, then by the Persians, and last of all by the Romans; the first destruction must be here referred to, if this city is designed. Strabo[u] says in his time it was only inhabited in villages; and Juvenal[w] speaks of it as wholly lying in ruins; and Pausanias[x], making mention of it with other cities which abounded with riches, says they were reduced to the fortune of a middling private man, yea, were brought to nothing. It is now, or what is built on the spot, or near it, called Luxxor, or Lokorreen[y]. Some[z] think the city Memphis is meant, so Vitringa on Isa. xix. 5. see the notes on Ezek. xxx. 14, 15. this was for many ages the metropolis of all Egypt. Strabo[a] calls it a large and *populous* city, and full of men, and second to Alexandria in his time. The compass of it, when first built, was 150 furlongs[b]; but now there is no more remaining of it than if there had never been such a city; nay, it is not easy to say where it once stood: now Nineveh is asked, or its inhabitants, if it could be thought that their city was in a better and safer condition than this city; it might indeed, according to the account of it by historians, and as in the prophecy of Jonah, be larger, and its inhabitants more numerous; but not better fortified, which seems to be the thing chiefly respected, as follows: *that was situate among the rivers;* the canals of the river Nile: that had *the waters round about it;* moated on every side, either naturally or artificially: *whose rampart was the sea, and her wall was from the sea?* which agrees with Alexandria, according to the description of it by Strabo[c], Solinus[d], and Josephus[e], which had two seas on each side it; the Egyptian sea on the north, and the lake Mareotis

[h] L. 2. sive Euterpe, c. 42.
[i] Iliad. 9. ver. 381.
[k] Vid. Mela de Situ Orbis, l. 1. c. 9. Diodor. Sicul. l. 1. p. 42.
[l] Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 14, 42. Ed. Rhodoman.
[m] Ibid. p. 42.
[n] Geograph. l. 16. p. 561. Ed. Casaubon.
[o] See the Universal History, vol. 1. p. 396.
[p] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 15.
[q] Ut supra, p. 27.
[r] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 16. sect. 4.
[s] De Situ Orbis, l. 1. c. 9.

[t] Ut supra, p. 42. Vid. Homer, ut supra.
[u] Ut supra.
[w] Vetus Thebe centum jacet obruta portis. Satyr. 15. l. 6.
[x] Arcadica, sive l. 8. p. 509. Ed. Hanau.
[y] Norden's Travels in Egypt and Nubia, vol. 2. p. 61, 62.
[z] So Hillerus, Onomast. Sacr. p. 571, 572. & Burkius in loc.
[a] Geograph. l. 17. p. 555.
[b] Diodor. Sicul. Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 46.
[c] Geograph. l. 17. p. 545.
[d] Polyhistor. c. 45.
[e] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 16. sect. 4.

on the south, as well as had the canals of the Nile running into it from various parts; and is represented as very difficult of access, through the sea, rivers, and marshy places about it; and, besides, might have a wall towards the sea, as by this account it should seem, as well as the sea itself was a wall and rampart to it: and this description may also agree with Diospolis or Thebes, which, though more inland, yet, as Bochart[f] observes, it had, as all Egypt had, the two seas, the Red sea and the Mediterranean sea, and the canals of the Nile, which might be said to be as a rampart to it. So Isocrates[g] says of all Egypt, that it is fortified with an immortal wall, the Nile, which not only affords a defence, but sufficient food, and is insuperable and inexpugnable; nor is it unusual, as to call rivers and lakes seas, so particularly the Nile, and its canals; see Isa. xi. 15. and xviii. 1. Ezek. xxxii. 2. and in the Alcoran the Nile is often called a sea[h]. There is another Diospolis in Egypt, near Mendes, which, as Strabo[i] says, had lakes about it; but this, being a more obscure place, is not likely to be intended here; though Father Calmet[k] is of opinion that it is here meant; it being situated in the Delta, on one of the arms of the Nile, between Busiris to the south, and Mendes to the north. The description seems to agree better with Memphis, whose builder Uchoreus, as Diodorus Siculus[l] says, chose a very convenient place for it, where the Nile divided itself into many parts, and made the Delta, so called from its figure; and which he made wonderfully strong, after this manner: whereas the Nile flowed round the city, being built within the ancient bed of it, and at its increase would overflow it; he cast up a very great mound or rampart to the south, which was a defence against the swell of the river, and was of the use of a fortress against enemies by land; and on the other parts all about he dug a large and deep lake, which received a very great deal of the river, and filled every place about the city but where the mound (or rampart) was built, and so made it amazingly strong; whence the kings after him left Thebes, and had their palace and court here; and so Herodotus, who makes Menes to be the builder of it, says[m], that without the city he caused lakes to be dug from the river to the north, and to the west, for to the east the Nile itself bounded it; and Josephus[n], who also makes Minæus, or Menes, the first Pharaoh, to be the builder of it, speaks of that and the sea together, as if not far off each other: now, if a city so populous, and so well fortified by art and nature, as each of these were, was taken, and its inhabitants carried captive, Nineveh could not depend on her numbers or situation for safety, which were not more or better than this.

Ver. 9. *Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength*, &c.] That is, the strength, support, protection, and defence of No, whether Alexandria, or Thebes, or Memphis: Egypt was, for these cities were in it, and subject to it; or, if this was a free city, as some think, yet in alliance with Egypt, and under its protection; and in like connexion it was with Ethiopia, that is, Arabia, a country that lay near to it; and yet, though it was strengthened by such powerful neighbours and allies, it was not secure from the devastation of the enemy: *and it was infinite*; or there was *no end*[o]; of its strength, or of the number of its allies, or the forces they were able to bring in its defence. The Ethiopians were very numerous, as may be learnt from 2 Chron. xiv. 9. and so were the Egyptians, to whom some interpreters strictly connect this sentence. In the times of Amasis, as Mela[p] relates, there were twenty thousand cities inhabited in it; and Josephus[q] says there were in it seven hundred and fifty myriads of men; as Sethon, king of Egypt, and Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, were about this time the allies of the Jews, in whom they trusted, no doubt they were confederate together, and so both the strength of this city; see Isa. xxxvi. 6. and xxxvii. 9: *Put and Lubim were thy helpers*; Put, or the Putim, were the people of the Moors, that dwelt in Mauritania; and Lubim were the Lybians that bordered on Egypt, and whose country is sometimes reckoned a part of it. The Jews[r] say Lybia is Egypt; see Acts ii. 10. these several people were the confederates of No; and helped them, not only by their commerce with them, but in time of war assisted them against their enemies; and yet, though so strengthened by alliances, were not safe and secure; and therefore Nineveh could not depend upon such helps and helpers.

Ver. 10. *Yet was she carried away, she went into captivity*, &c.] Not by Nebuchadnezzar; though this city was afterwards taken, and its inhabitants carried captive, by that monarch, as was foretold, Jer. xlvi. 25. but the prophet here does not predict an event to be accomplished, and instance in that, and argue from it, which could have no effect on Nineveh and its inhabitants, or be an example or terror to them; but refers to what had been done, a recent fact, and which they were well acquainted with. Aben Ezra says, this city No was a city of the land of Egypt, which the king of the Chaldeans took as he went to Nineveh; but when, and by whom it was taken, is nowhere said. According to Bishop Usher[s] and Dean Prideaux[t], the destruction of the city of Thebes was by Sennacherib, in his expedition against Egypt, which he harassed for three years together, from one end to the other; at which time Sevechus, the son of Sabacon, or So, the Ethiopian, was king of Egypt; and Egypt and Ethiopia were as one country, and helped each other; but could not secure this city from falling into the hands of Sennacherib, about three years before he besieged Jerusalem; and so, according to Mr. Whiston[u], it was destroyed three years before the army of Sennacherib was destroyed at Jerusalem: *her young children also were dashed in pieces at the top of all the streets*; against the walls of the houses, or upon the stones and pavements of the

[f] Phaleg l. 1. c. 1. col. 6, 7.
[g] Busiris, p. 427.
[h] Vid. Schultens in Job xxv. 11.
[i] Geograph. l. 17. p. 551.
[k] Dictionary, in the word Diospolis.
[l] Ut supra.
[m] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 99.
[n] Antiqu. l. 8. c. 6. sect. 2. & l. 2. c. 10. sect. 1.

[o] אין קצה non est finis, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Cocceius.
[p] De Orbis Situ, l. 1. c. 9.
[q] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 16. sect. 4.
[r] T. Hieros. Celaim, c. 8. fol. 31. 3.
[s] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3292.
[t] Connexion, par. 1. B. 1. p. 27, 28.
[u] Chronological Tables, cent. 8.

streets; which cruelties were often used by conquerors upon innocent babes at the sacking of cities, Psal. cxxxvii. 9. Isa. xiii. 16: *and they cast lots for her honourable men;* the soldiers did, who should have them, and sell them for slaves; which was done without any regard to their birth and breeding, Joel iii. 3: *and all her great men were bound in chains;* as nobles may be meant by *honourable* men, by *great men* may be designed the gentry, merchants, and others; these were taken, and bound in iron chains, handcuffed, and pinioned, and so led captive into a foreign land; and Nineveh might expect the same treatment.

Ver. 11. *Thou also shalt be drunken,* &c.] This is said to Nineveh, whose turn would be next to drink of the cup of the wrath of God, and be inebriated with it, so that they should not know where they were, or what they did; and be as unable to guide and help themselves as a drunken man. So the Targum, "thou "also shalt be like to a drunken man;" this was literally true of Nineveh when taken; see ch. i. 10: *thou shalt be hid;* or, *thou shalt be,* as if thou wast not; as Nineveh is at this day, *hid* from the sight of men, not to be seen any more. So the Targum, "thou shalt "be swallowed up or destroyed." The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions, render it *despised,* or the meaning is, she should *hide herself* *; or be lurking about through shame, as drunken, or through fear of her enemies: *thou also shalt seek strength because of the enemy;* seek to others to help them against the enemy, not being able with their own strength to face them: or, seek strength *of the enemy* *; beg their lives of him, and their bread; pray for quarter, and desire to be taken under his protection; to so low and mean a state and condition should Nineveh and its inhabitants be reduced, who had given laws to all about them, and had been a terror to them.

Ver. 12. *All thy strong holds* shall be like *fig-trees with the first ripe figs,* &c.] Upon them, or like them: *and the first ripe figs;* which are easily shook and gathered; and so easily should the fortresses and towers of Nineveh, in which they trusted for safety, be taken by the enemy, not only one, but all of them: *if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater;* as such ripe fruit is very desirable, and the mouth of a man is open and ready for them; so if he gives the tree but the least shake, they'll fall into his mouth, or about him in great plenty: in like manner, as the fortresses of Nineveh, being of importance, were desirable by the Chaldeans and Medes, and for which they were gaping; so upon the least assault they would fall into their hands; see Rev. vi. 13.

Ver. 13. *Behold, thy people in the midst of thee* are *women,* &c.] Or like women, weak and feeble, fearful and timorous; frighted at the first approach of the enemy; run away, and run up and down in the utmost consternation and distress, having neither skill nor courage to oppose them; some regard may be had to the effeminacy of their king; see ch. ii. 7. The sense is, they should be at once dispirited, and lose all strength of mind and body, and have neither heads nor hearts to form schemes, and execute them in their own defence; and thus should they be, even in the midst of the city, upon their own ground, where, if any where, it might be thought they would exert themselves, and play the man, since their all lay at stake: this was another thing they trusted in, the multitude of their people, even of their soldiers; but these would be of no avail, since they would lose all their military skill and bravery: *the gates of thy land shall be set wide open to thine enemies;* instead of guarding the passes and avenues, they would abandon them to the enemy; and, instead of securing the gates and passages, they would run away from them; and the enemy would find as easy access as if they were thrown open on purpose for them; perhaps this may respect the gates of the rivers being opened by the inundation, which threw down the wall, and made a way into the city; see ch. ii. 6: *the fire shall devour thy bars;* with which their gates had been shut, but now opened, and in the enemies' hands; who would set fire to them, that the way to go in and out might be open and free.

Ver. 14. *Draw thee waters for the siege,* &c.] Before the siege is begun, fetch water from the river, wells, or fountains without the city, and fill cisterns, and such-like receptacles of water, with them; that there may be sufficiency of it to hold out, which is often wanting in long sieges; the want of which gives great distress to the besieged: this is put for all necessary provisions, which should be made when a city is in danger of being blocked up: this, and what follows, are said ironically; signifying, let them do what they would or could for their support and security, it would be all in vain: *fortify thy strong holds:* repair the old fortifications, and add new ones to them; fill them with soldiers, arms, and ammunition: *go into clay, and tread the mortar, make strong the brick-kiln;* repair the brick-kilns, keep them in good order; employ men in digging clay, and treading it, and making it into bricks, and burning them in the kiln, that there be no want of bricks to repair the fortifications, or such breaches as might be made by the enemy. Bricks were much used instead of stone in those countries; but when they had done their utmost, they would not be able to secure themselves, and keep out the enemy.

Ver. 15. *There shall the fire devour thee,* &c.] In the strong holds, made ever so firm and secure; either the fire of divine wrath; or the fire of the enemy they should put into them; or the enemy himself, as Kimchi; and so the Targum, "thither shall come "upon thee people who are as strong as fire:" *the sword shall cut thee off; it shall eat thee up as the canker-worm;* that is, the sword of the Medes and Chaldeans shall utterly destroy thee, as the canker-worm is destroyed by rain or fire; or rather, as that creature destroys all herbs, plants, and trees it falls upon, and makes clear riddance of them, so should it be with Nineveh: *make thyself many as the canker-worm; make thyself many as the locust;* which go in swarms, innumerable, and make the air *heavy* in which they fly, and the earth on which they fall, as the word ʸ signifies. The locust has one of its names, *arbah,* in

* נעלמה latitans, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; abscondes te, Vatablus; eris abscondita, Burkius.

* מאויב ἐξ ἐχθρῶν, Sept.; ab hoste, Montanus, Calvin, Drusius, Grotius, Coccejus.

ʸ התכבד aggravate, Montanus; onerate, Tigurine version; gravem effice te, Burkius.

Hebrew, from the large numbers of them; so a multitude of men, and large armies, are often signified in Scripture to be like grashoppers or locusts, for their numbers; see Judg. vi. 5. and vii. 12. and Jer. xlvi. 23. So Sithalces king of Thrace is represented[z] as swearing, whilst he was sacrificing, that he would assist the Athenians, having an army that would come like locusts, that is, in such numbers; for so the Greek scholiast on the place says the word used signifies a sort of locusts: the sense is, gather together as many soldiers, and as large an army, as can be obtained to meet the enemy, or cause him to break up the siege: and so we find [a] the king of Assyria did; for, perceiving his kingdom in great danger, he sent into all his provinces to raise soldiers, and prepare every thing for the siege; but all to no purpose, which is here ironically suggested. The word in the Misnic language, as Kimchi observes, has the signification of sweeping; and some render it, *sweep as the locust*[b]; which sweeps away and consumes the fruits of the earth; so sweep with the besom of destruction, as Jarchi, either their enemies, sarcastically spoken, or be thou swept by them.

Ver. 16. *Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven*, &c.] A hyperbolical expression, setting forth the great number of merchants that were in Nineveh, and in the land of Assyria; who either were the natives of the place, or came thither for the sake of merchandise, which serve to enrich a nation, and therefore are encouraged to settle; and from whom, in a time of war, much benefit might be expected; being able to furnish with money, which is the sinews of war, as well as to give intelligence of the designs of foreign princes, they trading abroad: *the canker-worm spoileth, and fleeth away*: or *puts off*[c] its clothes, disrobes and changes its form; or breaks out with force, as the Septuagint, out of its former worm-state, and appears a beautiful butterfly, and then flies away. The word is rendered a caterpillar, Psal. cv. 34. Jer. li. 14, 27. and what we translate *spoileth* is used of stripping, or putting off of clothes, 1 Sam. xix. 24. Cant. v. 3. and the sense may be, that though their merchants were multiplied above the stars of heaven, in which there may be an allusion to the increase of caterpillars, ver. 15. yet, as the caterpillar drops its clothes, and flies away, so their merchants, through fear of the enemy, would depart in haste, or be suddenly stripped of their riches, which make themselves wings, and fly away, Prov. xxiii. 5. These merchants, at their beginning, might be low and mean, but, increasing, adorning, and enriching themselves in a time of peace, fled away in a time of war: or, *spreads itself*[d], *and flies away*: so these creatures spread themselves on the earth, and devour all they can, and then spread their wings, and are gone: suggesting that in like manner the merchants of Nineveh would serve them; get all they could by merchandise among them, and then betake themselves elsewhere and especially in a time of war, which is prejudicial to merchandise; and hence nothing was to be expected from them, or any dependence had upon them.

Ver. 17. *Thy crowned men are as the locusts*, &c.] Tributary kings, and hired officers, as some think, who might be distinguished by what they wore on their heads; or their own princes and nobles, who wore coronets or diadems; unless their religious persons are meant, their Nazarites and devotees, their priests; these were like locusts for their number, fear, and flight in time of danger, and for their spoil of the poor; and some locusts have been seen with little crowns on their heads, as those in Rev. ix. 7. which had *on their heads as it were crowns like gold*. In the year 1542 came locusts out of Turkish Sarmatia into Austria, Silesia, Lusatia, and Misnia, which had on their heads little crowns[e]. In the year 1572 a vehement wind brought large troops of locusts out of Turkey into Poland, which did great mischief, and were of a golden colour[f]; and Ælianus[g] speaks of locusts in Arabia, marked with golden-coloured figures; and mention is made in the Targum on Jer. li. 27, of the shining locust, shining like gold: *and thy captains as the great grashoppers*: or *locusts of locusts*[h]: those of the biggest size. The Vulgate Latin renders the word for captains *thy little ones*, junior princes, or officers of less dignity and authority; these were, as the Targum paraphrases it, as the worms of locusts; but rather as the locusts themselves, many and hurtful: *which camp in the hedges in the cold day*; in the cold part of the day, the night; when they get into the hedges of fields, gardens, and vineyards, in great numbers, like an army, and therefore said to encamp like one: but *when the sun ariseth they flee away, and their place is not known where they are*; whither they are fled, as the Targum; so these captains, or half-pay officers, swarmed in great numbers about the city, and in the provinces, whilst it was a time of peace, and they were indulged in sloth, and enjoyed much ease and prosperity; but when war broke out, and the heat of it began to be felt, these disappeared, and went into their own countries, from whence they came, with the auxiliaries and hired troops; nor could they be found where they were, or be called upon to do their duty: this is true of locusts in a literal sense, who flee away when the sun rises; hence the Arabs, as Bochart says[i], elegantly express this by the word *ascaora*: signifying, that when the sun comes to the locust it goes away. According to Macrobius[k], both Apollo and Hercules are names for the sun; and both these are surnamed from their power in driving away locusts: Hercules was called Cornopion by the Œteans, because he delivered them from the locusts[l]; and Apollo was called Parnopius by the Grecians, because, when the country was hurt by locusts, he drove them out of it, as Pausanias[m] relates; who observes, that they were drove out they knew, but in

[z] Aristophan. in Acharneus. Act. 1. Scen. 1.
[a] Diodor. Sicul. l. 2. p. 113.
[b] So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 39. 1.
[c] פשט expoliavit, De Dieu; proprie est, exuere, vestem detrahere & expoliare, De Dieu.
[d] Diffundit se, Munster, so the Targum; effunditur, Cocceius.
[e] Vid. Frantzii Hist. Animal. Sacr. par. 5. c. 4. p. 799.
[f] Ibid. p. 798.

[g] Hist. Animal. l. 10. c. 13.
[h] גוב גובי ut locustæ locustarum, Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus; sicut locusta locustarum, Burkius.
[i] Hierozoic. par. 2. c. 2. col. 453.
[k] Saturnal. l. 1. c. 17. p. 333. & c. 20. p. 362.
[l] Strabo. Geograph. l. 13. p. 422.
[m] Attica, sive l. 1. p. 44.

what manner they say not; for his own part, he says, he knew them thrice destroyed at Mount Sipylus, but not in the same way; one time a violent wind drove them out; another time a prodigious heat killed them; and a third time they perished by sudden cold; and so, according to the text here, the cold sends them to the hedges, and the heat of the sun obliges them to quit their station.

Ver. 18. *Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria,* &c.] Who this king of Assyria was is not easy to say; some think Esar-haddon, who is the last of the kings of Assyria the Scriptures speak of; according to Diodorus Siculus[n], Sardanapalus was the last of these kings, and in him the Assyrian monarchy ended; though, according to Alexander Polyhistor[o], Saracus, perhaps the Chyniladanus of Ptolemy, was king when Nineveh was destroyed: it is very likely that Sardanapalus and Saracus design the same person, though set at a great distance by historians; since the same things are said of the one as of the other; particularly that, when they saw their danger, they burnt themselves and theirs in the royal palace at Nineveh; nor is it probable that the same city with the empire should be destroyed and subverted twice by the same people, the Medes and Babylonians, uniting together; and it is remarkable that the double destruction of this city and empire is related by different historians; and those that speak of the one say nothing of the other: but this king, be he who he will, his case was very bad, his *shepherds slumbered*; his ministers of state, his counsellors, subordinate magistrates in provinces and cities, and particularly in Nineveh; his generals and officers in his army were careless and negligent of their duty, and gave themselves up to sloth and ease; and which also was his own character, as historians agree in; or they were dead, slumbering in their graves, and so could be of no service to him: *thy nobles shall dwell* in the dust; be brought very low, into a very mean and abject condition; their honour shall be laid in the dust, and they be trampled upon by every one: or, *they shall sleep*[p]; that is, die, and be buried, as the Vulgate Latin renders it: or, *shall dwell in silence,* as others[q]; have their habitation in the silent grave, being cut off by the enemy; so that this prince would have none of his mighty men to trust in, but see himself stripped of all his vain confidences: *thy people is scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them*: like sheep without a shepherd, which being frighted by beasts of prey, run here and there, and there is none to get them together, and bring them back again; so the subjects of this king, being terrified at the approach of the Medes and Babylonians, forsook their cities, and fled to the mountains; where they were scattered about, having no leader and commander to gather them together, and put them in regular order to face and oppose the enemy. So the Targum interprets it "the people of thine armies."

Ver. 19. *There is no healing of thy bruise,* &c.] Made by the fatal blow given to the empire by the taking of Nineveh; the ruin of it was irreparable and irrecoverable; the city of Nineveh was no more, and the Assyrian empire sunk, and never rose again: or, *there is no contraction of thy bruise*[r]; as when a wound is healed, or near it, the skin round about is wrinkled and contracted. The Targum is, "there is none that "grieves at thy breach;" so the Syriac version; so far from it, that they rejoiced at it, as in a following clause: *thy wound is grievous;* to be borne; the pain of it intolerable; an old obstinate one, inveterate and incurable: or, is *weak,* or *sickly*[s]; which had brought a sickness and weakness on the state, out of which it would never be recovered: *all that hear the bruit of thee;* the fame, the report of the destruction of Nineveh, and of the ruin of the Assyrian empire, and the king of it: *shall clap the hands over thee;* for joy; so far were they from lending a helping hand in the time of distress, that they clapped both hands together, to express the gladness of their hearts at hearing such news: *for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?* to which of thy neighbours hast thou not been troublesome and injurious? which of them hast thou not oppressed, and used with violence and cruelty? what province or city but have felt the weight of thine hand, have been harassed with wars, and distressed with tributes and exactions? and therefore it is no wonder they rejoice at thy fall. The destruction of this city, and so of the whole empire, is placed by Dr. Prideaux in the 29th year of Josiah's reign, and in the year 612 before Christ; and by what Josephus says[t] it appears to have been but a little while before Josiah was slain by Pharaoh-necho, who came out with an army to Euphrates, to make war upon the Medes and Babylonians; who, he says, had overturned the Assyrian empire; being jealous, as it seems, of their growing power. Learned men justly regret the loss of the Assyriaca of Abydenus, and of the history of the Assyrians by Herodotus, who promised[u] it: but whether he finished it or no is not certain; however, it is not extant; and in one place, speaking of the Medes attacking Nineveh, and taking it, he says[w], but how they took it I shall shew in another history; all which, had they come to light, and been continued, might have been of singular use in explaining this prophecy.

[n] Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 109, 115.
[o] Apud Syncell. p. 210.
[p] ישכנו dormiunt, Piscator; so Ben Melech interprets it, the rest of death.
[q] Habitarunt in silentio, Buxtorf, Drusius.
[r] אין כהה nulla est contractio, Junius & Tremellius, Burkius.
[s] נחלה infirmata, Pagninus, Montanus; ægritudine plena, Vatablus; ægra, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Burkius.
[t] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 5. sect. 1.
[u] L. 1. sive Clio, c. 184.
[w] Ibid. c. 106.

HABAKKUK.

THIS book is called, in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, *the Prophecy of Habakkuk*. Of this prophet, Aben Ezra and Kimchi say, we know neither his age nor his family; which shews they paid no regard to a tradition of their nation, mentioned by some of their ancient writers[a], that he was the son of the Shunamite, whom Elisha raised from the dead; and find the etymology of his name in the words of the prophet to her, *about this season, according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son*, 2 Kings xiv. 16. where the root of his name is used; and they account for the doubling of the last radical in his name, because of the two embraces of him, one by his mother, and the other by the prophet. His name indeed signifies *an embrace*[b]; or, as some, *an embracer*[c]; and the last letter being doubled, it is with others interpreted *the best embracer*[d]; to which name his character and conduct agree; who, in the most tender manner, embraced the people of God, as parents their children, and comforted them with the assurance of their preservation, notwithstanding their captivity, and with the promise of the Messiah's coming; suggesting to them they should live by faith, to which he led them the way by his own example, ch. i. 12. and ii. 3, 4. and iii. 17, 18, 19. but as this is placing him too early, to put him in the times of Elisha; so it is fixing him too late, to make him to be in the times of Daniel, and to feed him in the den of the lions, as Joseph ben Gorion[e], and the author of the apocryphal book of Bel and the Dragon, say he did, which was after the Babylonish captivity was ended; whereas it is certain this prophet prophesied of it, and must have lived some time before it; for he speaks of the Chaldeans by name coming against the Jews, and carrying them captive, ch. i. 6, 9. The learned Huetius[f], and others, think there were two prophets of this name; one of the tribe of Simeon, who lived before the captivity; and another of the tribe of Levi, who lived after it. The Jewish chronologers[g] generally place this our prophet in the times of Manasseh; with which well enough agrees the description of the times the prophet lived in, given in ch. i. 2, 3, 4. though some think he lived in the latter times of Josiah[h], or the beginning of Jehoiakim[i]; and it is probable he was a cotemporary of the Prophet Jeremiah, with whom he agrees in many things, and prophesied of the same. However, there is no room to doubt of the authority of this book, being always received by the Jewish church, and agreeing with other parts of Scripture, and especially with the prophecies of Jeremiah; and may be further confirmed and established by the quotations out of it in the New Testament, as ch. i. 5. in Acts xiii. 41. and ch. ii. 4. in Rom. i. 17. Gal. iii. 11. Heb. x. 38. The general design of the prophecy is to comfort the people of God under the afflictions that were coming upon them, and to encourage them to the exercise of faith and patience, in the hope and view of the coming of the Messiah. Pseudo-Epiphanius[k] says that Habakkuk died two years before the people of the Jews returned from Babylon, and was honourably buried in his own native place, which he says was Beth-socher, in the tribe of Simeon. With whom Isidore[l] agrees, as to the time of his death; but the place of his birth, he says, was Beth-acat; and of his death, Sabarta. Sozomen[m] reports, that, in the days of Theodosius, the grave of Habakkuk was found in Cele, formerly the city Ceila. So Eusebius says it was shewn at Kela, eight miles from Eleutheropolis; though, in another place, he says it was to be seen at Gabatha, twelve miles from the same place; which may be reconciled, by observing that it might be between them both, and be seen from each, since they were places near to each other[n]. But the Cippi Hebraici[o] say it was at a place called Jakuk in Galilee, not far from Sephetta, where was an academy of the Jews; and this seems to agree with what Sanderson, a countryman of ours, as quoted by Van Till[p], observes; that in his journey from Damascus to Jerusalem, between Sephet and Chapher-chittin, he found a village, in which, the Jews report, Habakkuk the prophet dwelt and died, the name of which is Jeakoke. But these things are not to be depended on.

CHAP. I.

IN this chapter, after the inscription, in which are the title of the book, the name and character of the writer, ver. 1, there is a complaint made by the prophet of his cry not being heard, and of salvation being deferred,

[a] Zohar in Gen. fol. 6. 3. Vid. Shalsbelet Hakabala, fol. 19. 2.
[b] חבקוק amplexus, Hillerus; amplexatio, Hieronymus.
[c] Amplexans, ibid.
[d] Optimus amplexator, Tarnovius.
[e] Hist. Heb. l. 1. c. 11. p. 35, 36.
[f] Demonstr. Evangel. Prop. 4. p. 234, 301.
[g] Seder Olam Rabba, p. 55. Seder Olam Zuta, p. 105. Tzemach David, fol. 15. 1. Juchasin, fol. 12. 2.
[h] Bedford's Scripture Chronology, p. 674.
[i] Usher. Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3395.
[k] De Prophet. Vit. & Interit. c. 18.
[l] De Vit. & Mort. Sanct. c. 47.
[m] Hist. Ecclesiast. l. 7. c. 29.
[n] Vid. Reland. Palestina Illustrata, tom. 2. p. 772.
[o] P. 63. Ed. Hottinger.
[p] Habakkuk Illustratus, p. 214.

which was long expected, ver. 2. and of the wickedness of the times he lived in; of iniquity and trouble, rapine and oppression, in general; and particularly of corruption in courts of judicature, in which there were nothing but strife and contention, a dilatoriness in proceedings at law, and justice was stopped and suppressed, ver. 3, 4. then follows an answer to this, shewing that some sore judgment, amazing and incredible, would soon be executed for such sins, ver. 5. that the Chaldeans would be raised up and sent against the Jews, and spoil them, and carry them captive; who are described by the cruelty of their temper and disposition; by the swiftness and fierceness of their cavalry; and by their derision of kings, princes, and strong holds; and by their victories and success, which they should impute to their idols, ver. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. and then the prophet, in the name of the church, expresses his faith that the people of God, and his interest, would be preserved, and not perish in this calamity; which is urged from the eternity, holiness, faithfulness, and power of God, and from his design in this affliction, which was correction, and not destruction, ver. 12. and the chapter is closed with an expostulation of the prophet with God, in consideration of his purity and holiness; how he could bear with such a wicked nation as the Chaldeans, and suffer them to devour men as fishes, in an arbitrary way, that have no ruler; catch them in their net, and insult them, and ascribe all to their own power and prudence, and think to go on continually in this way, ver. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

Ver. 1. *The burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see.*] This prophecy is called a *burden*, or something took up and carried, being what the prophet received from the Lord, and went with to the people of the Jews, and was a heavy burdensome prophecy to them; declaring the calamities that should come upon them by the Chaldeans, who would invade their land, and carry them captive; and Habakkuk, that brought this account, is called a *prophet*, to give the greater sanction to it; and it was what he had in vision from the Lord represented unto him, and therefore should be credited. Abarbinel inquires why Habakkuk should be called a prophet, when none of the lesser prophets are, excepting Haggai and Zechariah; and thinks the reason of it is, to give weight to his prophecy, since it might be suspected by some whether he was one; there being none of those phrases to be met with in this prophecy as in others, as *the word of the Lord came*, &c. or *thus saith the Lord.*

Ver. 2. *O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear!* &c.] The prophet having long observed the sins and iniquities of the people among whom he lived, and being greatly distressed in his mind on account of them, had frequently and importunately cried unto the Lord to put a stop to the abounding of them, that the people might be brought to a sense of their sins, and reform from them; but nothing of this kind appearing, he concludes his prayers were not heard, and therefore expostulates with the Lord upon this head: even *cry unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save!* either of violence done to himself in the discharge of his office, or of one man to another, of the rich to the poor; and yet, though he cried again and again to the Lord, to check this growing evil, and deliver the oppressed out of the hands of their oppressors, it was not done; which was matter of grief and trouble to him.

Ver. 3. *Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance?* &c.] That is, wicked men, and such as give a great deal of trouble, vexation, and grief to others, by their rapine and oppression; suggesting that he could not turn his eyes any where, but such persons presented themselves to his view; and that their wicked actions were performed by them openly and publicly, in the sight of all, without any shame or fear. So the Targum, "why do I see oppressors, and "behold those that do the labour of falsehood?" *For spoiling and violence are before me:* in my sight and presence, though a prophet, and notwithstanding all my remonstrances, exhortations, and reproofs; such were the hardness, obstinacy, and impudence of this people; to such a height and pitch of iniquity were they arrived, as to regard not the prophets of the Lord. The Targum is, "spoilers and robb[illegible] are before me:" or, *against me* [*], as in the text; t[illegible] sins were committed against him, he was injur[illegible]sly used himself; or they were done to others, contrary to his advice and persuasion: *and there* are *that raise up strife and contention;* in the kingdom, in cities, in families; in one man, brother, friend, and neighbour, against another; which occasion lawsuits, and in them justice is not done, as follows. It may be rendered, and *there shall be* and *is* a man *of strife;* so Japhet: *and he shall raise up contention;* one man given to strife will and does cause great contention in communities, civil and religious.

Ver. 4. *Therefore the law is slacked*, &c.] Is not put into execution against offenders: the civil magistrates, whose office it is to do justice according to law, are dilatory, and don't proceed with vigour and spirit against the transgressors of it, and in favour of honest and good men oppressed: or *it intermits* [†], or is *intermitted:* it is like a man whose pulse beats low, and is scarce perceived, which is a sign that he is not in good health; as the body politic is not, when the law, which is the soul of it, is not suffered to take place, and do its office. So the Targum, "the law languishes;" loses its force and vigour, and is ready to expire; which is a sad symptom of the bad estate of a commonwealth. *And judgment doth never go forth:* at least not right, to the justifying of the righteous, acquitting the innocent, and giving the cause on the right side; condemning the wicked, and punishing offenders as their crime deserves: it never appears as it should do; it is either not done at all, or done badly and perversely: *for the wicked doth compass about the righteous;* to hurt him or insnare him, and by frauds and wicked artifices, and false witnesses, to carry a cause against him; *therefore wrong judgment proceedeth;* the cause is given on the wrong side, against a good man, and for a wicked man; all these things the prophet saw with grief, and

[*] לנגדי contra me, Pagninus, Montanus; e regione mei, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius.

[†] תפוג intermittitur, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Burkius; פוג est, animi deliquium pati, Tarnovius.

complained of to the Lord, from whom he has an answer in the following words:

Ver. 5. *Behold ye among the Heathen, and regard*, &c.] This is the Lord's answer to the prophet's complaint, or what he directs him to say to the Jews, guilty of the crimes complained of, which should not go long unpunished; and who are called upon to look around them, and see what was doing among the nations; how the king of Babylon had overturned the Assyrian empire, and was going from place to place, subduing one nation after another, and their turn would be quickly: for these words are not addressed to the Heathen, to stir them up to observe what was doing, or about to be done, to the Jews: but to the Jews themselves, to consider and regard the operations of the Lord, and the works of his providence among the nations of the earth. These words are differently rendered in the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, and which better agree with the quotation of them by the apostle, Acts xiii. 41. see the note there: *and wonder marvellously*; or *wonder, wonder* [s]; the word is repeated, to express the great admiration there would be found just reason for, on consideration of what was now doing in the world, and would be done, especially in Judea: *for I will work a work in your days*, which *ye will not believe, though it be told* you; which was the destruction of the Jewish nation, city, and temple, by the Chaldeans, as is evident from the following words; and, though they were the instruments of it, it was the work of divine Providence; it was done according to the will of God, and by his direction, he giving success; and, being thus declared, was a certain thing, and might be depended on, nothing should hinder it; and it should be done speedily, in that generation, some then living should see it; though the thing was so amazing and incredible, that they would not believe it ever would be; partly because the Chaldeans were their good friends and allies, as they thought, as appears by Josiah's going out against the king of Egypt, when he was marching his army against the king of Babylon; and partly because they were the covenant-people of God, and would never be abandoned and given up by him into the hands of another people; and therefore, when they were told of it by the prophets of the Lord, especially by Jeremiah, time after time; who expressly said the king of Babylon would come against them, and they would be delivered into the hands of the Chaldeans; yet they would give no credit to it, till their ruin came upon them, as may be observed in various parts of his prophecy. The apostle quotes this passage in the place above mentioned, and applies it to the destruction of the Jews by the Romans, for their contemptuous rejection of the Messiah and his Gospel; which yet they would not believe to the last, though it was foretold by Christ and his apostles.

Ver. 6. *For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans*, &c.] A people till of late mean and low, famous only for their soothsaying, divination, and judicial astrology; but now become a powerful and warlike people, rising up under the permission of Providence to universal monarchy, and who would quickly add Judea to the rest of their dominions: *that bitter and hasty nation*; a cruel and merciless people in their temper and disposition: *bitter* against the people of God and true religion, and causing bitterness, calamities, and distress, wherever they came: *hasty* and precipitate in their determinations; swift and nimble in their motions; active and vigorous in the prosecution of their designs: *which shall march through the breadth of the land*: or *breadths of the land* [t]; through the whole world, as they were attempting to do, having subdued Syria, all Asia, and great part of Africa, through which they boldly marched, bearing down all opposition that was in their way; or through the breadth of the land of Judea, taking all the fenced cities as they went along, and Jerusalem the metropolis of it; see Isa. viii. 7, 8: *to possess the dwelling-places* that are *not theirs*; the cities of Judea, and houses in them, as well as the palaces and dwelling-places in Jerusalem, which they had no right unto, but what they got by the sword; what were the legal possessions and inheritances of others from father to son for ages past, these the Chaldeans would dispossess them of; and not only take them, and the spoil and plunder of them, for the present, but retain them in their possession, as an inheritance to be transmitted to their posterity. This may have some respect to the length of the captivity of the Jews, and their land being in the hands of their enemies for the space of seventy years.

Ver. 7. *They* are *terrible and dreadful*, &c.] For the fierceness of their countenances; the number and valour of their troops; the splendour of their armour; the victories they had obtained, and the cruelty they had exercised; the fame of all which spread terror wherever they came: *their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves*; they will not be directed and governed by any laws of God and man, but by their own; they will do according to their will and pleasure, and none will be able to gainsay and resist them; they will hear no reason or argument; their decrees and determinations they make of themselves shall be put into execution, and there will be no opposing their tyrannical measures; they'll usurp a power, and take upon them an authority over others of themselves, which all must submit unto; no mercy and pity, no goodness and humanity, are to be expected from such lawless and imperious enemies.

Ver. 8. *Their horses also are swifter than the leopards*, &c.] Creatures remarkable for their swiftness: these are creatures born of a he-panther and a lioness, and not of a lion and a she-panther, as some have affirmed; and which adultery is highly resented by the lion; nor will he suffer it to go unrevenged, as Pliny [u] and Philostratus [w] observe: those thus begotten differ from common lions in this, that they have no manes: the panthers are the creatures here meant, which are very swift, as Bochart [x] from various authors has observed. Lucan [y] calls this creature *celerem pardum, the swift*

[s] והתמהו תמהו & admiramini, admiramini, Vatablus, Drusius, Burkius.

[t] למרחבי ארץ latitudines terræ, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[u] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 16.

[w] De Vita Apollonii, l. 2. c. 7.

[x] Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 3. c. 7. col. 788.

[y] Pharsalia, l. 6.

panther; and Jerom says [a] nothing is swifter than the panther; and Ælianus [b] observes that the panther, by the swiftness of its running, will overtake most creatures, and particularly apes; and Eustathius [c] confirms the same, saying that it exceeds other creatures in swiftness, and as it were flies before the eyes of hunters; and Osorius [d] relates, that the king of Portugal once sent to the pope of Rome a panther tamed, which being had into the woods a hunting by a Persian hunter, with wonderful swiftness leaped upon the boars and deer, and killed them at once; and the Septuagint version here is, *their horses will leap above the panthers:* or exceed them in leaping, for which these panthers are very famous too: an Arabic writer [e], whom Bochart mentions, says it will leap above forty cubits at a leap. Pliny [f] reports, that the panthers in Africa will get up into thick trees, and hide themselves in the branches, and leap from thence on those that pass by; and because of the swiftness of this creature, with other qualities of it, the third beast or Grecian monarchy, especially in its first head Alexander the great, is represented by it, Dan. vii. 6. he making such a swift and rapid progress in his conquests; and yet the Chaldean horses would exceed them in swiftness, and be very speedy in their march into the land of Judea; and therefore it was in vain for the Jews to please themselves with the thoughts that these people were a great way off, and so they secure from them, when they could and would be upon them presently, ere they were aware: *and are more fierce than the evening wolves;* which creatures are naturally fierce, and especially when they are hungry, and particularly at evening; when, having had no food all the day, their appetites are very keen, and they go in quest of their prey; and, when they meet with it, fall upon it with greater eagerness and fierceness. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, than the wolves of Arabia; that there are wolves very frequent in Arabia, is observed by Diodorus Siculus [g], and Strabo [h]; but that these are remarkable for their fierceness does not appear; rather those in colder climates are more fierce; so Pliny [i] says, they are little and sluggish in Africa and Egypt, but rough and fierce in cold climates. It is, in the original text, *more sharp* [k]; which some interpret of the sharpness of their sight. Ælianus says [l], it is a most quick and sharp-sighted creature; and can see in the night-season, even though the moon shines not: the reason of which Pliny [m] gives is, because the eyes of wolves are shining, and dart light; hence Ælianus [n] observes, that that time of the night in which the wolf only by nature enjoys the light is called wolf-light; and that Homer [o] calls a night which has some glimmering of light, or a sort of twilight, such as the wolves can see themselves walk by, αμφιλυκη νυξ, which is that light that precedes the rising sun; and he also observes that the wolf is sacred to the sun, and to Apollo, which are the same; and there was an image of one at Delphos; and so Macrobius [p] says, that the inhabitants of Lycopolis, a city of Thebais in Egypt, alike worship Apollo and a wolf, and in both the sun, because this animal takes and consumes all things like the sun; and, because perceiving much by the quick sight of its eyes, overcomes the darkness of the night; and observes, that some think they have their name from light, though they would have it be from the morning-light; because those creatures especially observe that time for seizing on cattle, after a night's hunger, when before day-light they are turned out of the stables into pasture; but it is for the most part at evening, and in the night, that wolves prowl about for their prey [q]; and from whence they have the name of evening-wolves, to which the Chaldean horses are here compared: and yet there seems to be an antipathy between these, if what some naturalists [r] say is true; as that if a horse by chance treads in the footsteps of a wolf, a numbness will immediately seize it, yea, even its belly will burst; and that, if the buckle-bone of a wolf is thrown under horses drawing a chariot full speed, and they tread upon it, they'll stop and stand stone-still, immovable: whether respect is here had to the quick sight or sharp hunger of these creatures is not easy to say; though rather, since the comparison of them is with horses, it seems to respect the fierceness of them, for which the war-horse is famous, Job xxxix. 24. and may be better understood of the sharpness of the appetite of evening-wolves, when hunger-bitten: *and their horsemen shall spread themselves;* or be multiplied, as the Targum; they shall be many, and spread themselves all over the country, so that there will be no escaping; all will fall into their hands: *and their horsemen shall come from far;* as Chaldea was reckoned from Judea, and especially in comparison of neighbouring nations, who used to be troublesome, as Moab, Edom, &c. see Jer. v. 15: *they shall flee as the eagle* that *hasteth to eat;* those horsemen shall be so speedy in their march, that they shall seem rather to fly than ride, and even to fly as swift as the eagle, the swiftest of birds, and which itself flies swiftest when hungry, and in sight of its prey; and the rather this bird is mentioned, because used by many nations, as the Persians, and others, for a military sign [s].

Ver. 9. *They shall come all for violence,* &c.] Or, *the whole of it* [t]; the whole army of the Chaldeans, every one of them; this would be their sole view, not

[a] Comment. in Hos. c. 14. fol. 10. L.
[b] Hist. Animal. l. 8. c. 6.
[c] In Hexaemeron.
[d] De Rebus Portugall. l. 9. apud Frantz. Hist. Animal. Sacr. par. 1. c. 8. p. 90.
[e] Damir apud Bochart, ut supra.
[f] Nat. Hist. l. 19. c. 73.
[g] Bibliothec. l. 3. p. 177.
[h] Geograph. l. 16. p. 534.
[i] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 22.
[k] חדו & acuti erunt, Montanus, Cocceius; & acutiores, Pagninus, Calvin, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Grotius; so Ben Melech; & acuti sunt, Burkius.
[l] De Animal. l. 10. c. 26.
[m] Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 37.
[n] Ut supra.
[o] Iliad. 7. prope finem.
[p] Saturnal. l. 1. c. 17.
[q] Vesper ubi e pastu vitulos ad tecta reducit,
Auditisque lupos acuunt balatibus agni. Virgil. Georgic. l. 4.
Ac veluti pleno lupus insidiatus ovili
Nocte super media—— Ibid. Æneid. l. 9.
[r] Ælian. de Animal. l. 1. c. 36. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 28. c. 20.
[s] Vid. Lydium de Re Militari, l. 3. c. 7. p. 87.
[t] כלה illa tota, Junius & Tremellius; sub. gens, Pagninus, Piscator; totus exercitus, Vatablus; populus, Calvin.

to do themselves justice, as might be pretended, or avenge any injuries or affronts done to them by the Jews; but purely for the sake of spoil and plunder: *their faces shall sup up as the east wind*: their countenances will appear so stern and fierce, that their very looks will so frighten, as to cause men to sink and die through terror; just as herbs and plants shrivel up and wither away, when blasted by a nipping east wind. So the Targum, "the reception or look of their faces is "like to a vehement east wind." Some render it, "the look or design of their faces is to the east [t];" when the Chaldeans were on their march to Judea, their faces were to the west or south-west; but then their desire and views were, that when they had got the spoil they came for, as in the preceding clause, to carry it to Babylon, which lay eastward or north-east of Judea, and thither their faces looked: *and they shall gather the captivity as the sand*: or gather up persons, both in Judea, and in other countries conquered by them, as innumerable as the sand of the sea, and carry them captive into their own land. Captivity is put for captives.

Ver. 10. *And they shall scoff at the kings*, &c.] Or, *he shall* [u], Nebuchadnezzar king of the Chaldeans, and the army with him; who would make a jest of kings and their armies that should oppose them, as being not at all a match for them; as the kings of Judah, Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, they carried captive, and all others confederate with them, in whom they trusted, as the king of Egypt particularly; and which is observed to shew the vanity of trusting in princes for safety; though it may also include all other kings the Chaldeans fought against, and the kingdoms they invaded and subdued: *and the princes shall be a scorn unto them*: the nobles, counsellors, and ministers of state; or leaders and commanders of armies, and general officers, in whom great confidence is often put; but these the king of Babylon and his forces would mock and laugh at, as being nothing in their hands, and who would fall an easy prey to them: *they shall deride every strong hold*: in Jerusalem, in the whole land of Judea, and in every other country they invade, or pass through, none being able to stand out against them: *for they shall heap dust, and take it*: easily, as it were in sport, only by raising a dust-heap, or a heap of dirt; by which is meant a mount raised up to give them a little rise, to throw in their darts or stones, or use their engines and battering-rams to more advantage, and to scale the walls, and get possession. There are two other senses mentioned by Kimchi; as that they shall gather a great number of people as dust, and take it; or they shall gather dust to fill up the trenches and ditches about the wall, that so they may come at it, and take it.

Ver. 11. *Then shall* his *mind change*, &c.] The mind of the king of Babylon; not that, when he had taken Jerusalem, he altered his purpose, and laid aside his designs of attacking other nations, and returned to his own country; where he became guilty of gross idolatry, in setting up the golden image in the plain of Dura, which he required all his subjects to worship, and to which he ascribed all his victories; for, five years after this, Josephus [w] says, he led his army into Cœlesyria, and conquered the Moabites and Ammonites, and entered Egypt, and slew the reigning king of it: but rather the disposition of his mind changed for the worse upon his success in subduing kings and princes, and their kingdoms; for though his mind was never good, but always proud, haughty, and ambitious, insolent, cruel, and tyrannical; yet, being flushed with his conquests, he grew more and more so: *and he shall pass over* [x], or *transgress*, all bounds of modesty and sobriety, of humanity and goodness: *and offend*, imputing *this his power unto his god* [y]; this particularly will be the sin he will be guilty of, he will ascribe all his achievements to his idol Bel; or rather to himself, to his own prowess and valour, his wisdom and skill in military affairs; for so it will bear to be rendered, making *this his own power to be his god*; and perhaps the golden image Nebuchadnezzar set up to be worshipped was for himself; see Dan. iv. 30. The Targum is, "therefore, because of the lifting up of his spirit, "his kingdom was removed from him; and he com"mitted an offence, in that he multiplied glory to "his idol;" and some interpret the whole of this of the miserable condition Nebuchadnezzar was brought into, being a prophecy of it: *then shall his mind change*; his heart from man's to a beast's, Dan. iv. 16: *and he shall pass over*; from all society and conversation with men, and have his dwelling with beasts, ver. 31, 32: *and offend*, or rather *be punished*, and become desolate and miserable, for his pride, and idolatry, and other sins: *this his power is his god* [z]; spoken ironically; see what his power is now, being changed into a beast, which he reckoned his god, or gloried in as what he had from his god: but I rather think the whole is a continuation of his success, particularly in the land of Judea; and to be rendered, *then shall he pass through, as the wind, and shall pass over: and he shall bear the punishment of his sin, whose power is his god*; that is, the king of Babylon and his army, the Chaldeans, should pass through all nations and kingdoms that were between them and Judea, like a strong wind or whirlwind, to which they are compared, Jer. iv. 13. and carry all before them, none being able to resist and oppose them; and should pass over rivers that lay in their way, and the boundaries of Judea, and spread themselves over the whole country; and then that country, and the inhabitants of it, should be punished for their sins, particularly for their confidence in themselves; in their wealth and riches; in their fortresses and strong towers; in their own works of righteousness; all which they made idols of, and trusted not in their God, as they ought to have done.

Ver. 12. Art *thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine holy One?* &c.] The prophet, foreseeing these calamities coming upon his nation and people, observes some things for their comfort in this verse; and expostulates with God in the following verses

[t] קדימה ad orientem, Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius; orientem versus, Junius & Tremellius, De Dieu, Burkius; so Abarbinel.

[u] והוא & ipse, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Tarnovius, Grotius, Cocceius.

[w] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7.

[x] יעבר transgredietur, Pagninus, Vatablus, Calvin, Drusius, Tarnovius.

[y] זו כחו לאלהו iste est, cujus robur fuit pro deo ejus, Gussetius.

[z] Tunc immutatus est spiritus, & transiit & desolatus est, hoc robur ejus est dei ejus, De Dieu.

about his providential dealings, in order to obtain an answer from him, which might remove the objections of his own mind, and those of other good men he personates, raised against them; being stumbled at this, that wicked men should be suffered to succeed and prosper, and the righteous should be afflicted and distressed by them: but for his own present consolation, and that of others, in a view of the worst that should befall them, he strongly asserts, *we shall not die;* meaning not a corporeal death, for that all men die, good and bad; and this the Jews did die, and no doubt good men among them too, at the siege and taking of Jerusalem by the Chaldean army, either by famine, or pestilence, or sword: nor a death of affliction, which the people of God are subject to, as well as others; is often their case, and is for their good, and in love, and not wrath: but a spiritual death, which none that are quickened by the spirit and grace of God ever die; though grace may be low, it is never lost; though saints may be in dead and lifeless frames, and need quickening afresh, yet they are not without the principle of spiritual life; grace in them is a well of living water, springing up to everlasting life; their spiritual life can never fail them, since it is secured in Christ: and much less shall they die the second, or an eternal death; they are ordained to eternal life; Christ is come, and given his flesh for it, that they might have it; it is in his hands for them; they are united to him, and have both the promise and pledge of it: and this may be argued, as by the prophet here, from the eternity of God, *art thou not from everlasting?* he is from everlasting to everlasting, the Ancient of days, that inhabits eternity, is, was, and is to come: therefore *we shall not die;* none of his people shall perish, because he loves them with an everlasting love; has made an everlasting choice of them; has set up Christ from everlasting as their surety and Saviour; entered into an everlasting covenant with them in Christ; is their everlasting Father, and will be their everlasting portion; is the unchangeable Jehovah, and therefore they shall not be consumed: this may be concluded from their covenant-interest in God, *O Lord my God;* they are his peculiar people, given to Christ to be preserved by him, and covenant-interest always continues; he that is their God is their God and guide unto death: and also from the holiness of God, *mine holy One:* who has sworn by his holiness to them, and is faithful to his covenant and promise; and is the sanctifier of them, that has sanctified or set them apart for himself; made Christ sanctification to them, and makes them holy by his spirit and grace, and enables them to persevere in grace and holiness: moreover, this may be understood of the people of the Jews, as a church and nation; who, though they would be carried captive into Babylon, yet would still continue as such, and be returned again as such, and not die, sink, and perish; since the Messiah was to spring from them; and they might be assured of their preservation for that purpose, from the perfections of God, his covenant with them, and their relation to him: nor shall the church of Christ in any age die and perish, though in ever so low a state; a particular church may, but the interest and church of Christ in general, or his spiritual seed, never shall. This is one of the eighteen passages, as Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech observe, called *Tikkun-Sopherim*, the correction of the scribes, of Ezra, and his company; it having been written, in some copies, *thou shalt not die*[a]; asserting the immortality of God, or his eternity to come; and that, as he was from everlasting, so he should continue to everlasting; and to this sense the Targum paraphrases the words, "thy Word remaineth for ever;" and so the Syriac version follows the same reading: *O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment:* that is, the Chaldeans; either to be judged and punished themselves for their sins, as all wicked Christless sinners are, even righteously fore-ordained to condemnation for their sins; or rather to be the instruments of punishing the wicked among the Jews; for this purpose were these people ordained in the counsels of God, and raised up in his providence, and constituted a kingdom, and made a powerful nation: *O mighty God:* or *rock*[b]; the rock and refuge of his people: *thou hast established them for correction;* or *founded*[c] them, and settled them as a monarchy, strong and mighty for this end, that they might be a rod in the hand of the Lord, not for destruction, but for correction and chastisement; and from hence it might be also comfortably concluded that they should not die and utterly perish.

Ver. 13. Thou art *of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniquity,* &c.] The Lord with his eyes of omniscience beholds all things good and evil, and all men good and bad, with all their actions; but then he does not look upon the sins of men with pleasure and approbation; since they are contrary to his nature, repugnant to his will, and breaches of his righteous law: and though sin in general may be included here, yet there seems to be a particular respect had to the *evil* or injury done by the Chaldeans to the Jews, in invading their land, spoiling their substance, and slaying their persons; and to the *iniquity*, labour, or grievance, by which may be meant the oppression and violence the same people exercised upon the inhabitants of Judea; which, though permitted by the Lord, could not be well-pleasing in his sight. The Targum interprets it of persons, workers of evil, and workers of the labour of falsehood; see Psal. v. 4, 5: *wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously;* the Chaldeans, who dealt treacherously with God, by worshipping idols; and with the Jews, pretending to be their good friends and allies, when they meditated their ruin and destruction; and yet the Lord in his providence seemed to look favourably on these perfidious persons, since they succeeded in all their enterprises: this was stumbling to the prophet, and all good men; and they knew not how, or at least found great difficulty, to reconcile this to the purity and holiness of God, and to his justice and faithfulness; see Jer. xii. 1, 2: and *holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?* the

[a] לא תמות non morieris, Vatablus, Drusius, Grotius.

[b] צור O rupes, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Coccejus, Van Till; O petra, Drusius.

[c] יסדתו fundasti eum, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Coccejus, Van Till; constituisti, Vatablus.

comparison does not lie so much personally between Nebuchadnezzar and Zedekiah the last king of the Jews, whose eyes the king of Babylon put out, and whom he used in a cruel manner; who was, no doubt, comparatively speaking, a more righteous person than the Chaldean monarch was; being not the worst of the kings of Judea, and whose name has the signification of righteousness in it: but rather between the Chaldeans and the Jews; who, though there were many wicked persons among them, yet there were some truly righteous, who fell in the common calamity: and, as to the bulk of them, were a more righteous people, at the worst, than their enemies were, who devoured them, destroyed many with the sword, plundered them of their substance, and carried them captive; and the Lord was silent all this while, said nothing in his providence against them, put no stop to their proceedings; and by his silence seemed to approve of, at least to connive at, what they did; and this the prophet in the name of good men reasons with the Lord about.

Ver. 14. *And makest men as the fishes of the sea,* &c.] That is, sufferest them to be used as the fishes of the sea, which are easily taken in the net, and are common to every one; whosoever will may take them up, and kill them, and use them for their food; and which also among themselves are often hardly used, the lesser being devoured by the greater; and in like manner the prophet suggests, that the people of the Jews, who were men made after the image of God, and made for society and usefulness, and moreover were God's covenant-people; and it might have been expected, that a more special providence would have attended them, more than other men, and especially than what attended the fishes of the sea; yet it looked as if there were no more care taken of them than of these: *as the creeping things that* have *no ruler over them*: not the creeping things of the earth, but of the water, the lesser sort of fishes that move in the water; or those that more properly creep, as crabs, prawns, and shrimps; see Psal. civ. 25. who have none to protect and defend them, and restrain others from taking and hurting them: this may seem contrary to what Aristotle[d] and Pliny[e] say of some fishes, that they go in company, and have a leader or governor; but, as Bochart[f] observes, it is one thing to be a leader of the way, a guide and director, which way to steer their course in swimming; and another thing to be as the general of an army, to protect and defend, or under whose directions they might defend themselves; such an one the prophet denies they had: and so, the prophet complains, this was the case of the Jews; they were exposed to the cruelty of their enemies, as if there was no God that governed in the world, and no providence to direct and order things for the preservation of men, and to keep good men from being hurt by evil men; or those that were weak and feeble from being oppressed by the powerful and mighty; this he reasons with the Lord about, and was desirous of an answer to it.

Ver. 15. *They take up all of them with the angle,* &c.] The prophet continues the metaphor of fishing, and observes the different ways of taking fish; which is to be applied to the case he is speaking of: as fishermen take all they can with their angles, so *they* or *he*, for it is in the singular number, Nebuchadnezzar and his army, take up all out of the sea of the world; are ambitious of getting all kingdoms and nations of the world under their power and dominion; particularly all Judea, and all the inhabitants of it, good and bad, without any distinction; for all were fish which came to their net: this may design the artful and alluring methods they first made use of to get the people into their hands, by making covenants with them, and drawing them into making of presents, and paying of tribute: *they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag*: with the angle the fisherman casches fish one by one, but with the net great numbers; and what he misses by throwing the net, he gets by using the drag; all which may be expressive of the ways and methods used by the king of Babylon and his army, both in the times of Jeconiah, and of Zedekiah; under the former he used the net, and carried off large numbers, and with them the royal family and great substance, but left many behind; under the latter he came and swept away all, drained the land of its riches and its inhabitants: *therefore they rejoice and are glad*: as fishermen do when they have good sport; so these people rejoiced in their own success, and in the calamities of their neighbours.

Ver. 16. *Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag,* &c.] Either to their idols, to fortune and the stars, as Aben Ezra; imagining they gave them success, and prospered them in the arts and methods they used: or to their arms, as the Targum; nor was it unusual with the Heathens to worship their spears, sacrifice to them, and swear by them[g]. So Justin says[h], originally the ancients worshipped spears for gods, in memory of whose religion spears are still added to the images of the gods. Lucian[i] asserts that the Scythians sacrificed to a scimitar; and Arnobius[k] says the same; and Ammianus Marcellinus[l] reports, that the Quadi worship their swords or daggers instead of gods; and that it was usual to swear by the spear is evident from others[m]. Or else the sense is, they sacrificed to their own valour and courage, skill and conduct. *Because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous*; that is, by their angle, net, and drag; or by those things signified by them, the arts and methods they used to subdue nations, conquer kingdoms, and bring them into subjection to them; they enlarged their dominions, increased their riches and revenues, and had plenty of every thing that was desirable for food and raiment, for pleasure and profit; or to gratify the most unbounded ambition, having every thing that heart

[d] Hist. Animal. l. 9. c. 13.
[e] Nat. Hist. l. 9. c. 15.
[f] Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 1. c. 6. col. 39.
[g] Vid. Doughtæi Analect. Sacra, p. 494, 495.
[h] E Trogo, l. 43. c. 3, 4.

[i] In Jupiter Tragœdus.
[k] Adv. Gentes, l. 6. p. 232.
[l] Hist. l. 17.
[m] Ὀμνυσι δ' αἰχμην, Æschylus.

could wish for and desire: the allusion is to making sumptuous feasts, and rich banquets, on occasion of victories obtained.

Ver. 17. *Shall they therefore empty their net,* &c.] Or *thus*, after this manner, so Noldius; as fishermen do, when they have had a good cast, and a large draught, spread the net, and take out the fishes, in order to throw it again, and catch more; and so it is asked, should these Chaldeans, when they have conquered one nation, and so filled their net or themselves with the spoil, carry it to Babylon, and there lay it up, and then proceed to fight against another kingdom and nation, and plunder it in like manner? *and not spare continually to slay the nations?* the inhabitants of them one after another, and subdue them under them, and make themselves master of all their treasure, until they are arrived to universal monarchy by such cruel and unmerciful methods. The Targum is, "shall he send "his armies continually to consume nations, and that "without mercy?" This the prophet proposes in the name of the whole body of the Lord's people, and leaves it with him to have an answer to it, which is given in the following chapter.

CHAP. II.

THIS chapter contains an answer from the Lord to the expostulations, pleadings, and reasonings of the prophet, in the name of the people. The preparation of the prophet to receive this answer is described, ver. 1. then follows the answer itself, in which he is bid to write and make plain the vision he had, that it might be easily read, ver. 2. and a promise is made, that vision should still be continued to the appointed time, at which time the Messiah would come; and this the righteous man, in opposition to the vain and proud man, is encouraged to live in the faith of, ver. 3, 4. and then the destruction of the enemies of the people of God is threatened for their pride, ambition, covetousness, oppression, and murder, ver. 5—12. which would be unavoidable, ver. 13. and issue in the spread of the knowledge of the glory of God in the world, ver. 14. and also the ruin of other enemies is threatened, for drawing men into apostacy, and for their violence and idolatry, ver. 15—19. upon which would follow an universal silence in the earth, ver. 20.

Ver. 1. *I will stand upon my watch,* &c.] These are the words of the prophet: so the Targum introduces them, "the prophet said;" and this he said in character as a watchman, as all the prophets were: as a watchman takes the proper place he watches in and looks out, especially in time of danger and distress, if he can spy any one bringing tidings, that he may receive it, and notify it to the people that have appointed him a watchman; so the prophet retired from the world, and gave himself up to meditation and prayer, and put himself in a waiting posture; looking up to the Lord, and expecting an answer to his expostulations with him, concerning the success of the enemies of God's people, and the calamities that were like to come upon them, that he might report it to them; see Isa. xxi. 8: *and set me upon the tower;* a place of eminence, from which he could behold an object at a distance: it signifies a strait place, in which he was as one besieged; and may be an emblem of the straits and difficulties he was in, which he wanted to be extricated out of: the thoughts of his heart troubled him; he had a great many objections that rose up in his mind against the providences that were like to attend his people; he was beset with the temptations of Satan, and surrounded with objectors to what he had delivered, concerning the Chaldeans being raised up by God to the destruction of the Jewish nation; and, amidst these difficulties, he sets himself to reading the word of God, and meditation on it, to pray to God for instruction and information in this matter; as Asaph, in a like case, went into the sanctuary of the Lord, where he got satisfaction, Psal. lxxiii. 2, 3. 16, 17. as well as it may be expressive of the confidence he had in God, in his covenant and promises, which were as a fortress and strong tower to him; in short, he kept his place, he was found in the way of his duty, in the performance of his office, and was humbly and patiently waiting on God, to know more of his mind and will, and acquaint the people with it. *And will watch to see what he will say unto me;* or *in me**; that is, what the Lord would say unto him, either outwardly by an audible voice; or inwardly by impressing things upon his mind; or in a vision by the spirit of prophecy, as Kimchi; so David, *the spirit of the Lord spoke by me*, or *in me*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. he was determined to wait patiently for an answer, and to continue in the present posture, and constantly attend to every motion and dictate of the spirit of God, and take particular notice of what should be suggested to him: *and what I shall answer when I am reproved:* either by the Lord, for using so much freedom and boldness in expostulations and reasonings with him, who is under no obligation to give an account of his matters unto the children of men; or by others, how he should be able to satisfy his own mind, and remove the scruples, doubts, and objections, that arose there against the providence of God, in prospering the wicked, and afflicting the righteous, and repel the temptation he was under to quarrel with God, and arraign his proceedings; and how he should answer the objections that his people made, both against his prophecies, and the providence of God, for which they reproved him; or, however, he expected they would. The Targum is, "and what "will be returned to my request."

Ver. 2. *And the Lord answered me,* &c.] As he does his ministers and people sooner or later, in one way or another, when they call upon him with humility and reverence, with faith and fervency: *and said,*

* בי in me, Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius, Tarnovius, Van Till, Burkius.

write the vision; which the prophet now had from him, concerning the coming of the Messiah, and the destruction of the enemies of the church and people of God: and this he has orders to *write:* not only to tell it to the people then present, for their particular information and satisfaction; but to write it, that it may be read over and over, and that it may remain, and be of use in times to come: *and make it plain upon tables:* engrave it in plain legible letters on tables of wood; on box-tree, as the Septuagint version; on which they used to write before paper was found out and used. Writing-tables are of ancient use; they were used in and before the times of Homer, for he speaks[o] of writing very pernicious things on a two-leaved table: wherefore Josephus must be mistaken when he suggests[p] that letters were not found out in the times of Homer. These tables were made of wood, sometimes of one sort, and sometimes of another; sometimes they were made of the pine-tree, as appears from Euripides[q]; but, for the most part, of box[r], according to the Greek version as above; and consisted sometimes of two leaves, for the most part of three or five, covered with wax[s], on which impressions were easily made, and continued long, and were very legible; and these impressions or letters were formed with an iron style or pen; see Jer. xvii. 1. this the Greeks and Tuscans first used, but was afterwards forbid by the Romans, who, instead of it, ordered an instrument of bone to be used[t]: hence these tables were wont to be called *wax,* because besmeared with it; and so, in wills and testaments wrote on them, the heirs are said to be written either in the first wax, or in the bottom of the wax[u], that is, of the will, or in the lowest part of the table, or what we should call the bottom of the leaf or page: and it was a custom among the Romans, as Cicero[w] relates, that the public affairs of every year were committed to writing by the Pontifex Maximus, or high-priest, and published on a table, and set to view within doors, that the people might have an opportunity and be able to know them: yea, it was usual to hang up laws, approved and recorded, in tables of brass, in their market-places, and in their temples, that[x] they might be seen and read; the same we call annals. In like manner the Jewish prophets used to write and expose their prophecies publicly on tables, either in their own houses, or in the temple, that every one that passed by might read them. *That he may run that readeth it;* may run through the whole without any difficulty, without making any stop, being written in such large capital letters; and those cut so well, and made so plain, that a man might run it over at once with ease, or even read it as he was running; nor need he stop his pace, or stand to read. The Targum is, "write the prophecy, and explain it in the book of "the law, that he may hasten to obtain wisdom, "whoever he is that reads in it."

Ver. 3. *For the vision is yet for an appointed time, &c.*] Not the present vision only, but vision or prophecy in general: it was a doubt that arose in the minds of the prophet and other good men, upon the notice given that the Chaldeans would be raised up to the destruction of the Jews; that then the law of God would cease, his worship would not continue; vision and prophecy would be no more; it would be all over with the doctrine of the law and the prophets: now in answer to this, and to remove this doubt, they are assured that vision or prophecy should *yet,* or still, continue, and even *to the appointed time;* the time fixed for the continuance of it, notwithstanding the people of the Jews should be carried captive into another land: and accordingly so it was; there were prophets, as Daniel and Ezekiel, in the time of the captivity; and, after it, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi; yea, the law and the prophets were until John; for vision and prophecy were to be sealed up by the Messiah, and not before; see Luke xvi. 16. Dan. ix. 24. it was true indeed with respect to the present vision or prophecy concerning the Messiah, that that was not to be fulfilled presently; there was some considerable time first to elapse; there was a time appointed for the accomplishment of it, and it would remain till that time, and then be most surely fulfilled; which would be before the sceptre departed from Judah, while the second temple was yet standing, and when Daniel's seventy weeks, or 490 years, were come; which were the limited, determined, and appointed time for the Messiah's coming, the time appointed of the Father, the fulness of time; so there was an appointed time for his coming to take vengeance on the Jewish nation, for their rejection of him, to which the apostle applies these words, Heb. x. 37. and also for his spiritual coming, to visit his people in a gracious way; there is a set time to favour Zion and her children; as well as there is a day fixed for his second coming, or coming to judgment. *But at the end it shall speak, and not lie;* or rather, *he shall speak*[y]; and so in the following clauses it should be rendered, not *it,* but *he;* and so the apostle has taught us to interpret it of a person, and not a thing, Heb. x. 37. that is, *at the end* of the time appointed, or at the end of the Jewish state, both civil and ecclesiastic, the Messiah should appear, as he did, which is called the end of the world, 1 Cor. x. 11. Heb. ix. 26. when a new world began, the world to come, the Gospel dispensation, of which Christ is said to be the Father, in the Greek version of Isa. ix. 5. see Heb. ii. 5. and being come, he shall *speak;* or, as it may be rendered, *at the end thereof* shall be *the speaker,* or *preacher*[z]; that shall publish and proclaim the glad tidings of the Gospel; and this agrees with Christ, the Logos, or Word of God, the great Prophet that should be raised up in the church, the teacher sent of God, the Wonderful Counsellor, and faithful witness; who spoke out the whole mind and will of God; published the

[o] γράψας ἐν πίνακι πτυκτῷ, &c. Homer. Iliad. 6.
[p] Contr. Apion, l. 1. c. 2.
[q] In Hippolito.
[r] Ergo tam doctæ nobis periere tabellæ,
Non illas fixum charas effecerat aurum,
Vulgari buxo sordida cera fuit. Propertius.
Buxa crepent cerata——— Prudentius.
[s] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 30.

[t] Isidor. Originum, l. 6. c. 9.
[u] In ima cera, Sueton. in Vit. Jul. Cæsar. c. 83. in extrema cera, Cicero in Verrem, l. 3. Vid. Alex. ab Alex. ib. l. 1. c. 1.
[w] De Oratore, l. 2. sect. 24.
[x] Taciti Annales, l. 11. c. 14.
[y] ויפח idque ille loquetur, Castalio.
[z] Præco erit in fine, Coccieus; & præco aderit in fine, Van Till.

everlasting Gospel; delivered out the doctrines of grace and truth; and spoke such words of grace as never man did, and with such power and authority as the Scribes and Pharisees did not. Some render the words, *and he shall break forth as the morning*[a]; so the word is used in Cant. ii. 17. and iv. 6. and so the Septuagint version, *he shall arise at the end*: like the rising sun: this agrees with Christ, the day-spring from on high, and whose coming is said to be as the morning, Luke i. 78. 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. Hos. vi. 3. and when he should thus appear, and exercise his prophetic office, he should *not lie*: this is the character of God himself, as opposed to a mere man, who is subject to lying and deceit; and suits well with Christ, who is truly God, and not a mere man; and answers to his character in prophecy and fact, that there was no guile in his mouth and lips, Isa. liii. 4. 1 Pet. ii. 22. and fitly describes him as a preacher, who is truth itself; taught the way of God in truth; spoke the word of truth, the Gospel of our salvation; and no lie is of the truth; and who is infallible in all his doctrines, and does not and cannot deceive any; all his words are to be depended upon as faithful and true. *Though it tarry, wait for it*; or *though he tarry, wait for him*; not that he really would or did tarry; but he might seem to do so, not coming so soon as the Old-Testament saints expected, and as they wished for and desired; it was a long time from the first promise of him; and sometimes the saints were ready to give it up, and their hearts to sink and faint, because it was seemingly deferred. This shews that this prophecy does not respect the Babylonish captivity; for that had no seeming delay, but, as soon as ever the seventy years were up, there was a deliverance from it; but the Messiah's coming was long expected, and seemed to be deferred, and the patience of the saints was almost wore out; but they are here encouraged, when this was the case, still to wait for him, as good old Simeon and others did, about the time of his coming; and so his spiritual and second coming should be waited patiently for, though they may seem to be delayed. *Because it will surely come, it will not tarry*; or *for he that is to come*, or *is coming, will come*[b], *and not tarry*; beyond the appointed time. This is a periphrasis of the Messiah; for, being so often spoken of as to come, it became a description of him, *he that is to come*; see Mat. xi. 3. and as it was foretold he would come, so assuredly he would come, and not stay a moment longer than the time appointed of the Father; in which fulness of time God sent him, and he came, Gal. iv. 3, 4. The person here prophesied of is not Jeremiah, as Jarchi, but the Messiah; and this is acknowledged by some Jewish writers, ancient and modern; and removes the doubt and objection that might arise from the Chaldeans coming upon the Jews, and carrying them captive, as if the promise of the Messiah would fail, whereas it would not. In the Talmud[c], they say, "God does not renew his world "till after seven thousand years; another says five "thousand. R. Nathan says, this Scripture penetrates and descends into the abyss; *i. e.* fixes no "particular time; *the vision is for an appointed time*, "&c.; not as our Rabbins, who inquire the meaning "of a time, and times, and half a time; what then is "meant, *but at the end it shall speak*, and *not lie*? "Let them burst that compute the times, who used "to say when the time comes, and he cometh not, he "will never come; but wait for him, as it is said, *if* "*he tarry, wait for him*: perhaps you'll say, we wait, "but he does not wait; this may be an instruction "to you what he says, *therefore the Lord waiteth to* "*be gracious*," &c. Maimonides says[d], their twelfth fundamental article of faith is, the days of the Messiah; that is, to believe, and be firmly persuaded, that he will come, nor will he tarry; *if he tarry, wait for him*: though, he observes, this Scripture does not fix the certain time; nor is it to be so expounded, so as to gather from thence the exact time of his coming. This they don't choose to own, though it does, because the time is long ago elapsed. Abarbinel[e] owns that this vision is different from that in the preceding verse, which concerns the second temple, but this another redemption; and would have it that the words may be explained thus, he that shall come will come at the time appointed, which is mentioned; and, after his coming, the King Messiah shall not tarry from coming to redeem you; which, though a wrong sense, shews his conviction of the prophecy belonging to the Messiah. So Abendana[f] says, our Rabbins understand this, *at the end it shall speak*, of the end of our redemption from this captivity in which we now are; and in this way it appears right to explain it, for the prophet was complaining of the prosperity of Nebuchadnezzar; and the Lord answers him, that he should write the vision of the destruction of Babylon, which should be at the end of seventy years; and said, do not wonder that I prolong to Babylon seventy years, for *yet the vision is for an appointed time*: as if he should say, yet there is a vision for times afar off, *and at the end it shall speak*: in all which there are plain traces of the sense the ancient synagogue put on this text, though now perverted, to favour their hypothesis of the Messiah being yet to come and save them.

Ver. 4. *Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him*, &c.] This and the following clause describe two sorts of persons differently affected to the Messiah, and the promise of his coming. Here it points at such as were *incredulous*, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; that disbelieved his coming, and mocked and scoffed at the promise of it; as well as those that did not believe in him when he came, though he had all the characteristics of the Messiah; and damnation was the certain consequence of their unbelief. The proud and haughty Scribes and Pharisees are here plainly described, whose minds were elated with themselves; whose hearts were like bubbles, blown up, full of wind; whose souls swelled with pride and vanity, and a high conceit of themselves; of their merit and worth; of their holiness and works of righteousness; and treated those they

[a] Καὶ ἀνατελεῖ, Sept.

[b] כי בא יבא quia veniens veniet, V. L.; veniendo veniet, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Van Till, Burkius.

[c] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 2.

[d] In Pocock. Porta Mosis, p. 176.

[e] Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 64. 1.

[f] Not. in Miclol Yophi in loc. Vid. Caphtor Uperah, fol. 6. 4. & 45. 1. 2.

thought below them in these things with the utmost disdain and contempt; and trusted in themselves, and to their own righteousness, to the great neglect of the true Messiah and his righteousness[g]. The word for *lifted up* has in it the signification of a hill, mountain, fortress, or tower; see Isa. xxxii. 14. Mic. iv. 8. as Aben Ezra observes. So R. Moses Kimchi interprets the passage, "he whose soul is not right in him places "himself in a fortress or tower, to set himself on high "there from the enemy, and does not return to God, "nor seek deliverance of him; but the righteous has "no need to place himself on high in a fortress, for "he shall live by his faith." Ophel was part of the hill of Zion, on which the temple was built; and Cocceius thinks there is a reference in the words to Mount Moriah, on which the temple stood: and in this sense the words aptly agree with the pharisaical Jews, who boasted of their temple, and gloried in it, and trusted in the service and sacrifices of it; and betook themselves to the observance of rites and ceremonies, and the traditions of their elders, and to their moral works of righteousness, for their justification and salvation, as their tower of safety, and place of defence; neglecting the Messiah, the Rock of salvation, the Rock of Israel, the munition of rocks, the strong hold and tower, where only safety and salvation are. The apostle, following the Greek version, renders the word in Heb. x. 38. *if any man draw back*, &c. and De Dieu[h] observes, that the word in the Arabic language signifies to neglect or withdraw the mind from a person or thing; and may be fitly applied to the same persons who neglected Christ, and the great salvation by him; hid their faces from him; would not look at him, nor converse with him, nor attend his ministry, nor suffer others to do it; they withdrew from his apostles and ministers, and the Christian churches, and persecuted them both in Judea and in the Gentile world; and many of the Jews that did make a profession, and joined themselves to Christian churches, after a time separated from them; being sensual, and not having the spirit, went out from among them, not being truly of them, and forsook the assembling of themselves together with them; and to these the apostle applies the words in the fore-mentioned place. Now of every such person it may be said, *his soul is not upright in him*; either *in himself*, as the Vulgate Latin version, and so Kimchi; he is not a just man, not truly upright and righteous, though he may think he is, and may be thought so by others; yet he is not in the sight of God; his heart is not sincere; he has not the truth of grace in him; a right spirit is not created and renewed in him; he never was convinced by the spirit of God of sin and righteousness, or he would not be thus elated with himself: his soul is not upright towards God; he seeks himself, and his own applause, in all he does, and not the honour and glory of God, and the magnifying of his grace and goodness; he has no right notions of the righteousness of God, and of his holy law; nor of Christ, his person, and offices; nor indeed of himself. Or *his soul is not right in him*[i]; that is, in Christ, who was to come, nor when he was come; that is, he is not rightly, sincerely, and heartily affected to him; he has no true knowledge of him, real desire unto him, hearty affection for him, or faith in him, or regard unto him, his Gospel and his ordinances; all which was most clearly true of the carnal Jews, and is of all self-righteous persons. The apostle, in Heb. x. 38. seems to understand it of the soul of God, that that, or he, was not affected to, and pleased with, persons of such a character and complexion; see Luke xiv. 11, and xviii. 14. *But the just shall live by faith*; the *just* man is the reverse of the former; he is one that believed in the coming of Christ, and believed in him when come; who has no overweening opinion of himself, and of his own righteousness; nor does he trust in it for his justification before God, and acceptance with him; but in the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, from whence he is denominated a just man: and such an one *shall live*, not merely a corporeal life, for righteous men die as well as others; nor an eternal life, though such shall live this life, and have it now in some sense, for this life is enjoyed not by faith, but by sight; but a spiritual life, begun in regeneration, and maintained by the spirit and grace of God; such live a life of justification on Christ, of sanctification from him, and of communion with him; they live cheerfully, comfortably, and delightfully, a life of peace, joy, and comfort; which is greatly the sense of the word here, as in Psal. xxii. 26. Isa. lv. 2. and this is *by his faith*: his own faith, and not another's; which though for its kind is the same in all, alike precious faith, yet as to its actings is peculiar to one, and is not another's; or by the faith of God; that is, by that faith which is the gift of God, and of his operation, and has him for its object; such live by faith upon a promising God, and so live comfortably: or by the faith of Christ, promised to come in the preceding verse; by that faith, of which he is the object, author, and finisher: just men live not upon their faith, but by it on Christ, as crucified for them, as the bread of life, and as the Lord their righteousness; and so have joy and peace in believing. There is a different accentuation of this clause. Some put the stop after *just*, and read the words, *the just, by his faith shall live*; that is, he who is a just man, in an evangelical sense, he shall live by his faith, in the sense before explained; not that he is a just man that lives righteously and unblamably before men; but who lives a life of faith on Christ, and whose hope of eternal life is not founded upon his holy life and conversation, but upon the righteousness of Christ, which he by faith lives upon; for neither eternal life, nor the hope of it, are to be ascribed to faith in itself, but to the object of it. But the most correct Hebrew copies unite, by the accent *merca*, the words *by his faith*, to the *just man*; and so they are to be read, *the just by his faith, he shall live*; that is, the man who is just, not by the works of the law, but by faith in the righteous-

[g] So Kimchi and Ben Melech observe the word has the signification of haughtiness of heart, and of pride; and Jarchi of impudence; and the Arabic word *muthaphilin*, in Schindler, is rendered *despisers*.

[h] So غفل according to Castel is neglexit, Act. vi. 1. substraxit se, Judg. xx. 36. and so it is used in the Alcoran, Surat. Joseph. ver. 13. and in the Arabic version of Psal. xxviii. 1. Matt. xxiii. 23. Heb. xii. 5.

[i] לא ישרה נפשו בו non recta (est) anima ejus in eo, Montanus, Calvin, Drusius, Burkius.

ness of Christ, or through the righteousness of Christ received by faith; for it is not faith itself, or the act of believing, that is a man's justifying righteousness, or is imputed to him for righteousness, or denominates him righteous, but the righteousness of Christ he lays hold on by faith; and such a man shall live both spiritually and eternally. And this manner of accenting the words is approved of by Wasmuth[k], and by Reinbeck[l]. Burkius, a late annotator thinks, it might be safest to repeat the word that is controverted, and read it thus, *the just in* or *by his faith: in* or *by his faith he shall live*: which takes in both senses, and either of which rightly explained may be admitted. Junius, with whom Van Till agrees, is of opinion that respect is had to the example of Abraham, of whom we read Gen. xv. 6. and *he believed in the Lord*, and *he counted it to him for righteousness*; not his faith, but the object of it, or what he believed, the promised seed. And so the ancient Jews compare this faith with Abraham's; for, mentioning the text in Gen. xv. 6. say they[m], "this is the faith by which the Israelites "inherit, of which the Scripture says, *and the just by* "*his faith shall live*." And they have also a saying[n], that the law, and all the precepts of it, delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai, are reduced by Habakkuk to one, namely this, *the just by his faith shall live*; which is true, if rightly understood; for the righteousness of Christ, the just man becomes so by, and which by faith he lives upon, is answerable to the whole law. The apostle produces this passage three times to prove that the righteousness of Christ revealed in the Gospel is to faith; that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God; that the just man shall live, and not die; shall not draw back to perdition, but believe to the saving of the soul, Rom. i. 17. Gal. iii. 11. Heb. x. 38, 39. which shews that it belongs to Gospel times and things. The Targum of the whole is, "behold, the wicked say all these things *shall* not *be*, "but the righteous shall remain in their truth." Kimchi interprets the former part of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar his son; and the latter part of the Israelites carried into captivity with Zedekiah; but very wrongly.

Ver. 5. *Yea also, because he transgresseth* by *wine*, &c.] Or rather, *how much less* or *more*[o], *wine dealing treacherously*: or *a man of wine*, as Aben Ezra supplies it; that is, a wine-bibber, as Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it: and the sense in connexion with the preceding verse is, if a Jew, elated with his works of righteousness, his soul is not right in him, *how much less* a drunken, treacherous, proud, and ambitious Heathen? if the Scribes and Pharisees, who expected the coming of the Messiah, yet withdrew from him, and opposed themselves unto him when come, *how much more* will such persons set themselves against him and his interest, thus described? by whom are meant, not the Babylonian monarchs, Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, and the Chaldeans, as usually interpreted, though there are many things in the account applicable to them; but this is breaking the thread of the prophecy, which carries on the account of the enemies of Christ, and of his kingdom, from his first to his second coming; whereas to interpret this prophecy of the Chaldeans is to go back to times before the first coming of Christ; nor does it seem necessary to say any thing more concerning them, since the people of God might be satisfied that these would be in their turn destroyed, and they delivered from them; and that they, the Jews, could not be cut off as a people, since the promise of the Messiah, as springing from them, is firmly established; and it is so strongly asserted, that he should come at the appointed time, and not tarry: after which the prophet goes on to observe two different sorts of people among the Jews; one sort proud and vain-glorious, who opposed themselves to Christ when he came; the other sort true believers in him, who lived by faith upon him: so things would stand among the Jews when Christ came, and so they did; there was a separation among them on his account: next the prophet proceeds to observe another sort of enemies to Christ and his interest among the Heathens, which was not to be wondered at, and therefore introduced by a comparative particle, *how much more* or *less*; and who must be removed to make way for his kingdom and glory in the latter day, manifestly pointed at in ver. 14, 20. now who can these be but the Romans, both Pagan and Papal in succession? and with these and their rulers, civil and ecclesiastical, do the characters given as well agree as with the Babylonian monarchy, and the Chaldeans, or better and therefore, after Cocceius and Van Till I shall choose to interpret the whole of them; and it is well known that several of the Roman emperors were greatly given to luxury and intemperance, the first character they stand described by in the text. Tiberius was greatly addicted to this vice; and, because of his greediness after wine[p], used to be called Biberius Caldius Mero, instead of Tiberius Claudius Nero; his successor Caligula spent the immense riches Tiberius had gathered together in less than a year's time in luxury and intemperance[q]; and Claudius, that succeeded him, scarce ever went out of his doors but he was drunk[r]; and Nero, who came after him to the empire, was of unusual luxury and sumptuousness, as the historian says[s]: he used to keep on his banquets from the middle of the day to the middle of the night[t]; to say nothing of Domitian, Commodus, and other emperors that followed after them: and these men were deceitful and treacherous, both to their friends and enemies; and it is no wonder that such as these should oppose themselves to the kingdom and interest of Christ, as they did. Kimchi interprets this of Nebuchadnezzar; and Jarchi of Belshazzar; and most interpreters think it refers to his drinking in the vessels of the temple, Dan. v. 2, 3: *he is a proud man*: the Roman emperors were excessively proud, like the unjust judge, neither feared God, nor

[k] Vindiciæ Hebr. par. 2. c. 2. p. 323.

[l] De Accent. Hebr. p. 485, 489. So Boston. Tract. Stigmologic. p. 33, 34.

[m] Shemot Rabba, sect. 23. fol. 107. 3.

[n] T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 24. 1.

[o] כי אף quanto magis, Calvin, Drusius, Tarnovius, Cocceius, Van Till, Burkius.

[p] Suetonius in Vita Tiberii, c. 42.

[q] Ib. Vita Caligulæ, c. 37.

[r] Ib. Vita Claudii, c. 33.

[s] Eutrop. Hist. Rom. l. 7.

[t] Suetonius in Vita Neronis, c. 27.

regarded man; nay, set up themselves for gods, and required divine worship to be given them. Caius Caligula claimed divine majesty to himself, and set himself up to be worshipped among his brother-gods; he built a temple to his own deity, and appointed priests and sacrifices; and placed a golden image of himself in it, and clothed it every day with such a garment as he himself wore [u]; he also set up his own image in the temple at Jerusalem. Nero suffered himself to be called lord and god by Tiridates king of the Armenians, with bended knees, and hands lift up to heaven. Domitian and Aurelianus took the same titles as Nero did; and Dioclesian would be worshipped as a god, and called himself the brother of the sun and moon; and no marvel that such men as these should be enemies to Christ, and persecutors of his people: *neither keepeth at home*: or *dwells not in the fold* [w]; in the sheepfold of Christ, in his church, being none of his sheep, an alien from the commonwealth of Israel; and so it denotes a infidel, an Heathen; a fit character for the Pagan emperors, who had no habitation in the house of God. Kimchi interprets it of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom not being continued; or of his being driven from his habitation, his palace, from among men, to live with beasts; but it is the character, and not the punishment, of the person that is here pointed at: *who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied;* death and the grave, though such vast numbers are continually slain by the one, and laid in the other, yet are never satisfied; see Prov. xxvii. 20. and xxx. 15, 16. This describes the insatiable thirst of the Roman emperors after honour, riches, and universal monarchy; who were never satisfied with what they obtained: *but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people;* that is, subdued them, and made them provinces of the Roman empire, and tributary to it, even almost all the then known world; hence the Roman empire is called the whole world, Luke ii. 1. so Agrippa, in his orations to the Jews, mentions all nations as subject to the Romans [x].

Ver. 6. *Shall not all these take up a parable against him, &c.*] A proverbial expression, a short sentence, a laconic speech, delivered in a few words, which contains much in them concerning the vices of these emperors, and imprecating judgments upon them for them; took up and expressed by the nations brought into subjection unto them, and especially by the Christians in those nations spoiled and persecuted by them: *and a taunting proverb against him;* or, *whose explanation are riddles to him* [y]; the proverb, when explained, would be a riddle to him, which he could not understand, nor would give any credit to; taking it not to belong to him or them, and in which they had no concern; though afterwards would find they had, to their great mortification: *and say, woe to him that increaseth that which is not his!* substance or goods, not his own, as the Targum explains it; which they had no right unto, nor property in, but were another's; and therefore guilty of great injustice in taking it from them, and might justly expect vengeance would pursue them for it; such were the goods they spoiled the Christians of for not worshipping their idols, and for professing and abiding by the Christian religion: *how long?* that is, how long shall they go on increasing their substance by such unjust and unlawful methods? how long shall they keep that which they have so unjustly got? this suggests as if it was a long time, which, as Cocceius observes, does not so well agree with the Babylonian as the Roman empire, which stood much longer: *and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay!* such is gold and silver, no other than yellow and white dust and dirt; and may be called *clay*, because dug out of the earth, as that; and as clay is defiling, so are gold and silver, when ill gotten, or ill used, or the heart set too much upon them; and as that is very ponderous and troublesome to carry, so an abundance of riches bring much care with them, and often are very troublesome to the owners of them, and frequently hinder their sleep, rest, and ease; and as clay when it sticks to the heels hinders walking, so riches, when the affections are too much set on them, are great obstacles in the way of true religion and godliness; hence our Lord observes, *how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God*, Mark x. 24. they are even a weight, a clog to good men. The phrase seems to point at the meanness of them, as well as the hurt that sometimes comes by them, and the contempt they should be had in, in comparison of the true riches; hence, agreeable to this way of speaking, a good man Drusius makes mention of used to call gold *yellow earth;* and a certain Greek writer [z] says gold is ashes, and so is silver. The word used is a compound; and, as Kimchi observes, signifies an abundance of riches; but our countryman Mr. Fuller [a] chooses rather to render it an *abundance of pledges;* and thinks it has respect to the many pledges which the person here spoken of, by whom he supposes is meant the Babylonian monarch, had in an unjust manner took of several nations, and heaped up like an usurer; and which should in due time be taken from him, by those whom he had plundered of them: but this expresses the greedy desire of the Romans after money, as well as the unlawful methods they took to acquire wealth, and the vast sums they became masters of, so that they were even loaded with it; but, getting it in an unrighteous manner, it brought the curses and imprecations of the people upon them, especially those they defrauded of it. Joseph Kimchi, as his son David observes, interprets it, "he shall make thick clay lie "heavy on his grave;" and it was a custom with the Romans, as Drusius [b] relates, that when one imprecated evil upon another, he used to wish a heavy load of earth upon him, that is, when he was dead; as, on the contrary, when one was wished well after death, it was desired he might have a light earth upon him: so Julian the emperor, speaking of Constantius, says [c],

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[u] Suetonius in Vita Caligulæ, c. 22.

[w] ולא ינוה qui non habitat; quod de mansionibus ovium imprimius dicitur, Cocceius; qui non inhabitat gratis, Van Till.

[x] Apud Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 16. sect. 4.

[y] ומליצה חידות לו & interpretationem ænigmata ei, Drusius, Burkius; & interpretatio erit ænigmata ipsi, Cocceius; cujus explicatio illi erit ænigmatum loco, Van Till.

[z] Χρυσος τε κονις εστι, και αργυρος, Naumachius apud Grotium in loc.

[a] Miscel. Sacr. l. 4. c. 8.

[b] Observat. l. 15. c. 18.

[c] Epist. Hermogeni, Ep. 23. p. 141.

"when he is become happy, or departs out of this "life, may the earth be light upon him;" which is wishing all felicity, and freedom from punishment; whereas the contrary, to have a load of earth or thick clay, is an imprecation of the heaviest punishment.

Ver. 7. *Shall not they rise up suddenly that shall bite thee*, &c.] Or, *thy usurers*, or *creditors*[d], as some render it; the Christians, whose money, goods, and substance, they had spoiled them of, but now should be repaid with great usury and gain; these, that is, their princes and emperors, as Constantine and Theodosius, rose up suddenly, and conquered the Heathen emperors, and took away their power and authority from them, and their wealth and riches, and gave them to the Christians, what they and those under them had plundered them of: *and awake that shall vex thee*: or *move thee*[e]; the emperor, from the throne of the empire; and other subordinate magistrates from their places of dignity, trust, and profit; the priests out of their temples; and change the face of things everywhere; and which is expressed in language agreeable to this, in Rev. vi. 14, and has respect to the same times and things, *and the heaven departed as a scrowl when it is rolled together, and every mountain and island were moved out of their place*: which is to be understood of the fall of the Pagan Roman empire: *and thou shalt be for booties unto them?* the wealth and riches found in the Roman empire, as it fell into the hands of Constantine, were converted to the use of the Christians for the building of their temples, and the maintenance of their ministers, the relief of their poor, and for the reparation of losses others had sustained under the persecutions: thus the Christian emperors rose up at once, and exerted themselves; and who before seemed to be asleep awoke, and seized upon the empire, and the riches of it, and divided the spoil among themselves and their people.

Ver. 8. *Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee*, &c.] Those that survived the persecutions of the Roman emperors; those that were left of the great numbers put to death by them; those under Constantine rose up, and by just retaliation spoiled them of all their power and wealth: *because of men's blood*; the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus, of those under the altar, whose blood cried for vengeance, Rev. vi. 9, 10, which was shed under the ten bloody persecutions: or, *because of the blood of a man*: of Adam[f], as it may be rendered; the blood of Christ the second Adam, which, though shed at the instance of the Jews, yet by the order of Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor: *and for the violence of the land, and of the city, and of all that dwell therein*; that is, for the violence and injuries done to the land of Israel and city of Jerusalem, and the inhabitants thereof, as the Targum, and so Jarchi; and which were done by the Romans to those places and people, under Titus Vespasian, when he invaded the country of Judea, and made it desolate; besieged and took Jerusalem, and burnt it with fire; destroyed great numbers of its inhabitants, and carried them captive, and sent great multitudes of them to the mines; as well as for what were done to the Christians in every country and city where they dwelt; and to the city of the living God, the church, the heavenly Jerusalem, and the citizens of it, who were used by them in a very cruel and inhuman manner, and for which vengeance would be, and was, taken upon them.

Ver. 9. *Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house*, &c.] The bishops of Rome, being enriched by the donations of Constantine, were not satisfied, but coveted more; these are the greedy dogs Isaiah speaks of, that could never have enough, Isa. lvi. 11. but were still seeking and gaping after more for themselves and families, and for their own house or church; which, from the time of their apostacy, became their own house, in distinction from, and in opposition to, the house or true church of God; and of those covetous bishops, or Rome Papal, are these and the following words to ver. 14 to be understood: *that he may set his nest on high*; in allusion to birds, especially the eagle, which builds its nest in high places, that it may be secure from any that would otherwise disturb it, or take it away: so these covetous and ambitious bishops, getting great wealth and riches, and large dominions into their hands, secular power and authority, as well as ecclesiastical, set themselves up, and advanced their see and seat, not only above all other bishops, but even above the kings and princes of the earth, above all that are called gods, 2 Thess. ii. 4. and by such means endeavoured to gain their point, the main thing they had in view: *that he may be delivered from the power of evil*; that they might be safe and secure against all worldly power, and be out of the jurisdiction of the princes of the earth, and in no danger of being dispossessed or crushed by them.

Ver. 10. *Thou hast consulted shame to thy house*, &c.] Instead of bringing real honour and glory to their church, and that into the esteem of men, by such covetousness, ambition, and arrogance, they brought it into shame and disgrace, especially with all good men; and which they as effectually did as if they had studied it, and as if this was the thing they had in view in all their schemes and measures: this they procured *by cutting off many people*; by making war with the saints, and killing great multitudes of them with the sword, as the Waldenses and Albigenses, and many of the Protestants by fire and faggot; and also by cutting off all such they called heretics and schismatics, with their anathemas and excommunications; neither of which were to their honour, but to their eternal infamy: *and hast sinned against thy soul*; and exposed it to eternal damnation; that is, they sinned against the light and dictates of their own consciences, which is an aggravation of their sin, and might justly cause shame and confusion of mind.

Ver. 11. *For the stone shall cry out of the wall*, &c.] Of their own house; some from among themselves, that truly feared God, seeing the evil practices done

[d] נשכיך foeneratores tui, seu creditores tui, Coccelus, Van Till.

[e] מזעזעיך qui commoveant te, Pagninus, Vatablus; so R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 56. 1. excutientes, Cocceius, Van Till; commoventes te, Burkius.

[f] מדמי אדם propter sanguinem hominis, i. e. Christi, qui est secundus Adam, Cocceius, Van Till.

among them, and abhorring them, such as their covetousness, ambition, murders, excommunications, and anathemas, should cry out against them in their sermons and writings; such as were lively stones, eminent for religion and godliness, as Bernard, Wickliff, Huss, and others: *and the beam out of the timber shall answer it;* such as were of eminent note in things civil, as beams and rafters in the house; emperors and governors of provinces, who observed the complaints of godly ministers and people, answered to them, and checked the evil bishops and clergy, and hindered them in the pursuit of their schemes, and so brought them to shame and confusion. Aben Ezra observes, that the word signifies the hard place in the wood; or the harder part of it, the knotty part, or the knot in it; and which is confirmed by the use of the word in the Arabic language, as Hottinger[g] observes; and so may have respect to such persons as were raised up at the beginning of the Reformation, who were of rough dispositions, and hardy spirits, fit to go through the work they were called to; such as Luther, and others, who answered and were correspondent to the doctrines of those before mentioned, who preceded them: for not a beetle, as the Septuagint version, which breeds, and lives not in wood, and so represents heretics, as Jerom; much better, as some other Greek versions, a *worm;* though rather the word may signify a brick, as it is used by the Talmudists[h] for one of a span and a half, which answers well enough to a stone in the former clause; nor is it unusual with Heathen writers[i] to represent stones and timbers speaking, when any criminal silence is kept; see Luke xix. 40.

Ver. 12. *Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and establisheth a city by iniquity.*] This is what the stone and beam should say, if others were silent. The town and city are the church of Rome, mystical Babylon, the great city, called spiritually Egypt and Sodom; the builder of this is the pope of Rome, the bishops of it in succession, who built it with blood: the pope of Rome received his title as head of the church from Phocas, that murdered the emperor Mauritius; the foundation of the church of Rome is the blood of the saints, shed in persecutions and wars; hence she is said to be drunk with the blood of them, and to have the blood of prophets and saints found in her, Rev. xvii. 6, and xviii. 24. and it is established by unjust exactions of tribute from all countries subject to it, and by indulgences, processions, and various methods taken to extort money from the people, to support its pageantry, pomp, and grandeur; but there's a woe denounced against such that are concerned herein, and which will take place in due time, nor can it be awarded, as follows:

Ver. 13. *Behold, is it not of the Lord of hosts?* &c.] That which follows; the judgments of God upon the bloody city, which they that labour to prevent labour in vain. So the Targum, "lo, strong and mighty "blows or judgments come from the Lord of hosts;" the mighty God, the Lord of armies, whose hand when stretched out none can turn back; he does what he pleases, and none can hinder him; when the decree is gone forth from him, it is in vain to attempt to stop it: *that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity?* words of the same import, and expressed in much the same language, were used of the destruction of literal Babylon by fire, and of the vain attempts of the Chaldeans in labouring and wearying themselves to quench it; Jer. li. 58. and here of mystical Babylon, and the vanity of the people of it, in labouring to support it by their wars, for recovering the holy land from the Turks, and against the Waldenses, Hussites, and Bohemians; for, notwithstanding all their successes, and the vast number of persons slain by them, yet they could never prevail so as to root out the kingdom and interest of Christ: and their city and state shall fall, and they will not be able to uphold it; and a considerable blow and shock it received at the time of the Reformation; and this great city Babylon will be destroyed by fire, which its best friends cannot prevent; even the ten kings that have given their kingdom to the beast will hate the whore, and burn her with fire; and those antichristian kings that will continue friends to her, when they see her burning, will find it in vain to attempt to help her, and will stand afar off lamenting her case, Rev. xvii. 16, and xviii. 9, 10. Kimchi begins here to see that this section and paragraph does not belong to Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans, but to the times of the Messiah; and interprets it of the vengeance of God that shall come upon all the nations that come along with Gog against Jerusalem in the latter day; but he mistakes: it designs what will come on mystical Babylon; so Abarbinel owns, that, from ver. 12, what is said belongs to the Roman empire, which he calls the kingdom of Edom.

Ver. 14. *For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord,* &c.] Of the *glory* of the Lord Jesus Christ; of the glory of his person, as the Son of God, and truly God; which is essential to him, and underived; the same with his Father's, and what transcends the glory of all created beings; and of the glory of his office as Mediator, which itself is glorious and honourable: and this his glory lies in his fitness for it; in his faithful performance of it, and the honour given him by his Father upon it; as well as in the fulness of grace in him, which makes him appear glorious to his people; and who are continually giving glory to him as the Lord their righteousness, by exercising faith on his righteousness, and glorying in it; and as their only Saviour and Redeemer, by looking to him, and believing in him as such; and as the only Head of the church, by owning and holding to him; and as the only Mediator between God and man, by making use of him for that purpose, and not angels and saints; and as their Prophet, by hearkening to his voice, yielding a subjection to his Gospel, and submission to his ordinances; and as their Priest, by dealing with his blood and sacrifice for the atonement and pardon of their sins; and as their King, by obedience to his commands; and who will now take to himself his great

[g] Smegma Orientale, l. 1. c. 7. p. 162.
[h] T. Bava Metzia, fol. 117. 2. & Bathra, fol. 3. 1.

[i] ——— Secretum divitis ullum
Esse putas? servi ut taceant, jumenta loquentur,
Et canis, & postes, & marmora.——— Juvenal. Satyr. 9.

power, and reign gloriously before his saints; the glory of his kingly office will be now seen and known, when this prophecy shall have its full accomplishment, and which seems greatly intended. The *knowledge* of all this glory will not be a mere notional and speculative one, but special and spiritual; an experimental knowledge, accompanied with affection, approbation, confidence, and appropriation: and *the earth will be filled with* this; that is, the inhabitants of it: this had an accomplishment in part in the times of the apostles, when they were sent into all the world to preach the Gospel to every creature, and diffused the savour of the knowledge of Christ everywhere; and had a further accomplishment in the times of Constantine, when the whole Roman empire, or all the world, became Christians; and again at the time of the Reformation, when many nations, especially in Europe, were freed from Popish darkness by the pure light of the Gospel; but will have its final accomplishment in the latter day; and which will bring on the destruction of antichrist, and seems here intended; since this is given as a reason why it will be all labour in vain to attempt the prevention of it. It will be by means of the Gospel spreading the knowledge of Christ everywhere that antichrist will fall: this is the brightness of Christ's coming, with which he will be destroyed; hence the angel, with the everlasting Gospel to preach to all nations, and with whose glory the whole earth will be lightened, is represented as preceding the fall of Babylon, and as the means of it; see 2 Thess. ii. 8. Rev. xiv. 6, 7, 8. and xviii. 1, 2. and the great spread and large abundance of this knowledge communicated by the preaching of the Gospel is thus illustrated and exemplified, *as the waters cover the sea*; expressing the nature of Gospel doctrines, revealing the glory of Christ and his grace, which, like waters, refresh and make fruitful; and the force and power of them, bearing down all before them, like an inundation of water when it breaks its banks; and likewise the depths of them, these being the deep things of God; and more especially the general spread and large abundance of them, and of the knowledge conveyed by them; which will fill the earth, as the waters of the sea fill up and cover the vast chasm prepared for them; see Isa. xi. 9.

Ver. 15. *Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, &c.*] Before the full accomplishment of the above prophecy concerning the abundance of the knowledge of the Lord in the earth, and before the utter destruction of antichrist; between that and the Reformation, when it had its fulfilment in part; the following practices inveighed against would be used, as we find they are, and for which the man of sin and his followers will be punished: one of which is expressed by a man's *giving his neighbour drink*; which is a commendable action, when drink is given to a person in want to quench his thirst, or in sorrowful and distressed circumstances to refresh and cheer him; but when this is done to intoxicate him, and draw him into uncleanness, it is an evil one; and which is the sense of the phrase here, as appears by the *woe* denounced, and by what follows; and is to be understood, not in a literal sense, but in a figurative one; and is expressive of the various artful methods and alluring ways used by the Papists, especially the Jesuits, after the Reformation, with the Protestants, to forsake their religion, and to draw them into the superstition and idolatry of the church of Rome; and which are in the New Testament signified by *the wine of her fornication*, with which the kings, nations, and inhabitants of the earth, are made *drunk*, Rev. xvii. 2. crying up the devotion and religion of their church, its antiquity, purity, holiness, and unity; pretending great love to the souls of men, that they seek nothing but their spiritual good; promising them great advantages, temporal and spiritual, worldly riches and honour, and sure and certain salvation within the pale of their church, without which they say there is none; and by such means they have intoxicated many princes, kingdoms, and multitudes of people, since the Reformation; and have drawn them off from the profession of the Protestant religion, and brought them back to Popery again, as in Poland, Bohemia, Hungary, Germany, France, and other places; and these methods they are now taking in all Protestant countries, and in ours, and that with great success, as is notorious, and time will more abundantly shew; but there is a *woe* lies against them for it: *that puttest thy bottle* to him; giving him not only a glass or cup at a time, but a whole bottle to drink off at once, in order to inebriate him. The word is by some translated *thy gall*, or *thy poison* [k]; which fitly enough expresses the poisonous doctrines of the church of Rome, which men insensibly imbibe, infused in her wine of fornication, or drink in through the alluring and insnaring methods taken. It properly signifies *heat* or *wrath*. The Targum is, "that pours *it* with "heat, that he may drink, and be inebriated." The Syriac version is, "woe to him that gives his neigh-"bour to drink the dregs of fury." The words may be truly rendered, *adding thy wrath* [l]; that is, to the alluring and enticing methods before mentioned, adding menaces, wrathful words, and furious persecutions: and this the Papists do where they can; when good words and fair speeches will not prevail, and they can't gain over proselytes with flattery, deceit, and lying, they threaten them with racks and tortures, with prisons and galleys, and death itself in various shapes, to force men into their communion; and which they have put in execution in many places, in Bohemia, Hungary, and in France even to this day; and this is what in the New Testament is called *the wine of the wrath of her fornication*, Rev. xiv. 8. and xviii. 3: *and makest* him *drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!* as Ham did on his father's nakedness when in such circumstances: all the above methods are taken in order to intoxicate them, deprive them of the use of their reason, as is the case of a drunken man; and so bring them to believe, with an implicit faith, as the church believes; to believe things contrary to reason; to give into the spiritual whoredom and idolatry of that church, as men when drunk are easily drawn into uncleanness; to cast off their profession of

[k] חמתך venenum tuum, Montanus; so some in Drusius, and R. Jonah in Ben Melech.

[l] מספח חמתך adjungenti, sive adhibenti furorem tuum, Tigurine version.

the true religion, as a garment is cast off, as men when drunk are apt to do; and particularly to reject the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, which is the only robe to cover the nakedness of men, and receive the doctrine of merit and justification by works: in short, to apostatize wholly from the religion they have professed, and join in communion with the whore of Rome, that so they may look upon their apostacy, which is their nakedness, with the utmost pleasure and delight.

Ver. 16. *Thou art filled with shame for glory*, &c.] This is said by the Lord to the man that gives his neighbour drink to intoxicate him, that he may draw him into uncleanness, and please himself with it; who, instead of being filled with the glory of the Lord, and the knowledge of it, as the earth is before said to be, such are filled with shameful doctrines and abominable practices, as those of the church of Rome are; and instead of seeking the glory of God, and the honour of their neighbours, they are satiated with the shameful spectacle of their apostacy, they have been the instruments of; and yet, instead of taking shame to themselves, as they ought to do, they glory in their shame; count it an honour they have been the instruments of bringing them into such uncleanness and idolatry; and glut themselves with the delightful sight; which, in the esteem of God, was filling themselves with shame, instead of bringing any glory to him, to themselves, or their neighbours; and therefore should severely smart for it: *drink thou also*: of another cup, the cup *of the wine of the wrath of God*: as a just retaliation for giving to others *the wine of wrath of fornication* to drink, and to intoxicate men with; which will be given to mystical Babylon at the time she comes into remembrance before God, or when the time to punish her is come, and to all the followers and worshippers of the beast; see Rev. xiv. 10. and xvi. 19: *and let thy foreskin be uncovered*; in retaliation for uncovering the nakedness of others, and looking with pleasure on it; by which it will appear that the men here spoken of, that take all the above methods to draw or force others into the communion of their church, are no other than Heathens; their religion consisting greatly of Gentilism; or what has a very great likeness to it; hence the Papists are sometimes called Heathens and Gentiles; see Psal. x. 16. Rev. xi. 2: *the cup of the Lord's right hand shall be turned unto thee*; who, in their turn, shall drink of it, when his right hand, in which it is, shall reach it out; for there is no resisting the power of that; when he gives the orders to drink it, they must; and this cup in his right hand is a cup of red wine, of the wrath, fury, and indignation of God, the dregs of which these wicked men must wring out, and drink up; see Psal. lxxv. 8. It is no unusual thing in Scripture for the wrath, vengeance, and judgments of God to be represented by a cup, as in Isa. li. 17. Jer. xxv. 15, 16, 17: *and shameful spewing shall be on thy glory*: signifying that they should be like a man intoxicated with wine, that vomits it up again; and which, falling on his fine clothes, spoils the glory of them: so when this cup of wrath and vengeance should be given unto them, and they be made to drink of it, they should be so full of it, that all their glory should be covered with shame; or all their glorious things should be spoiled, and they deprived of all their riches and honours, their titles and grandeur; the magnificence of their temples, altars, idols, and vestments, &c.

Ver. 17. *For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee*, &c.] Lebanon was a mountain on the borders of the land of Israel, from whence cedar-wood was brought, of which the temple was built, and for that reason is sometimes so called, as in Zech. xi. 1. and so the Targum and Jarchi interpret it, "the violence of the house "of the sanctuary shall cover thee;" and this was a type of the church of Christ, the violence of which is that which is offered to it, and which it suffers; and designs all the injuries, oppressions, and persecutions of it by the Papists; who shall be surrounded with the judgments of God, and covered with his wrath and vengeance for the violence done to his people, as a man is covered with a garment: or else the sense is, that the same, or a like judgment, should come upon them, as did on Lebanon, or the material temple of Jerusalem, which with great force and violence destroyed it; as that was consumed by fire for the sins of the Jews in rejecting Christ and persecuting his people, so shall Rome be burnt with fire for the opposition of the inhabitants of it to Christ, and the injuries they have done to his church and people: *and the spoil of beasts*, which *made them afraid*; or, *the spoil of the beasts* shall cover thee, which *made them afraid*; we read of two beasts, one rising out of the sea, and the other out of the earth; and both design the pope of Rome in different capacities, as considered in his secular and ecclesiastical power; and the spoil he has made of those that oppose him, the calamities of fire and sword he has brought upon them, are what have greatly terrified the sheep of Christ; but for all the spoil and havoc he has made, the judgments of God shall come upon him on all sides, and utterly destroy him; the beast and false prophet shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone; see Rev. xiii. 1, 11. and xvii. 8. and xix. 20: *because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein*: the same that is said in ver. 8. and here repeated, as respecting another body of men, guilty of the same or like crimes: there Rome Pagan, concerned in the crucifixion of Christ, the desolation of the land of Judea, and city of Jerusalem, and their inhabitants, as well as in persecuting the saints, the citizens of the church of God; here Rome Papal, where our Lord has been crucified again, and his blood, and the efficacy of it, set at nought; the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus shed in great abundance, and violent persecutions of the churches of Christ, and the members of them; for all which the above judgments shall come upon them; see Rev. xi. 8. and xviii. 24.

Ver. 18. *What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it*, &c.] The graven images the church of Rome enjoins the worship of; the images of the Trinity, of Christ, of the Virgin Mary, of angels and saints departed, and which are still continued since the Reformation; but of what profit and advantage are they? they may be profitable to the graver, who is paid for graving them; and the metal or matters of which they are made, if sold, and converted to another use,

may turn to account; but as deities, and worshipped as such, they are of no profit to them that worship them; they can't hear their prayers, nor answer them; can't bestow any favours on them, and deliver them out of any distress; and particularly can't save them from the judgments before denounced: *the molten image, and a teacher of lies*: nor is a molten image any ways profitable, which is made of liquid matter, gold or silver melted and poured into a mould, from whence it receives its form: it may be profitable to the founder, and the metal to the owner, if put to another use; but, as a god, is of no service; and both the graven and molten image, the one and the other, each of them is *a teacher of lies*, and so unprofitable; if they are laymen's books, as they are said to be, they don't teach them truth; they don't teach them what God is in his nature and perfections; what Christ is in his person and offices; what angels are, who are incorporeal; nor the saints, they neither describe the shape and features of their body, nor express their characters, minds, or manners; they teach men to believe lies, and to worship false deities, as they are. So the Targum renders it, a false deity; which imposes on men, and therefore cannot profit them: or this may be understood of an idolatrous priest, as Aben Ezra; as the idol itself cannot profit, so neither can the priest that teaches men such lies as to worship the idol, and put trust in it: *that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols?* or, *whilst making dumb idols**; which is great stupidity indeed! that whilst a man is graving an image, or casting an idol, which are lifeless senseless things, that can neither move nor speak, yea, are his workmanship, yet puts his trust and confidence in them, that they can do him service he needs, help him in distress, and save him out of his troubles; what profit can be expected from these, though ever so nicely framed, when he considers they are of his own framing, and that they are idols, which are nothing in the world, as the word* here used signifies; and dumb ones, which can give no answer to the requests of their votaries? The Targum is, "idols in whom there is "no profit."

Ver. 19. *Woe to him that saith to the wood, awake,* &c.] That saith to a wooden image, let him go by what name he will; saint such an one, or such an one; awake, arise, exert thyself on our behalf; deliver us from present danger; save us from our enemies; or pray and intercede for us, that we may be delivered and saved, as the Papists do; addressing a block of wood as they would God himself, or as his people do, Psal. xliv. 23. This must be very displeasing and detestable to God, and therefore a woe is threatened to such idol-worshippers: who also say *to the dumb stone, arise*; to the idol of stone, as the Targum; the stone statue, an image made of stone, such as the Papists have, even of wood, and of stone, as well as of gold, and silver, and brass, Rev. ix. 20. and so stupid as to say to such stocks and stones, arise, stand up, and help us: *it shall teach*; the stone itself would teach them better, would they but consider what it is, look upon it, and handle it, when they would find it to be a mere stone, and no deity: or, *shall it teach?* so Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech; no, it cannot teach any true doctrine, or direct to right worship; it can't teach men their duty, or where they may have help; it is a dumb idol; it cannot teach men the nature of God, and the knowledge of him; or instruct in his mind and will; or inform of things secret or future: *it is laid over with gold and silver*; it is made of stone, and covered with gold and silver; how should it teach? *and there is no breath at all in the midst of it*; or, *no spirit**; so far from having the spirit of divinity in it, or the spirit of God, that it has not the spirit of a man in it, nor even the spirit of a brute creature; it has not so much as animal breath, and so no life, motion, or activity in it; and therefore must be quite unprofitable to the worshipper of it; incapable of teaching those who apply to it; and they must be stupid that do it, and most righteously bring themselves under the displeasure and wrath of God, and expose themselves to the woe here denounced against such persons.

Ver. 20. *But the Lord is in his holy temple,* &c.] Not in graven and molten images; not in idols of wood and stone, covered with gold and silver; but in heaven, the habitation of his holiness, the place of his residence, where he is seen and worshipped by the holy angels and glorified saints; and from whence he surveys all the children of men, and their actions; observes the folly and stupidity of idol-worshippers; and hears and answers the prayers of his own people: or this intends his church, which is his temple, sanctified by him, and set apart for his service, worship, and glory: here he grants his gracious presence to those who worship him in spirit and in truth; and here he will appear as King of saints, in a most glorious manner, when these several woes before mentioned have taken place; as on Rome Pagan already, and in part on Rome Papal at the Reformation, so completely on it, and all worshippers of images hereafter. The word היכל, here used, signifies that part of the temple, called the holy place, as distinct from the holy of holies; which was the proper seat of the divine Majesty, and a figure of heaven, as the holy place was of the church; and so he was, as it were, removed from the one to the other; hence the more observable and remarkable, and the greater reason for what follows; and this serves to illustrate and confirm the sense given: *let all the earth keep silence before him*; stand in awe of him, and reverence him; be subject to him, and silently adore him; as all the inhabitants of the earth will when the above enemies of his are entirely removed out of it; there will be no more clamours and objections against the Christian religion by Jews and Mahometans, on account of image-worship, which will be no more; no more wars, or rumours of wars, but a profound peace every where; no more persecutions of the saints; no more will be heard the cry of violence and oppression, all their enemies being destroyed; no more repinings and murmurings among the people of

* לעשות אלילים אלמים faciendo idola muta, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Vatablus.

* אלילים dii nihili, Drusius.

* רוח spiritus, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Burkius.

God, through impatience and unbelief, all afflictions being at an end; there will be an entire silence of this kind everywhere: only the voice of the Gospel, of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, will be heard. This is not the case now, nor was there ever as yet such a time on earth; this shews that the prophecy regards time to come.

C H A P. III.

THE title of this chapter is a prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, composed after the manner of a psalm of David, and directed to the chief singer, ver. 1, 19. The occasion of it is expressed, ver. 2. in which the prophet declares his concern for the work of the Lord, and the promotion of the kingdom and interest of Christ; and observes the various steps that were, or would be, taken for the advancement of it: for which he prays, and suggests that these would be after the manner of the Lord's dealing with the people of Israel, and settling them in the land of Canaan, ver. 3—15. and there being several things awful in this account, both with respect to the judgments of God on his enemies, and the conflicts and trials of his own people, it greatly affected the mind of the prophet, ver. 16. and yet, in the view of the worst, he expresses his strong faith in the Lord, as to better times and things, that would most assuredly come, ver. 17, 18, 19.

Ver. 1. *A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet upon Shigionoth.*] Of the name, character, and office of the prophet, see the note on ch. i. 1. This chapter is entitled a *prayer* of his, a supplicatory one, put up in an humble and earnest manner, and in the exercise of faith, and under the influence of a spirit of prophecy. He before had a vision of the coming of Christ, and of what enemies would rise up, and obstruct his kingdom and interest in the world; and here he prays that these obstructions might be removed, and that the kingdom of Christ, in its full extent and glory, might take place in the world; and is a prayer of faith, as he prayed it might be, he believed it would be; and left this prayer behind him, for the use and instruction of the church in all ages, until the whole should be accomplished. It seems to be composed after the manner of the psalms of David, to make it the more pleasant and agreeable; and that it might be the more regarded, and be more fitted for the public use and service of the sanctuary: this appears from the style of it, which is poetical, lofty, and sublime; from the frequent use of the word *Selah*, peculiar to the psalms of David, ver. 3, 9, 13. and from the direction of it to the chief singer on the stringed instruments, ver. 19. and from the phrase *upon*, or *according to Shigionoth* here, which the Septuagint version renders *with a song*; and so the Arabic version, *after* the manner *of a song*: for this word seems to be the plural of Shiggaion, the title of the seventh psalm; which was either the name, title, or first word of some song or songs, according to which this was to be sung; or the name of the tune with which it was to be sung; or of the instrument on which it was to be sung: it very probably designs, and may be called, an *erratic* or *wandering* song, because of the variableness of its metre, and of its tune. The Vulgate Latin version wrongly interprets it, *for ignorances*; as if this was a prayer of the prophet's for the pardon of sins of error and ignorance committed by himself, or by others, or both; which sense is favoured by the Targum, "a prayer which Habakkuk the prophet prayed, "when it was revealed unto him concerning the length "(of time) which (God) gave to the wicked; that, if "they would return to the law with a perfect heart, "they should be forgiven all the sins which they had "committed before him as ignorance:" but there does not appear throughout the whole prayer one single petition for the pardon of any sin at all.

Ver. 2. *O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid*, &c.] Or, *thy hearing* †; which the Lord had caused to be heard from and of himself; the report that had been made to him, and other prophets before him, particularly Isaiah, who says, *who hath believed our report?* Isa. liii. 1. where the same phrase is used as here: though it seems here not so much to regard the evangelical part of that report, concerning the coming of Christ, his sufferings and death, in order to obtain redemption and salvation for his people; for this would have been, and was, matter of joy, and not of fear and consternation: but the truth is this, the Lord in the preceding speech, being a report he made to the prophet concerning the Messiah, had signified that Christ would have many enemies from the Jews and from the Gentiles, from Rome Pagan and Rome Papal; that the church of Christ would meet with great afflictions and persecutions, and be attended with many conflicts, temptations, and difficulties; that the interest of the Redeemer would be sometimes very low, and the work of the Lord at a stand in the world, yea, seemingly dead, quite lost and gone; this is what caused the fear and distress in the prophet's mind, and gave him that pain and uneasiness: and hence the following petition, *O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years*; which refers not to the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity, which was fixed to a term of years, when, and not before, not in the midst of them it would be wrought; but to the great work of the Lord in the times of the Gospel. There is a double reading of these words in the Septuagint version of them, and both very different from the Hebrew text. The one is, *in the midst of two lives thou shalt be known*; the life that now is, and that which is to come. The other, by a change of the accent, is, *in the midst of two animals thou shalt be known*: so the Arabic version. Theodoret makes mention of both, and inclines to the former: "some (he says) by two animals understand angels and "men; some the incorporeal powers near the divine "Glory, the cherubim and seraphim; others the Jews "and Babylonians; but to me it seems that the pro-

† שמעך tuam auditionem, V. L. Burkius; tuum auditum, Pagninus, Montanus; rumorem, Tarnovius.

"phet does not say animals, but lives, the present and "future, in the midst of which he was a just Judge:" but the latter reading is followed by many of the ancients, whose different senses are given by Jerom on the place; some interpreting them of the Son and Spirit, by whom the Father is made known; others of the two cherubim in Exodus, and of the two seraphim in Isaiah; and there were some who understood them of the two Testaments, the Old and New, in the midst of which the Lord may be known; and others of Christ's being crucified between two thieves, by which he might be known: but, besides these different sentiments, many of the ancients concluded from hence that Christ lay in the manger between two animals, the ox and the ass, and to which they refer in their ancient hymns[q]; but though this is a wrong version of the text, and a wrong sense which is put upon it, together with Isa. i. 3; yet, as Burkius observes, there is in this mistake a certain and ancient truth, that the text of Habakkuk belongs to the work of God in Christ, and especially to the nativity of our Lord Jesus; and so some later writers apply this to the wonderful work of the incarnation of Christ, that new, unheard-of, and amazing thing the Lord would work in the earth; the promise of which, being delayed, might seem to be dead; and therefore it is entreated it might be revived, and the performance of it hastened; and others to the work of redemption by Christ, which the Father gave him to do, and he promised to come and perform; but, being deferred, the Old-Testament saints were impatient of it. Cocceius and Van Till restrain it to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, his coming being prophesied of before; and render the words, *O Lord, thy work is his life*[r], *in the midst of the years;* the resurrection of Christ from the dead, or the quickening of him, is prophesied of in many places as a work that would be done, and in which the hope and expectation of the saints were placed; this being a work of great importance both to Christ, his exaltation and glory, and to his people; their quickening together with him; their regeneration, or passing from death to life; their justification of life, and resurrection from the dead, depending upon it; and this is the Lord's work, and owing to the exceeding greatness of his power, and is frequently ascribed to God the Father, who raised Christ from the dead, and gave him glory: and this was *in the midst of the years,* or between the years of the Old and of the New Testament; the former was the year of God's long suffering and forbearance, the time when the Jewish church, like children, were under governors and tutors, until the time appointed of the Father; the latter is the acceptable year of the Lord, and the year of the redeemed; and between these two years, at the end of the one, and the beginning of the other, the Messiah came, was cut off or died, and was quickened and raised again: but I should choose rather to understand this more generally of the work of the Lord in the Christian churches throughout the whole Gospel dispensation, or at least in some certain periods of it. The church itself is the work of the hands of the Lord, Isa. xlv. 11. which sometimes has seemed to have been in a very dead and lifeless state and condition, as in the dark times of Popery; and though there was a reviving of it upon the Reformation, yet there has been a decline since; and the Sardian church-state, in which we now are, is described as having a *name,* that it *lives,* and yet is *dead;* and the interest of religion, and the church of Christ, will be lower still when the witnesses are slain, and their dead bodies lie unburied, before the spirit of the Lord enters into them, and revives them: now the prophet having in view these several intervals, and especially the last, prays for a reviving of the interest and church of Christ, and the work of the Lord in it; and which will be done when Christ will come in a spiritual manner, and destroy antichrist; when the spirit will be poured down plentifully from on high; when the Gospel will be purely and powerfully preached all over the world; when the ordinances of it will be administered as at the beginning; when multitudes of churches will be raised and formed, the Jews will be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in: this will be a reviving time indeed! and there never will be a thorough one till this time comes; and this will be in *the midst of the years;* between the years of the reign of antichrist, the 1260 days or years of it, which will now expire, and the thousand years of Christ's personal reign on earth; between these two periods will be this reviving time or spiritual reign of Christ[s]. The words may to good purpose be applied to the work of grace in the hearts of true believers in Christ, which is the Lord's work, and his only; not men, not ministers, not angels, but Jehovah only is the author and finisher of it. This sometimes seems as it were to be dead, when the graces of the spirit are not in exercise; when saints are in dead and lifeless frames of soul; when they are backward to spiritual and religious exercises; when the world, and the things of it, have got power over them, and they are unconcerned for the things of Christ, the honour of his name, and the good of their own souls; when they are under the power of some sin, and are carried captive by it, as was the case of David, Peter, and others: now this work is revived, when the graces of the spirit are called forth again into lively exercise; when the affections go out strongly after divine objects and things; when the thoughts of the mind, and the meditations of the heart, are on spiritual subjects; when the talk and conversation turns chiefly on things of a religious and heavenly nature; when there is a forwardness to spiritual exercises, a stirring up of themselves and others to them, and a continuance in them; when there is a visible growing in grace, and a fruitfulness in every good work: this is to be prayed for, and is from the Lord; and is owing to his setting his hand a second time to the work; to his being as the dew to his people; to Christ the sun of righteousness arising on them, with healing in his wings; and to the south wind of the Spirit blowing upon them, and causing their spices to flow out; and this is desirable in the

[q] Agnoscat bos & asinus
Jacentem in præsepio. And again,
Cognovit bos & asinus,
Quod puer erat Dominus.

[r] Taking חייהו for חייו, as ידיהו for ידיו in ver. 10. So Ben Melech observes it may be taken.

[s] The Targum interprets these years of the time in which God will renew the world.

midst of their years, before the years come on in which they have no pleasure, or before they go hence, and be no more: *in the midst of the years make known;* which Cocceius and Van Till restrain to the notification of Christ's resurrection from the dead by the ministry of the Gospel, for the benefit of the Lord's people, both Jews and Gentiles; as being a matter of great consequence to them, and for the confirmation of the Christian religion, as it undoubtedly was: but it seems better to understand it in a more general sense, that God would make known more of himself, as the covenant God and Father of his people, of his mind and will, of his love, grace, and mercy in Christ; that he would make known more of Christ, of his person, offices, and grace; that he would make known more clearly the work of his Spirit and grace upon their hearts, and display his power, and the efficacy of his grace, in reviving it, and carrying it on; that he would make known more largely his covenant and promises, his truth and faithfulness in the performance of them; that he would grant a larger measure of knowledge of all divine things of the Gospel, and the truths of it; such as is promised, and is expected will be in the latter day, when the earth shall be every where filled with the knowledge of the Lord, ch. ii. 14: *in wrath remember mercy;* the above interpreters refer this to the time of God's wrath and vengeance upon the Jewish nation for their rejection of the Messiah; and which the prophet does not pray might be averted, but that mercy might be remembered to his own people among them, as was; who had the Gospel first preached to them, and were called by grace and saved; and who had an opportunity given them of escaping from Jerusalem, before the destruction of that city: but it may be more agreeable to interpret this of the state of the churches of Christ and true believers; who, when under affliction and distress, or in temptation and desertion, are ready to conclude that God is dealing with them in wrath; and whom the prophet personates, and by him they are taught to pray, that at such seasons God would remember his covenant, his promises, his loving-kindness and tender mercies, the favour he bears to his own people, and smile on them again, and comfort their souls.

Ver. 3. *God came from Teman,* &c.] Or, *may God come from Teman*[t]; since it is part of the prayer of Habakkuk: or, as *from Teman*[u]; as he of old came from thence, a city in the land of Edom, Jer. xlix. 7. Amos i. 12. it was five miles from Petra, in Idumea, where was Mount Seir, from whence the Lord arose, and shone forth from Mount Paran, at the giving of the law, Deut. xxxiii. 2. to which the allusion is here. So the Targum, "at the giving of the law to his people, God was revealed from the south;" for so Teman signifies. The prophet, to encourage his own faith, and the faith of others, takes notice, in this and the following verses, of the instances of the grace, goodness, and power of God to his people Israel, in appearing to them at Mount Sinai, going before them in the wilderness, destroying their enemies, casting them out before them, and introducing them into the land of Canaan, and settling them there; suggesting, that he that had done these great and wonderful things would support and maintain, carry on and promote, his own kingdom and interest in the world; in order to which the prophet prays to God the Father for the coming of his Son, either in the flesh, that the incarnate God would appear in the world, and set up his kingdom in it; or, in prayer, he prophesies of it, and expresses his faith in it: *God cometh from the south;* or, he *shall come*[w], as it may be rendered: he knew, from the prophecy of Micah, that he that was to be ruler in Israel was to come from Beth-lehem, Mic. v. 2. which lay to the south of Jerusalem; and from hence he expected him, and believed he would come, and prayed for it as being most desirable and welcome: or else this respects the coming of the Messiah, in the ministration of the word to Jews and Gentiles, after his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven, and the pouring forth of his Spirit on the day of Pentecost; that as the Lord came from the places here mentioned, when he gave the law on Mount Sinai, so he would send forth his Gospel out of Zion and Jerusalem, and go forth himself along with it, riding in his glory, and in his majesty, conquering and to conquer; causing his ministers to triumph in him, and by them subdue multitudes of souls to him, both in Judea, and in the Gentile world, whereby his kingdom might appear in it: *and the holy One from Mount Paran;* or, *even the holy One*[x]; that came or shined forth *from Mount Paran* formerly; for it was Christ then that appeared on Mount Sinai, and gave to Moses the lively oracles of God; see Psal. lxviii. 17, 18. Acts vii. 38. he, as he is truly God, God manifest in the flesh, *Immanuel,* God with us; so he is the holy One of God, infinitely and essentially holy, as a divine Person; and holy, and harmless, and without sin in his human nature and life; and is the sanctifier and sanctification of his people. Mount Paran was situated to the south of the land of Canaan, as well as Teman, which so signifies, as before observed. It is called by Ptolemy, Pomponius Mela, and others, Strobilus, from its likeness to a pine-apple. It had its name from the city Paran, which lay between Egypt and Arabia[y]; see 1 Kings xi. 18. which Jerom says[z] was three days' journey from Aila to the east; mention is made of Ail, or El-paran in Gen. xiv. 6. near to which was the wilderness of Paran, frequently spoken of in Scripture, Gen. xxi. 21. Numb. x. 12. and xiii. 3, 26. 1 Sam. xxv. 1. the same which Josephus[a] calls the valley or plain of Pharan, where Simon of Gerasa made caves and dens, and hid the treasure he plundered from the people: according to Adrichomius[b], it was a most dreadful barren desert, where nothing grew, or was to be had, through which the children of Israel journeyed; and was sometimes taken for the first part of the desert of Arabia, near Mount Sinai, and sometimes for the last part of it, towards the land of promise; sometimes it was called the desert of Sin, and sometimes the desert of Sinai, from that mountain; but its most general name was that of Paran, and contained eleven days' journey

[t] יבוא veniet, so some in Calvin, Van Till.
[u] מתימן sicuti olim ex Theman, Van Till.
[w] Venit, Grotius; veniet, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Gussetius.
[x] קדוש.
[y] Hiller. Onomastic. p. 585, 909.
[z] De locis Hebr. fol. 91. F. G.
[a] De Bello Jud. l. 4. c. 9. sect. 4.
[b] Theatrum Terræ Sanctæ, p. 116.

from Mount Sinai to Cadesh-barnea. Mount Paran (he says[s]) is thick and shady, near to Mount Sinai, and even *contiguous*, as it should seem to be from Deut. xxxiii. 2. to which the reference is here. So Hillerus[t] interprets it, *full of boughs*, or *branches*; or else he would have it to signify *the corner of Aran*, the son of Dishan, a son of Seir the Horite, who inhabited this country; see Gen. xxxvi. 20, 28. and both Teman and Paran being to the south, may point to the place of the Redeemer, by whom the great work was to be done, referred unto. Jerom says he heard a Hebrew man discourse on this passage, thus, "that "Beth-lehem lies to the south, where the Lord and "Saviour was born: and that he it is of whom it is "here said, *the Lord shall come from the south*; that "is, shall be born in Beth-lehem, and thence arise; and "because he who is born in Beth-lehem formerly gave "the law on Mount Sinai, he is *the holy One* that "came *from Mount Paran*; seeing Paran is a place near "to Mount Sinai; and the word *Selah* signifies *always*; "and the sense is, he who is born in Beth-lehem, and "who on Mount Sinai, that is, on Mount Paran, gave the "law, always is the author and giver of all blessings, "past, present, and to come." The word *Selah* stands here in the middle of the verse. It is interpreted, by several of the Jewish writers, *for ever*, as by the forementioned Hebrew; and by others as an affirmation, and render it, *verily*, *truly*, as answering to *Amen*. Some understand it as a pause or full stop, denoting attention to something said that is remarkable; and others take it to be a note, directing the singer to the elevation of his voice, where it stands; and so it is no other than a musical note; hence the Septuagint render it διαψαλμα. A very learned man[u] has wrote a dissertation upon it, shewing that it is one of the names of God; and used differently, as the sense requires, either in the vocative case, as *Selah*, that is, O God; or in the other cases, of God, to God, &c.: *his glory covered the heavens*; that is, the glory of God, the holy One, when he came, or should come: this was true of him when he descended on Mount Sinai, and his glory abode upon it; and the sight of his glory was like devouring fire; and the elders saw the God of Israel, under whose feet was as a paved work of sapphire, and as the body of heaven in its clearness; yea, so great as to make the light and glory of the celestial bodies useless, even to cover and hide the shining of them; see Exod. xxiv. 10, 16, 17. and may respect the glorious appearances at the birth of Christ, when the heavenly host descended, and sung Glory to God in the highest, and when the glory of the Lord shone round about the shepherds, Luke ii. ix. 14. and at his baptism, when the heavens were opened, the Father's voice was heard, and the Spirit descended on Christ, as a dove; and at his transfiguration, when his face shone as the sun; and Moses and Elias appeared in glorious forms, and a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice was heard from the excellent Glory, Matt. iii. 16, 17. and xvii. 2, 3, 4, 5. 2 Pet. i. 19. or rather it may be, this may respect Christ as the brightness of his Father's glory, and the glory of God in the face of Christ, as set forth in the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, when carried throughout the world by his apostles; whereby his glory was so spread in it, that the heavens were covered with it, and declared it; yea, it was set above the heavens, and the name of the Lord became excellent in all the earth, as follows; see Psal. xix. 1—4. and viii. 1: *and the earth was full of his praise*; with the words of his praise, as the Targum; so the fame of the mighty things done by the Lord in Egypt, at the Red sea, and in the wilderness, for his people, reached the nations of the world, and especially those of the land of Canaan, and struck them with awe and dread, Josh. ii. 9, 10. and the fame of Christ, his miracles and doctrines, went through the land of Israel, and all Syria; and multitudes glorified God, and praised him for what was done by him, Matt. iv. 23, 24. and xv. 31. and more especially the earth was filled with his glory and praise when his Gospel was carried into all the parts of it by his apostles; which occasioned universal joy to all sensible sinners, and filled their hearts and mouths with praise to God for such a Saviour, and for such blessings of grace and good things that came by him: or, *the earth was full of his light*[w]; of the light of his Gospel, and of the knowledge of himself by it.

Ver. 4. *And his brightness was as the light*, &c.] Of fire, of devouring fire on the top of the mount, to which the sight of his glory was like, Exod. xxiv. 16. to which Kimchi refers it. Aben Ezra thinks the pillar of fire is intended, in which the Lord went before his people in the wilderness, Exod. xiii. 21, 22. or as the light and splendour of Bereshith, as the Targum, of that primogenial light which was produced on the first day of the creation; or as the light of the seven days of the creation, as Jarchi; see Isa. xxx. 26. or rather as the light of the sun shining in its full strength, Christ being the light of the world, and the sun of righteousness; and so may describe him as the brightness of his Father's glory; or his glory, as the only-begotten of the Father, seen by his own disciples in the days of his flesh, shining through his works and miracles; or as exhibited in the light of his glorious Gospel, which is the great light that shined on men; and in and by which they that sat in darkness saw light, and who were darkness itself were made light in the Lord: what a glory, lustre, brightness, and light, did the Gospel spread in the world at the first publication of it! *he had horns* coming *out of his hand*; which the Jewish interpreters understand of Moses having horns or beams of light and glory from the hand and power of God, when he conversed with him on the mount, and the skin of his face shone, where the same word is used as here, Exod. xxxiv. 29, 35. though some of them interpret it of the two tables of the law, which came from the hand of the Lord, edged with glory and brightness, and looked like fire; hence called a *fiery law*, Deut. xxxiii. 2. The words may be rendered, as in the margin, *he had beams* coming *out of his side*[x]; and be understood of

[s] Ibid. p. 122.

[t] Ut supra, p. 451, 477, 908.

[u] Paschii Dissertatio de Selah, p. 670. in Thesaur. Theolog. Philolog. par. 1.

[w] ותהלתו מלאה הארץ & lux ejus implevit terram, Junius & Tremellius; & splendoris, *vel* fulgoris ejus plena terra, Vatablus, Drusius; so Kimchi, Ben Melech, and R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 3. 1.

[x] קרנים מידו לו e lateribus utrinque emicabant coruscationes, h. e. radii, Drusius.

Christ, who has beams and rays of glory on all sides of him, all around him; he is all glory[*]; he is crowned with glory and honour, and highly exalted at his Father's right hand, above all principalities and powers: and *horns* being an emblem of power and might, authority and dominion, the phrase may denote that all power and authority in heaven and in earth are given to him as Mediator, and exercised by him. Van Till observes, that the word *horns* is a military term, and is used for the wings of armies, the right and left; and as Christ is here described as a General of an army, marching forth in a warlike manner; these may denote the armies or companies under him, at his hand, and under his command, accoutred, and ready to obey his orders; and particularly may have respect to the division made among the apostles, whom he sent forth to subdue men to him; committing the Gospel of the circumcision to Peter, and of the uncircumcision to Paul, Gal. ii. 7, 8. whose ministrations were made successful to the pulling down of the strong holds of sin and Satan, and reducing many to the obedience of Christ: *and there was the hiding of his power;* that is, in his hand; there his power, which before was hidden, was made manifest; and yet so little displayed, in comparison of what it is in itself, that it may be rather said to be hid than revealed; or there, in his hand, lies his power, with which he hides and covers his people in the day of battle; especially his ministering servants, whom he holds in his right hand, and preserves them amidst a thousand dangers and difficulties, and keeps them for further usefulness; see Acts xviii. 10. Rev. ii. 1. The Targum is, "sparks went out from the "chariot of his glory; there he revealed his majesty, "which was hid from the children of men, with sub-"lime power." Aben Ezra thinks the ark is meant by *the hiding of his power*, called *the ark* of his *strength*, Psal. cxxxii. 8.

Ver. 5. *Before him went the pestilence,* &c.] Either in the land of Egypt, when he marched through that, and slew all their first-born, Psal. lxxviii. 50, 51. or rather which he sent before him, and Israel his people among the nations of the land of Canaan, with other diseases and judgments, and destroyed them to make way for his people, which may be here alluded to, Exod. xxiii. 27, 28. and may point at the judgments of God, and those pestilential diseases which seized upon the persecutors of the Christians, both among the Jews, as Herod, Acts xii. 23. and among the Gentiles, as many of the Roman emperors, who died violent and grievous deaths; and particularly it may regard the pestilence, famine, and other sore judgments preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, and the inhabitants of it, for their rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah: *and burning coals went forth at his feet;* which some understand of hailstones mingled with fire, to which the allusion may be, being one of the plagues of Egypt, Exod. ix. 23, 24. Some interpret it of hot diseases, burning fevers, so Kimchi; which are at the command of God, and sent forth by him when he pleases, to do his will. The ancient fathers expound all this of the destruction of death, and the devil, and his principalities, by Christ upon the cross; and the Targum is, "from before him was sent forth the angel of death, "and his word went forth in a flame of fire;" but this seems to have respect to the burning of the city and temple of Jerusalem, which was done by the Romans as instruments, but according to the direction, order, and will of Christ, Matt. xxii. 7. see Psal. xviii. 12, 13.

Ver. 6. *He stood and measured the earth,* &c.] This alludes to the ark of the Lord, the symbol of his presence, standing and abiding at Gilgal for the space of fourteen years, whilst the land of Canaan was subdued by Joshua; and then measured out by him, and divided by lot, as an inheritance to the children of Israel, according to the direction and appointment of the Lord, Josh. xiii. &c.: here it may have respect to the mission of the apostles into the several parts of the world, and the distribution of it among them; some being sent into one part, and some into another, called their particular line and measure, 2 Cor. x. 14, 15, 16. some into India, others into Ethiopia; some into Asia, and others into Europe; by which means the Gospel was preached everywhere, and great part of the world became Christians: *he beheld, and drove asunder the nations;* with a look of his he made them give way; he drove the Canaanites out of the land, and separated them from one another, and scattered them about, to make room for his people Israel, Psal. lxxviii. 55: *and the everlasting mountains were scattered;* or, *were broken*[t]: *the perpetual hills did bow;* the mountains and hills that were from the beginning of the creation, that were settled upon their bases, and never moved, now trembled, shook, and bowed, as Sinai and others did, at the presence of the God of Israel; see Judg. v. 5. Psal. lxviii. 8, 16. or rather, figuratively, these may design the kingdoms and states, kings and princes, greater and lesser, belonging to the land of Canaan, which were shaken, moved, and taken by the Israelites, and brought into subjection to them; and in like manner kings and kingdoms, comparable to mountains and hills, through the preaching of the Gospel, and the power of Christ attending it, were brought to yield unto him, at the downfal of Paganism in the Roman empire: this is signified by every mountain and island being moved out of their places, and kings and great men calling to the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the wrath of the Lamb, Rev. vi. 14—17: *his ways are everlasting;* and what he has done in ages past he can do again; his power, his wisdom, and his grace, are unchangeably the same; and all he does in time, every step he takes, is according to his counsels, purposes, and decrees in eternity, which infallibly come to pass; nor can he be hindered and frustrated in the execution of them; as he has begun, he'll go on; as he has set up his kingdom in the world, he'll support and maintain it; and though there are many obstructions and remoras in the way of it, he'll go on, and remove them, until he has thoroughly established it, and brought it to its highest glory, which he has designed; all mountains and hills are nothing

[*] So R. Joseph Albo interprets them of sparks of spiritual light, which come from God himself, and not another. Vid. Sepher Ikkarim, l. 2. c. 29.

[t] ויתפצצו contriti sunt, Pagninus, Montanus; so R. Sel. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 95. 2.

before him; he can soon make them a plain; see Rev. xi. 15, 17: or, *the ways of the world*[k] are *his*; the world is under his government, and all things in it subject to his providence; he can rule and overrule all things for his own glory, and the good of his interest, and he will do it; every thing is subject to his control, and under his direction; not a step can be taken without his will. This the prophet observes along with the above things, to encourage the faith and expectation of the saints, that the work of the Lord will be revived, and his kingdom and interest promoted and established in the world; though there may, and will, be many difficulties and distresses previous to it.

Ver. 7. *I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction*, &c.] The same with Cush or Ethiopia; hence the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it, *the tents of the Ethiopians*; and these are the same with *the curtains of Midian* in the next clause, tents being made of curtains, and the Ethiopians and Midianites the same people; so the daughter of the priest of Midian, whom Moses married, is called an Ethiopian woman, Exod. ii. 21. Numb. xii. 1. This seems to have respect to that panic which seized the neighbouring nations by whom the Israelites passed, as well as the Canaanites, into whose land they were marching, when they heard what wonderful things were done for them in Egypt, at the Red sea, and in the wilderness, which was predicted by Moses in Exod. xv. 14, 15. and not only fulfilled in the Canaanites, as appears from what Rahab says, Josh. ii. 9, 10, 11. but particularly in the Moabites and Midianites, who sent to each other, and consulted together against Israel; and, by the advice of Balaam, found ways and means to draw them into fornication, and so to idolatry; for which the Israelites having suffered, were stirred up to avenge themselves on them, and slew five of their kings, and a great multitude of their people; and so the words may be rendered, *for iniquity*[l]; and the word is often used for idolatry; that is, for the sin they drew the Israelites into, they were brought into trembling and great distress, which the prophet saw, perceived, and understood by reading the history of those times; see Numb. xxii. 3, 4, 7, and xxv. 6, 17, 18. and xxxi. 2—8. though the Jewish commentators, and others, generally refer this to the case of Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia, who carried Israel into captivity, from whence they were delivered by Othniel, who prevailed against Cushan, and into whose hands he fell; and so then he and his people were seen in affliction, Judg. iii. 7—10. but Cushan here is not the name of a man, but of a country: and whereas it follows, *the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble*: this is thought to refer to the times of Gideon, when the Midianites were overcome by him with three hundred men, and in their fright fell upon and destroyed each other; signified by a barley-cake tumbling into the host of Midian, and overturning a tent, as represented in a dream to one of Gideon's men, Judg. vii. 13, 21, 22. but the former reference seems best; and it should be observed, that Cush or Ethiopia, and Midian, were parts of Arabia; for not only the Arabians are said to be near the Ethiopians, or at the hand of the Cushites, 2 Chron. xxi. 16. but Sinai, a part of Horeb, where Moses fed the flock of his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, is expressly said to be in Arabia; compare Exod. iii. 1. Gal. iv. 25. and with those Arabians called Scenitæ, from their dwelling in tents, agree the characters in the text: now the people inhabiting those places, the prophet foresaw by a spirit of prophecy *under vanity*[m], as it may be rendered; that is, *subject* to it, as the whole Gentile world was, Rom. viii. 20. or under the power of idolatry; but it was foretold that these should be converted in Gospel-times, Psal. lxviii. 31. and lxxxvii. 4. which was brought about, partly by the Apostles Matthew and Matthias, said to be sent into Ethiopia; and partly by the Ethiopian eunuch, converted and baptized by Philip, who doubtless was the means of spreading the Gospel in his own country, when returned to it, Acts viii. 27. and chiefly by the Apostle Paul, who went into Arabia, and preached there, quickly after his conversion; and here were churches in the first times of Christianity; see the note on Gal. 1. 17. and at this time Cushan or Ethiopia was in affliction; and the Midianites trembled, such of them to whom the word came in power, and they were made sensible of their danger and misery, as the apostle did, the instrument of their conversion, Acts ix. 6. once more, as an Ethiopian is an emblem of a man in a state of nature, and describes very aptly wicked and profligate persons, apostates from religion, and such as are persecutors of good men, Jer. xiii. 23. Amos ix. 7. it may design such here; and be expressive of their distress and trouble, the fear and dread they would be seized with on seeing Christianity prevail, and Paganism falling in the Roman empire; which distress and trembling are in a very lively manner set forth in Rev. vi. 15, 16, 17.

Ver. 8. *Was the Lord displeased against the rivers? was thine anger against the rivers?* &c.] Referring, as is commonly thought, either to the rivers in Egypt turned into blood, which was one of the plagues of that land, Exod. vii. 20. when the resentment of the Lord was not so much against them as against the Egyptians; and as a punishment of them for drowning the infants of the Israelites in them, and in order to obtain the dismission of his people from that land: or else to the river Jordan, called *rivers*, because of the largeness of it, and the abundance of water in it; against which the Lord was not angry, when he divided the waters of it, which was done only to make a passage through it for his people into the land of Canaan, Josh. iii. 16, 17: was *thy wrath against the sea, that thou didst ride upon thine horses* and *thy chariots of salvation?* the Red sea, when a strong east wind was sent, and divided the waters of it, which was no mark of displeasure against that; but for the benefit of the people of Israel, that they might pass through it as on dry land; and for the destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts, who, entering into it with his horses and chariots, were drowned; the Lord coming forth against him, riding on his horses and chariots, the pillar of fire and cloud, by which he defended Israel, and

[k] הליכות עולם itinera mundi, Vatablus, Tigurine version.
[l] תחת און propter iniquitatem, Vulg. Lat. Calvin, Tigurine version.
[m] Subjecta vanitati, Heb.; sub vanitate, Piscator, Cocceius, Van Till.

through which he looked, and discomfited the host of the Egyptians, and wrought salvation for his people; see Exod. xiv. 19—28. with which compare Psal. cxiv. 3, 5. The clouds are the chariots of the Lord, Psal. civ. 3. so angels, who are sometimes signified by horses and chariots, Psal. xviii. 10. and lxviii. 17. 2 Kings ii. 11. and vi. 17. Zech. i. 8. and vi. 1—5. and here they may design the angels of Michael, or Christ, Rev. xii. 7, 8. the Christian emperors, Constantine and Theodosius, whom the Lord raised up, and made use of as instruments to demolish Paganism, establish Christianity, and deliver and save his people from their persecutors, who came in like a flood upon them; and who, for their number and force, were comparable to rivers, yea, to the sea; and upon whom the Lord shewed some manifest tokens of his wrath and displeasure; so people, tongues, and nations, are compared to many waters, Rev. xvii. 15. and monarchs and their armies, Isa. viii. 7, 8. and the Targum here interprets the rivers of kings and their armies: and it may be observed that some parts of the Roman empire are signified by the sea, and rivers and fountains of waters, on which the blowing of the second and third trumpets brought desolation; as the antichristian states are described by the same, on which the second and third vials of God's wrath will be poured, when he will indeed be displeased and angry with the rivers and the sea, figuratively understood, Rev. viii. 8, 10. and xvi. 3, 4.

Ver. 9. *Thy bow was made quite naked*, &c.] It was took out of its case, and arrows out of their quiver, and these made use of against the enemies of his people: this is put for all weapons of war; the sword was unsheathed, and all military weapons employed, and the power of the Lord was exerted; or, as the Targum, "the Lord was revealed in his power;" fighting the battles of his people, as in the times of Joshua: according *to the oaths of the tribes*, even thy *word*. *Selah*. That is, to fulfil his word of promise, to which he had annexed his oaths, he at several times swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to the fathers of the Israelites, that he would put them in possession of the land of Canaan; and which being worthy of notice, and to be remarked, the word *Selah* is added. So the Targum, "in revealing thou art revealed in thy "power, because of thy covenant which thy word "made with the tribes for ever." The *bow* here is an emblem of the Gospel, with which Christ the Captain of our salvation, the antitype of Joshua, went forth, more especially in the first ages of Christianity, conquering and to conquer, Rev. vi. 2. The arrows of this bow are the doctrines of the Gospel, which are sharp in the heart of Christ's enemies, his elect; who are so in a state of nature, whereby they are brought into subjection to him, Psal. xlv. 5. and hereby the promises of God confirmed by his oaths are accomplished, that the spiritual seed of Christ shall endure for ever; or he shall never want a seed to serve him, Psal. lxxxix. 35, 36: *thou didst cleave the earth with rivers*; which is generally supposed to allude to the smiting of the rock, from whence waters gushed out, and ran in dry places like a river; for which channels or canals were made in the earth, in which they flowed and followed the Israelites wherever they went, and supplied man and beast with water. So the Targum, "for thou didst break strong rocks, rivers came forth "overflowing the earth;" see Psal. cv. 41. 1 Cor. x. 4. but this seems to be going back in the history; rather therefore this refers to the rivers formed in the land of Canaan, whereby it became fertile; hence it is called a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, that spring out of valleys and hills, Deut. viii. 7. This may respect, in futurity, either the provisions of grace, and the large abundance of the blessings of it, made for the supply and satisfaction of the children of God in times of distress and difficulty, Isa. xli. 17, 18. or that help and assistance against, protection and deliverance from, the flood of persecution, cast out after the church by Satan, in order to overwhelm her, by the earth opening its mouth, and swallowing up the flood, Rev. xii. 15, 16.

Ver. 10. *The mountains saw thee, and they trembled*, &c.] At the power and presence of God, as Sinai of old; see the note on ver. 6. by which are signified mighty people and nations, kings and great men, struck with terror at the amazing providences of God in the world, on the behalf of his own people, and against their enemies; see Rev. vi. 14—17: *the overflowing of the water passed by*; which is usually referred to the overflowing of the river Jordan at the time of the passage of the Israelites through it, when the waters above stood and rose up as a heap, and those below failed, and were cut off, and passed away into the salt sea, Josh. iii. 15, 16. but perhaps it may refer to the times of David, when he conquered all his enemies round about, who were like an overflowing flood; but now passed away, particularly the Philistines, who had always been very troublesome to Israel, but now were overcome by David at Baal-perazzim; where the Lord, on the contrary, broke forth upon his enemies as the breach of waters, from whence the place had its name, 2 Sam. v. 20. and as this respects time that was then to come, when this prayer was made, it may regard the flood of persecution, which ceased in Constantine's time, when Paganism was abolished, and Christianity established; concerning which it might be said, *the winter is past, the rain is over and gone*, Cant. ii. 11. and the word [*] here used signifies a large shower of rain, causing an inundation, a storm, a tempest; and so fitly expresses the violence of persecution, now at an end: *the deep uttered his voice*, and *lifted up his hands on high*; language very poetical, exceeding striking, very beautiful and elegant. It is generally understood of the deep waters of the Red sea, or of Jordan, or both, when divided for the Israelites to pass through; at which time, when they rose up, they made a great noise, and stood on a heap; and so the phrases are expressive of the roaring and raging of them as they rose up, which was as if they had spoken; and of the position in which they were, standing up on high, as if they had hands, and these lifted up: but rather they figuratively refer to the mighty nations conquered by David, who asked favour and mercy of him, and signified their subjection to

[*] זרם nimbus, Tigurine version; impetus, Munster; imber aquosus, Cocceius, Van Till; inundatio aquarum, Burkius.

him; and, having respect to times to come, may denote the subjection of the multitude of people and nations in the Roman empire to Christ, when Heathenism was abolished in it; and the joy and rejoicing of Christians upon it, and the ceasing of persecution in it, even high and low, rich and poor, all ranks and degrees of men; height and depth, men in high or low circumstances, signified by the depth uttering his voice, and the height lifting up its hands, in token of praise and thankfulness; for so the latter clause may be rendered, *the height lifted up his hands* [x]; and answers to the deep in the preceding clause; agreeable to this sense is Jarchi's note, "*the deep uttered his voice*; the "inhabitants of the earth praised him; *the height lifted* "*up his hands*; the host of heaven confessed unto "him;" every creature in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth, and in the sea, ascribed blessing, honour, glory, and power, to the Lord on this occasion, Rev. v. 13. The Targum is, "the powers on high "stood wondering;" amazed at what was done, and lifted up their hands with astonishment.

Ver. 11. *The sun and moon stood still in their habitation*, &c.] This is generally thought to refer to the miracle in the times of Joshua, Josh. x. 12, 13. but a different word is there used, especially of the standing still of the sun; nor are the sun and moon said there to stand in their habitation; nor will the series of the history of times past, or the thread of prophecy of things to come, admit of this reference; nor do the words express the clear shining of the sun and moon at their standing still, but the reverse; for the phrase, *in their habitation*, may be rendered, *within their tent* [y], or pavilion; see Psal. xix. 4. and the note there; which is no other than their being encompassed and covered with clouds; which is just such a pavilion as God is said to be in, when *darkness was his secret place; his pavilion round about him dark waters and thick clouds of the skies*, Psal. xviii. 11. and so is expressive of the dark times of antichrist, which followed, when the Pagan persecutions were over, Christianity supported by secular powers, and the Christian churches raised to the height of riches and honour; and then the man of sin shewed himself, the pope of Rome took upon him the title of universal bishop, and introduced false doctrines, strange worship, and bad discipline, into the church, and obscured the glorious light of it; and Mahomet also arose with his locusts, the Saracens, out of the bottomless pit opened, from whence came a smoke which darkened the sun and air, Rev. ix. 1, 2: *at the light of thine arrows they went*, and *at the shining of thy glittering spear*: the commonly received sense of the words is, either at the light and shining of the sun and moon, when they stood still in Joshua's time; the arrows of the Almighty, and the lightning of his spear, that is, hailstones mingled with fire, and thunder, and lightning, which the Heathens call Jupiter's arrows; these steered their course, being directed against the enemies of the Lord's people, and fought for them, Josh. x. 10, 11. or at the light of these, which looked very bright and dazzling through the rays of the sun upon them, the Israelites marched against their enemies, and avenged themselves on them: but these bright arrows and glittering spear, and the light and shining of them, seem to design no other than the weapons of the Christian ministry or warfare; the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; the light of which broke forth at the Reformation, the same that is meant by the *morning-star*, Rev. ii. 28. irradiated by which, the ministers of it especially went forth with courage against their antichristian enemies, and prevailed, and spread the Gospel in many countries. It may be rendered as a petition, *let them walk at the light* [z], &c.; a prayer of faith that it might be, and which is a prophecy that it would be.

Ver. 12. *Thou didst march through the land with indignation*, &c.] Not the land of Canaan, fighting against the inhabitants of it, dispossessing them to make room for the Israelites, whatever allusion may be to it; but the antichristian land, the whole Romish jurisdiction, and all the states of it, through which the Lord will march in wrath and fury, when he pours out the vials of it upon them; or this is desired, and prayed for; for it may be rendered, *do thou march through the land* [a], &c.; foreseeing and believing that he would: *thou didst thresh the Heathen in anger*; or, *do thou thresh* [b], &c.; these are the Papists, called Heathens and Gentiles in Scripture, because of the Heathenish customs and practices they have introduced into the Christian religion, Psal. x. 16. Rev. xi. 2. these are the nations that will be gathered together like sheaves of corn on a floor to be threshed; and when Zion the church of Christ, and Christian princes, will be called upon to arise, and thresh them; and the Lord by them will do it, namely, separate his own people from them, which are like wheat, and utterly destroy them, as chaff and stubble, Mic. iv. 12, 13.

Ver. 13. *Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed*, &c.] Or, *thy Messiah*; which Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret of Messiah the son of David; and read and give the sense of the words thus, "as thou wentest "forth for the salvation of thy people, by bringing "them into the land of Canaan, so do thou go forth "for salvation with thy Messiah." God of old went forth in his power and providence for the salvation of his people, whom he chose above all people to be his special and peculiar people; making use of Moses and Aaron in bringing them out of Egypt, and leading them through the wilderness, and of Joshua to introduce them, and settle them in the land of Canaan; who were all types of Christ in the salvation of the chosen people. Joshua particularly was a type of Jesus; they agree in their name, which signifies a Saviour, the salvation of God, or God the salvation; and in their character, office, and usefulness to the people of God. Jesus is the Lord's *anointed*; anointed with the Holy Ghost, the oil of gladness, above his fellows, which he received without measure; anointed to the office of Prophet, Priest, and King; and from whom his people receive the unction, and are denominated Christians,

[x] רום ידיהו נשא altitudo manuum suam sublevavit, Munster; altitudo manus suas tulit, Burkius.
[y] זבלה intra habitaculum, Cocceius, Van Till; vel in tugurio, ib.
[z] יהלכו ambulent ad lucem, &c. Van Till.
[a] תצעד progrediaris, Van Till.
[b] תדוש triturus, Van Till.

or anointed ones: and the *people* of God, for whose salvation he went forth with him, are not all mankind, who are not all saved; nor the people of the Jews only, or all of them; but a peculiar people, out of Jews and Gentiles, loved with a special love; chosen to salvation, secured in the covenant of grace, and given to Christ as his portion and people, and so saved by him, Matt. i. 21. The *salvation* of them is a spiritual one, a salvation from all their sins; from the power and dominion, pollution and guilt, the damning power of them, and at last from the very being of them; as well as from Satan, the law, death, hell, and wrath to come: it is perfect and complete, and endures for ever. Jehovah the Father *went forth* with Christ his Son for this salvation, in his purposes and decrees concerning it; in his council and covenant relating to it; in the mission of him into this world to effect it; and by helping and assisting him in it, as man and Mediator. The words may be rendered, *thou wentest forth*; or, *thou goest forth*; thou wilt do so; and mayest thou do so, *to save thy people, to save thy anointed*[*]; and so respect not the salvation of Israel by Moses or Joshua; nor the spiritual and eternal salvation of God's elect by the Messiah; but the salvation of the Lord's people from mystical Babylon, from the oppression and tyranny of antichrist, and from all his false doctrines, superstition, and idolatry, and ruin by them; and particularly the salvation of the two witnesses, the two olive-trees, the two anointed ones that stand before the Lord of the whole earth; the singular being put for the plural, *anointed* for *anointed ones*; and so the Alexandrian copy of the Septuagint version, and the Arabic version, render it, *thy Christs*, or *thy anointed ones*; now this will be done when the Lord shall go forth in his power and providence, and quicken and raise their dead bodies, when they have lain three days and a half, and shall cause them to ascend to heaven in the sight of their enemies; see Zech. iv. 14. Rev. xi. 3, 4, 11, 12: *thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked*; not the princes of the families of the land of Canaan, as some; nor the first-born of Pharaoh's family in Egypt, or him and his host at the Red sea, as others; nor Goliah of Gath, smitten by David, as Burkius; nor Satan and his principalities and powers by Christ on the cross; but antichrist the man of sin, that wicked and lawless one, who is at the head of a wicked house or family, the antichristian party; who received a wound at the Reformation; and ere long the kings of the earth will hate the whore, eat her flesh, and burn her with fire; and Christ will utterly consume and destroy this wicked one with the breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming, Rev. xiii. 3: and xvii. 16. 2 Thess. ii. 8. see Psal. cx. 6. Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret this of the head of the army of wicked Gog, the king of Magog, taking it to belong to future time; and so some render all those phrases, *thou wilt go forth, thou wilt wound*[*], &c.: *by discovering the foundation unto the neck*: or *razing the foundation*, as in Psal. cxxxvii. 7. There seems to be a double metaphor in the words, expressing the utter ruin and destruction of antichrist and his party; who, being compared to a building, will be demolished, and razed to the very foundation; that will be dug up, and laid bare, and no trace of an edifice to be seen any more; and, being compared to a human body, will be plunged into such distresses and calamities, as to be as it were up to the neck in them, from whence there is no escape and deliverance. Some understand this of the princes of this head, or of his friends, and those of his family that are nearest to him, as the neck is to the head; or of the whole body of the people under him, of which he will be deprived; and so be as a head without a body, and who cannot long survive them. *Selah* is added as a mark of attention, something of moment and importance being observed.

Ver. 14. *Thou didst strike through with his staves the head of his villages*, &c.] Of his warriors, mighty men, princes; so the Vulgate Latin, Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions; or of his armies, as Jarchi and Kimchi; which some interpret of Pharaoh and his host, who were destroyed by the steps and methods which they themselves took, going into the sea of themselves, and so were struck through with their own staves: others of the princes and armies of the Canaanites, who destroyed one another with their own weapons of war, as the Midianites did; though we have no instance of it on record: others of Goliah, as Burkius, called before *the head out of the house of the wicked*, with respect to his rise from Gath; here, *the head of his Pagans*, as he renders it, or Gentiles, with respect to his pre-eminence over the common soldiers, and all the Philistines: others of Sennacherib and his army, as Jarchi; but Kimchi's sense is much better, who interprets it of Gog and his army; and which, if understood of the Turk, the eastern antichrist, is not amiss; and so, as the western antichrist and his destruction are pointed at in the preceding verse, the ruin of the other is intimated here; whose armies are expressed by a word which sometimes has the signification of villages; because he said, *I will go up to the land of unwalled villages*, Ezek. xxxviii. 11. in the land of Judea about Jerusalem, where he will distribute and quarter his soldiers; and where he and they at the head of them in these villages will be cut to pieces with their own weapons; as it is said, *every man's sword shall be against his brother*, Ezek. xxxviii. 21. Cocceius and Van Till render the words, *thou hast designed*, marked out, or expressed by name, *in his tribes, the head of his villages*; and understand them, not of the enemy, but of Christ the anointed One, and his people; the Protestants, or reformed churches, who, being separated from antichrist, are represented as divided into tribes, and as dwelling in villages alone, and in separate states and kingdoms; and suppose that God has designed in his purposes and decrees some particular place, called the head or beginning of these villages, where his great and glorious work in the latter day will first appear; but what and where that place is is not said: *they came out as a whirlwind to scatter me*; the prophet personating the true Israel, or the whole church of Christ: it is not unusual for mighty armies to be compared to a whirlwind coming forth with

[*] לישע עמך לישע את משיחך ad salutem populi tui, ad servandum unctum tuum, De Dieu.

[*] יצאת egrediens; so some in Vatablus. מחצת transfigens; so some in Drusius.

great force, suddenly and swiftly; see Jer. iv. 13. and particularly it is said of the army of Gog or the Turk, which shall invade Judea, in order to dispossess the Jews of their land, when converted and returned to it; *thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud, to cover the land, thou and all thy bands, and many people with thee*, Ezek. xxxviii. 9. who will think to scatter the people of the Jews again among the nations, as they have been: *their rejoicing was to devour the poor secretly*; the poor people of the Jews, to strip them of their substance, to carry off their gold and silver, their cattle and their goods; and which they thought they should as easily accomplish as a rich man gets the mastery over a poor man, and ruins him, that has none to help him; and that they should do this in a still, private, secret manner, so as that the Christian princes should have no knowledge of it, and come in to their assistance; and this they rejoiced at in themselves, and pleased themselves with it; see Ezek. xxxviii. 10, 11, 12, 13. and Psal. cviii. 10. The above interpreters render this clause as a prayer, *let them tremble for fear*; or be filled with horror, who come *to scatter me, whose rejoicing is as to devour the poor in secret*; which is interpreted of the Papists being terrified by some Christian princes, since the Reformation, from carrying some of their designs into execution; and of the clandestine arts and secret methods the Jesuits particularly use to do injury to the interest of Christ and true religion.

Ver. 15. *Thou didst walk through the sea with thine horses*, &c.] And as thou didst of old, so do again; as Jehovah walked through the Red sea in a pillar of cloud and fire, which were his horses and chariots, and destroyed the Egyptians; so may he walk through another sea by his instruments, and destroy the enemies of his church and people; see the note on ver. 8. The *sea* here signifies the world, compared to it for the multitude of its people; the noise, fluctuation, and uncertainty of all things in it; and particularly the Roman empire, the sea out of which the antichristian beast arose, Rev. xiii. 1. The *horses* are the angels or Christian princes, with whom the Lord will walk in majesty, and in the greatness of his strength, pouring out the vials of his wrath on the antichristian states: *through the heap of many waters*; or *the clay*, or *mud of many waters* *; that lies at the bottom of them; which being walked through and trampled on by horses, is raised up, and *troubles* them, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it: these *many waters* are those on which the whore of Rome is said to sit; and which are interpreted of people, multitudes, nations, and tongues, Rev. xvii. 1, 15. and the *mud* of them is expressive of their pollution and corruption, with her false doctrines, idolatry, superstition, and immoralities; and of their disturbed state and condition, through the judgments of God upon them, signified by his horses walking through them; trampling upon them in fury; treating them with the utmost contempt; treading them like mire and clay, and bringing upon them utter ruin and destruction.

Ver. 16. *When I heard, my belly trembled*, &c.] His bowels, his heart within him, at the report made of what would come to pass in future time; and not so much at hearing of the judgments of God that should come upon the enemies of his church, antichrist and his followers; though even these are awful and tremendous to good men: see Psal. cxix. 120. but upon hearing what troubles and distresses would come upon the churches of Christ, previous to these, afterwards called a day of trouble in this verse, and more particularly described in the next: *my lips quivered at the voice*; at the voice of these words, as the Targum; at the voice of the Lord, expressing and foretelling these calamities, through fear and dread, consternation and amazement; under which circumstances the natural heat of the outward parts of the body retires to defend the heart, and leaves them trembling and quivering, particularly the lips, so that they lose their use for a time; and a person in such a case can hardly speak: *rottenness entered into my bones*; he became weak and strengthless, as if he had long been in a wasting consumption; or was at once deprived of all his strength, and it was turned into corruption; see Dan. x. 8: *and I trembled in myself*, within himself, in all his inward parts, as well as in his outward parts: or, *under myself* *; was not able to keep his place, could not stand upon the ground that was under him; his knees trembled, as the Syriac version: *that I might rest in the day of trouble*; rather, as Noldius [y] renders the particle, *yet*, or *notwithstanding, I shall rest in the day of trouble*; which had been represented to him in vision; and which he had a sight of by a spirit of prophecy, as coming upon the church of Christ, and had given him that concern before expressed. The Syriac version of this and the next clause, which it joins, is, *he shewed me the day of calamity, which is about to come upon the people*. Here begins the prophet's expression of his strong faith and joy in the midst of all the distresses he saw were at hand; herein personating the church, and all true believers helped to exercise faith in those worst of times. This *day of trouble* is the same with the hour of temptation that shall come upon all the earth to try the inhabitants of it; the time of the slaying of the witnesses, which will be such a time of trouble as never was in the world; see Rev. iii. 10. Dan. xii. 1. The *rest* the people of God will have then, which the prophet had faith in for them, will be in the Lord's protection and keeping of his people; his perfections, power, and providence, are the chambers of rest and safety he will call them unto, and the shadow of his wings, which they will make their refuge till these calamities and indignation be overpast, Isa. xxvi. 20. Psal. lvii. 1: *when he cometh up unto the people, he will invade them with his troops*; or rather *him*; not *the people*: the people of God, *he* the Lord or Christ comes unto; but the enemy of them: this is the ground of the prophet's faith and confidence before expressed, or of the church's he personated; namely, that when Christ, Michael the great Prince, should come up to his people, appear for them, and stand

* חמר מים רבים in luto aquarum multarum, Tigurine version; calcasti lutum aquarum multarum, Cocceius, Van Till; lutum, aquæ multæ, Burkius.

* תחתי subtus me, Drusius, De Dieu; subter me, Cocceius, Van Till.

[y] Ebr. Concord. Part. p. 108. No. 530.

on their side, he would lead his troops and march his army against their grand enemy antichrist; and *cut him to pieces*[z], as some render the word: so Christ is represented as a mighty warrior, marching at the head of his troops, the armies of heaven following him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, who are the called, chosen, and faithful; and with these he will fall upon the beast, the false prophet, and the kings of the earth, gathered together at Armageddon, and utterly destroy them, Rev. xvi. 14, 16. and xvii. 14. and xix. 14—21.

Ver. 17. *Although the fig-tree shall not blossom*, &c.] Or rather, as the Septuagint version, *shall not bring forth fruit*; since the fig-tree does not bear blossoms and flowers, but puts forth green figs at once. This was a tree common in the land of Canaan, and its fruit much in use, and for food; hence we read of cakes of figs among the provisions Abigail brought to David, 1 Sam. xxv. 18. so that, when there was a scarcity of these, it was a bad time: *neither* shall *fruit* be *in the vines*; no grapes, or clusters of them, out of which wine was pressed; a liquor very refreshing and reviving to nature; and is said to cheer God and man, being used in sacrifices and libations to God, and the common drink of men, Judg. ix. 13. so that, when it failed, it was a public calamity: *the labour of the olive shall fail*; or *lie*[a]; disappoint the expectation of those who planted and cultivated it with much toil and labour, it not producing fruit as looked for. This tree yielded berries of an agreeable taste, and out of which oil was extracted, the Jews used instead of butter, and for various purposes; so that, when it failed of fruit, it was a great loss on many accounts: *and the fields shall yield no meat*; the grass-fields no herbage for beasts; the corn-fields no corn for man; the consequence of which must be a famine to both; and this must be very dismal and distressing: *the flock shall be cut off from the fold*; flocks of sheep; either by the hand of God, some disease being sent among them; or by the hand of man, drove off by the enemy, or killed for their use; so that the folds were empty of them, and none to gather into them: *and there* shall be *no herd in the stalls*; or oxen in the stables, where they are kept, and have their food; or stalls in which they are fattened for use; and by all these are signified the necessaries of life, which, when they fail, make a famine, which is a very distressing case; and yet, in the midst of all this, the prophet, personating the church, expresses his faith and joy in the Lord, as in the following verse; though all this is to be understood, not so much in a literal as in a figurative sense. *Fig-trees, vines*, and *olives*, are often used as emblems of truly gracious persons, Cant. ii. 13. Psal. lii. 8. partly because of their fruitfulness in grace and good works, and partly because of their perseverance therein; all these trees being fruitful ones; and some, as the olive, ever green: of such persons there is sometimes a scarcity, as is complained of in the times of David and Micah, Psal. xii. 1. Mic. vii. 1. and especially there will be in the latter day; for righteous and merciful men will be taken away from the evil to come, Isa. lvii. 1. and, however, there will be very few lively, spiritual, and fruitful Christians, such as abound in the exercise of grace, and are diligent in the discharge of duty; for, when the son of man cometh, he will not find faith on the earth; and he will find the virgins sleeping, Luke xviii. 8. Matt. xxv. 5. The *fields not* yielding *meat* may signify that the provisions of the house of God will be cut off; there will be no ministration of the word, or administration of ordinances; the word of the Lord will be scarce, rare, and precious; there will be a famine, not of bread and of water, but of hearing the word of the Lord; one of the days of the son of man will be desired, but not enjoyed; so no spiritual food in the use of means to be had; a very uncomfortable time this will be, Amos viii. 11. Luke xvii. 22. The *flock* being *cut off from the fold* may denote that the sheep of Christ will be given up to the slaughter of the enemy, or be scattered abroad in this dark and cloudy day of persecution; so that there will be no fold, no flock, no sheep gathered together; and perhaps such will be the case, that there will not be one visible congregated church in due order throughout the whole world; all will be broke up, and dispersed here and there: *no herd* or *oxen in the stall* may signify that the ministers of the Gospel, compared to oxen for their strength, industry, and laboriousness in the work of the Lord, will be removed, or not suffered to exercise their ministry, nor be encouraged by any in it: this will be the case at the slaying of the witnesses, and a most distressing time it will be; and yet the prophet, or the church personated by him, expresses an uncommon frame of spirit in the following verse. The Targum interprets all this figuratively of the several monarchies of the world, which should be no more; "the kingdom of Babylon shall not con-
"tinue, nor shall it exercise dominion over Israel; the
"kings of the Medes shall be killed; and the mighty
"men of Greece shall not prosper; and the Romans
"shall be destroyed, and shall not collect tribute from
"Jerusalem; therefore for the wonder, and for the
"redemption, thou shalt work for thy Messiah; and
"for the rest of thy people who shall remain, they
"shall praise, saying: the prophet said;" as follows:

Ver. 18. *Yet I will rejoice in the Lord*, &c.] In the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; the essential Word of the Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ; in his person, the greatness and glory of it; in his offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King, the only Mediator and Saviour; in his relations, as head and husband, father, brother, friend; in his fulness, grace, and righteousness; in his spiritual presence, and comfortable communion with him, which may be expected in a remarkable manner after the above day of trouble is over: and in his personal appearance, which will shortly be, and when his tabernacle will be with men on earth: *I will joy in the God of my salvation*; in Christ, who is God, and so able to save his people; to make every thing he did and suffered in human nature effectual and available to them; to supply all their wants, and to keep what they commit unto him, and to preserve them safe to his kingdom and glory; and who also joy in the salvation of their God, or which

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[z] יגודנו ut excidat eum, Calvin; succidet eum, Vatablus.

[a] כחש ψεύσεται, Sept.; mentietur, Vulg. Lat. Piscator; mentiebatur, Pagninus.

he is the author of, both temporal and spiritual, especially the latter; which is so great and glorious in itself, so suitable to their case, so complete and perfect, and makes so much for the glory of all the divine perfections, and is all of free grace, and lasts for ever: this salvation is peculiar to the people of God; it is theirs, and theirs only; it is what they choose and prefer to all other ways of salvation; it is brought and applied to them by the Spirit, and which they appropriate to themselves under his witnessings; and then it is they can and do rejoice: particularly salvation and deliverance from antichristianism, in all the branches of it, may be chiefly pointed at as the matter and ground of joy; and the enjoyment of Gospel privileges in the full extent of them; the word and ordinances in their power and purity; and the presence of Christ in them.

Ver. 19. *The Lord God is my strength, &c.*] The author and giver of natural and spiritual strength, as he is to all his people; he is the strength of their hearts when ready to faint and sink, and of their graces, faith, hope, love, patience, &c. and continues and increases them, and draws them forth into lively acts and exercise; and of their lives, natural and spiritual, which he supports and maintains, secures and defends: from him they have their strength to perform the duties of religion; to oppose their spiritual enemies, sin, Satan, and the world; and to bear them up under all trials and afflictions, and carry them through them, and deliver out of them, and which is principally intended here: the church, though in distress, and pressed with sorrows, yet believed the strength of Christ would be made perfect in her weakness, and she should be upheld by him under all, and brought out of it: *and he will make my feet like hinds'* feet; swift as they, as the Targum, which are very swift; and on account of the swiftness of them is the comparison used: and which is to be understood, not barely of the Jews being swift of foot to return to their own country, when the time of their conversion is come; or to pursue their enemies, as Kimchi; that is, Gog or the Turks, having got the victory over them: but of all Christians, whose feet will be swift to run, in a lively cheerful manner, the way of Christ's commandments; their souls being strengthened, and their hearts enlarged with the love and grace of God; and to surmount with ease all difficulties and obstructions that lie in their way: and chiefly this regards the ministers of the Gospel, and the swift progress they will make in spreading it in the world; as the apostles and first ministers of the word, having their feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, went swiftly through all parts of the world, even to the ends of the earth, with it; so in the latter day many will run to and fro, everywhere preaching the everlasting Gospel to all nations; the knowledge of it shall greatly increase; see Dan. xii. 4. Rev. xiv. 6. this passage seems to be taken out of Psal. xviii. 34. and there may be not only an allusion to the swiftness of those creatures, but to the strength and firmness of their feet; so that they can go upon rocks and mountains securely, and tread and walk, and even run upon them with safety; and this sense is directed to, not only by what follows, concerning *walking* on *high places*; but by the word here used, which signifies to *make*, or *set*, fix, place, order, and settle[b]; and this agrees with the nature of those creatures, whose feet are not only swift, but firm; they tread sure and stable; hence hinds and harts are by the poets[c] called the *brazen-footed hinds*, or *harts*; because of the firmness and stability of their going; and it is an observation of Jarchi's[d], that the feet of the females stand firmer and more upright than the feet of the males; wherefore, both here, and in Psal. xviii. 34, not harts, but hinds, are made mention of; and so this may also denote the stability of the saints in those times, both ministers and common Christians, in the exercise of grace, and in the performance of duty; their hearts will be established in the faith of Christ, and in love to him, and in the hope of eternal life by him; all which they will be settled in, and will hold fast, and not let go; and will be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord their God; and so in the Gospel of Christ, and in the ordinances of it, their souls will be established in and with the doctrines of grace, and will continue steadfastly in them, and abide by and keep the ordinances as they have been delivered to them; nor will any difficulties, which may seem like hills and mountains, and cragged rocks, deter or discourage them, or move them from the hope of the Gospel, or from their duty; but they shall walk on securely and firmly: *and he will make me to walk upon mine high places*; meaning not so much the high places of the land of Judea, some part of it being mountainous, though there may be some reference to them; but it signifies the exalted state of the church after the troublesome times, when it shall be exalted above the hills, and established on the top of the mountains; when Christ the Lamb, with his 144,000 sealed ones, shall stand upon Mount Zion with harps in their hands, having gotten the victory over the antichristian beast and his image; and when the saints shall have the dominion of the world; and the kingdom and the greatness of it, under the whole heaven, shall be given to them, Isa. ii. 2. Rev. xiv. 1. and xv. 1. Dan. vii. 27. as well as they shall be in lively, spiritual, and heavenly frames of soul; mount up with wings, as eagles; soar aloft in the exercise of faith; dwell on high in the contemplation of divine things; have their affections set on things above; and their conversation in heaven whilst they are on earth: especially this may be said of them when they shall have the glory of God upon them in the New-Jerusalem state, and shall dwell in the new heavens and the new earth, with Christ at the head of them; and when they shall possess the ultimate glory in the highest heavens to all eternity; see Deut. xxxiii. 29. and thus ends this prayer of Habakkuk; which serves to draw out the desires of good men after the flourishing estate of the kingdom and interest of Christ; to

[b] ישם ϑήσει, Sept.; & ponet, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus, Montanus, Burkius; qui deposuit, Junius & Tremellius; & posuit, Cocceius, Van Till.

[c] Pinxerit æripedem cervam licet——
Virgil. Æneid. 6. prope finem.
Vincunt æripedes ter terno Nestore cervi. Ausonii Idyll. 11.

[d] Comment. in Psal. xviii. 34.

assist their faith in the belief, hope, and expectation of it; and to lead their views to its summit and perfection, notwithstanding all the difficulties and discouragements that may lie in its way: and being of so much moment and importance, that it might remain and continue, and be of use to the church in succeeding ages, the prophet delivered or directed it *to the chief singer*, to be set to tune, and sung by him, as David's prayers, and others, sometimes were, and to be preserved for future usefulness; and this he would have sung (he says) *upon my stringed instruments*; which were either invented by him, or used by him in the temple, or were his own property: or he sent this prayer or ode to him who was over these instruments, had the care and use of them; and which were such as were to be stricken with the hand, bone, or quill; and are the same that are called *Neginoth* in the title of the fourth Psalm, and others.

ZEPHANIAH.

THIS book in some Hebrew copies is called *Sepher Zephaniah*, the Book of Zephaniah. Its title, in the Vulgate Latin version, is, the Prophecy of Zephaniah; and, in the Syriac version, the Prophecy of the Prophet Zephaniah; and so the Arabic version calls him a prophet; and he is the last of the minor prophets that prophesied before the Babylonish captivity. The time of his prophesying, as well as his parentage, are expressed ch. i. 1, and therefore need not be inquired into; only the sad mistake of Hobbes[a] may be observed, who makes him to be the most ancient of the prophets, and to be cotemporary with Amaziah and Uzziah, kings of Judah, when he is expressly said to prophesy in the days of Josiah. Pseudo-Epiphanius[b] calls him a prophet of Sarabatha, of a mountain of that name, and says he was of the tribe of Simeon; and in this Isidore[c] agrees with him; and both affirm that he died and was buried in his own native place; but the author of the Cippi Hebraici[d] says he was buried at Geba, in Mount Lebanon, in the midst of a cave shut up, where his school continues; and from which place the clouds never depart, and where also are flowing fountains. His name, according to Jerom, signifies either *the Lord's watch-tower*, or *watchman*; or else *the secret of the Lord*; or, *his hidden one*; deriving his name, either from צפה, which signifies to *look out*, as a watchman from his tower; or from צפן, *to hide*; which latter derivation is best; and some interpret it *a revealer of the secrets*, or *hidden things, of the Lord*; and take it to be much the same with Zaphnath-paaneah, the name given to Joseph by Pharaoh, Gen. xli. 45, and is of the same signification: but Hillerus[e] interprets the name of Zephaniah, *the Lord hid himself*; which agrees with the times in which he lived. That this prophecy was wrote by himself, there need be no doubt of; nor of the authenticness of it, being always received by the Jewish synagogue as authentic; and as it appears to be from its style and manner of composition; from the subject-matter of it agreeing with other parts of Scripture, especially with Jeremiah and Ezekiel; and from the accomplishment of various prophecies in it. There are indeed some spurious things which have been ascribed to him, as the *analepsis* or assumption of Zephaniah the prophet, and the prophecy of Zephaniah, consisting of six hundred verses; but these are apocryphal, and have no likeness to this prophecy; in which he foretels the destruction of the Jews by the Chaldeans for their sins, which he inveighs against, and calls them to repentance for them, as also the ruin of many other nations, all which came to pass; as well as he prophesies of the calling of the Gentiles, and the conversion of the Jews, and of the comfortable state of the church in Gospel times, and especially in the latter day.

CHAP. I.

AFTER the title of the book, ver. 1, follows the Lord's threatening of the land of Judea with an utter consumption of it, and of all creatures in it, for the sins of its inhabitants, especially their idolatry and apostacy, ver. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and this is represented under the notion of a sacrifice, to which guests are bid; and which even princes, and those of the blood-royal, should not escape, nor ministers of state, or such who filled their masters' houses with violence, ver. 7, 8, 9. Some particular places are mentioned, where there should be a great noise of crying and howling, and especially Jerusalem, which should be diligently searched, and its goods become a booty, and its houses desolate, ver. 10, 11, 12, 13. This destruction is

[a] Leviathan, c. 33.
[b] De Prophet. Vita & Interitu, c. 19.
[c] De Vita & Morte Sanct. c. 48.
[d] P. 50. Ed. Hottinger.
[e] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 471, 952.

spoken of as near at hand, and is described as very terrible and distressing, ver. 14, 15, 16, 17. and as inevitable; nothing would be able to deliver from it, ver. 18.

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord which came unto Zephaniah the son of Cushi, &c.*] This is the title of the book, which expresses the subject-matter of it, the word of the Lord; the word of prophecy from the Lord, as the Targum; and shews the divine authority of it; that it was not of himself, nor from any man, but was of God; as well as describes the penman of it by his descent: who or what this his father was; whether a prophet, according to the rule the Jews give, that, when the name of a prophet and his father's name are mentioned, he is a prophet, the son of a prophet; or, whether a prince, a person of some great family, and even of the blood-royal, as some have thought, is not certain; or who those after-mentioned: *the son of Gedeliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hizkiah;* which last name, consisting of the same letters with Hezekiah, king of Judah, some have thought, as Aben Ezra, that he is intended; and that Zephaniah was a great-grandson of his; and which some think is confirmed by his style and diction, and by the freedom he used with the king's family, ver. 8. but it is objected, that, if so it was, Hizkiah, or Hezekiah, would have been called king of Judah; that it does not appear that Hezekiah had any other son besides Manasseh; and that there was not a sufficient distance of time from Hezekiah for four descents; and that, in fact, there were but three generations from him to Josiah, in whose days Zephaniah prophesied, as follows: though it is very probable that these progenitors of the prophet were men of note and character, and therefore mentioned, as well as to distinguish him from others of the same name, who lived *in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah;* not Amos, as the Arabic version: Amon and Manasseh, who reigned between Hezekiah and Josiah, were both wicked princes, and introduced idolatrous worship among the Jews; which Josiah in the twelfth year of his reign began to purge the people from, and endeavoured a reformation; but whether it was before or after that Zephaniah delivered out this prophecy is not certain; it may seem to be before, by the corruption of the times described in it; and so it may be thought to have some influence upon the after-reformation; though it is thought by many it was after; since, had he been in this office before the finding of the book of the law, he, and not Huldah the prophetess, would have been consulted, 2 Kings xxii. 14. nor could the people so well have been taxed with a perversion of the law, had it not been as yet found, ch. iii. 4. and, besides, the reformation seems to be hinted at in this prophecy, since mention is made of the remnant of Baal, which supposes a removal of many of his images; and also notice is taken of some that apostatized after the renewal of the covenant, ch. i. 4, 6. moreover, the time of the Jews' destruction and captivity is represented as very near, ver. 7, 14. which began a little after the death of Josiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim; to which Dr. Lightfoot[f] adds, that the prophet prophesies against the king's children, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah, for their new fashions, and new-fangled apparel, ver. 8. and therefore it must be in the latter part of his reign; and, if so, it shews how a people may relapse into sin after the greatest endeavours for their good, and the best of examples set them. Mr. Whiston[g] and Mr. Bedford[h] place him in the latter part of his reign, about 611 or 612 before Christ: there were three that prophesied about this time, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, and Huldah the prophetess; of whom the Jewish Rabbins say, as Kimchi quotes them, Jeremiah prophesied in the streets, Zephaniah in the synagogues, and Huldah among the women.

Ver. 2. *I will utterly consume all things from off the land, saith the Lord.*] That is, from the land of Judah, by means of the Chaldeans or Babylonians: this is a general denunciation of the judgments of God, the particulars follow: or, *in gathering I will gather;* all good things out of the land; all the necessaries of life, and blessings of Providence; all that is for the sustenance and pleasure of man, as well as all creatures, by death or captivity; and so the land should be entirely stripped, and left naked and bare. The phrase denotes the certainty of the thing, as well as the utter, entire, and total consumption that should be made, and the vehemence and earnestness in which it is expressed.

Ver. 3. *I will consume man and beast, &c.*] Wicked men for their sins, and beasts for the sins of men; and, as a punishment for them, the creatures whom they have abused to the gratifying of their lusts: *I will consume the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea;* so that there shall be none for the use of man, which are both delicate food; the latter were not consumed at the general deluge. Kimchi thinks this is said by way of hyperbole; but it is possible for these to be consumed, as men by famine, pestilence, and captivity, and beasts by murrain; so the fowls of the air by the noisomeness of it; and the fishes of the sea, that is, such as were in the sea of Tiberias, and other lakes in Judea, by the stagnation of the waters, or by some disease sent among them; unless wicked men, comparable to them, are intended; though they are expressly mentioned, both before and after: *and the stumbling-blocks with the wicked;* that is, idols, which are stumbling-blocks to men, and cause them to offend and fall; these, together with those that made them, and the priests that sacrificed unto them, and the people that worshipped them, should be consumed from off the land: or, *the stumbling-blocks of the wicked;* for את is sometimes used as a sign of the genitive case, as Noldius[i] observes; and so the Vulgate Latin version and the Targum render it: *and I will cut off men from off the land, saith the Lord;* this is repeated for the certainty of it; or else this designs another sort of men from the former; and that, as before wicked men are designed, here such as are not perfectly wicked, as Kimchi observes; yea, the righteous should be carried captive, so that the land should be left desolate, without men,

[f] Works, vol. 1. p. 117.
[g] Chronological Tables, cent. 9.
[h] Scripture Chronology, p. 674.
[i] Ebr. Concord. Part. p. 129.

good or bad; for even good men may fall in a general calamity, and be cut off from the land, though not from the Lord. The Septuagint indeed here render it wicked men. The phrase, *saith the Lord*, is twice expressed, for the certain confirmation of it; for it may be concluded it will be, since God has said it again and again that it shall be.

Ver. 4. *I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah*, &c.] Under whom the tribe of Benjamin is comprehended, which are only designed; the ten tribes having been carried captive in Hezekiah's time many years before this: not *to Judah*, as beckoning to come and hearken to him, as calling to repentance and reformation; this he had done, but was rejected, and therefore determines to stretch out his hand *upon* them; nor *over Judah*, to protect and defend them; but *upon Judah*, exerting his power, stirring up his wrath, and executing his vengeance; and this is dreadful and intolerable to bear! and when his hand is stretched out, it cannot be turned back; and when laid on, can never be removed, till he pleases: *and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem;* the metropolis of Judea, the royal seat of the kings of the house of David; where were the temple of the Lord; the ark, the symbol of his presence; the altar, where his priests sacrificed, and the place where his people worshipped; and yet these inhabitants should not escape the hand of the Lord, having sinned against him; nor should these things be any security to them: *and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place*; either what of the idolatry of Baal, or belonging to it, remained among the Jews after the ten tribes were carried captive; which must be the sense, if this prophecy was before the reformation was begun by Josiah; or, if after, the meaning is, what was left unremoved by him, as any of the images of Baal, or altars erected for his worship, or vessels consecrated to his service, or groves that were for his use; all which would be cut off and destroyed by the Chaldeans, as well as the worshippers of him that remained: *and the name of the Chemarim with the priests;* that is, the priests of Baal, with the priests of the tribe of Levi, who sometimes tampered and officiated with them in idolatrous service; for the word *Chemarim* is translated *idolatrous priests*, 2 Kings xxiii. 5. said to be put down by Josiah, in whose days Zephaniah prophesied; and must be the same with these, and it is used for such in Hos. x. 5. so called, either from the black garments they wore, as some think; or from the colour of their faces, smutted with the smoke of the incense they frequently offered; or of the fires in which they sacrificed, or made the children to pass through to Moloch. Hillerus[k] thinks they are the same with those Heathen priests called *Phallophori;* deriving the word from one in the Arabic language, which has the signification of the *Phalli:* which were obscene images, carried about in an impudent manner by the priests of Bacchus, in the performance of his sacred rites: the carrying of them was first instituted by Isis, as Plutarch[l] says; and if this was the case here, it is no wonder they should be so severely threatened. Some take them to be a sort of servants or ministers to the priests of Baal, who waited on them at the time of service; and so are distinguished from them in this clause, taking the word *priests* in it to design the priests of Baal; and the Vulgate Latin version renders it, *the name of sextons with the priests.* The word is used now by the Jews for Popish monks that live in cloisters; and Elias Levita[m] thinks these here are so called from their living in such-like recluse places. The Targum is, "and the name of their "worshippers with their priests;" one and the other; priests of Baal, and apostate priests of the Lord; the worshippers of Baal, and those that attend upon his priests, shall all feel the weight of Jehovah's hand, and the lighting down of his arm with indignation.

Ver. 5. *And upon them that worship the host of heaven upon the house-tops*, &c.] The sun, moon, and stars, which some worshipped upon their house-tops; the roofs of their houses being flat, as the roofs of the houses of the Jews generally were; from hence they had a full view of the host of heaven, and worshipped them openly; and fancied, the nearer they were to them, the more acceptable was their service; see Jer. xix. 13: *and them that worship*, and *that swear by the Lord*, and *that swear by Malcham;* that is, that worship the true God, or at least pretend to do so, and swear by him when they take an oath: or, *that swear to the Lord;* as the words[n] may be rendered; that swear allegiance to him, to be true and faithful to him, to serve and obey him, and to keep his statutes and ordinances; and yet they swear by Malcham also, or Milchom, or Melchom, the same with Molech, or Moloch, the god of the Ammonites. These were such as partly worshipped God, and partly idols; they divided their religion and devotion between them, sometimes served the one, and sometimes the other; they halted between two opinions, and were a sort of occasional conformists; and such were as detestable to God as those that worshipped idols; as the Papists are, who pretend to worship God and their images, or God in them, and with them; and so all such persons that seek for justification and salvation, partly by their own works, and partly by Christ, are displeasing to the Lord, and miss of the thing; stumbling at the stumbling-stone, and so fall and perish.

Ver. 6. *And them that are turned back from the Lord*, &c.] Who once were worshippers of him, but now become apostates, and had turned their backs on him and his worship. Some think this describes those who renewed their covenant with God in Josiah's time, and after that revolted from him, who must be very abominable to him; and therefore he threatens to stretch out his hand, and pour out his wrath upon them: *and those that have not sought the Lord, nor inquired for him;* profane abandoned sinners, that lived without God in the world, and as if there was no God; never concerned themselves about the worship of him, having no faith in him, love to him, or fear and reverence of him; so far were they from seeking him in the first place diligently, zealously, and with their whole heart,

[k] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 113.
[l] De Iside & Osiride.
[m] Tishbi, p. 103. Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud. in voce כמר.

[n] הנשבעים ליהוה qui jurant Domino, Drusius; qui jurant Jehovæ, Cocceius; jurantes Domino Jehovæ, Burkius.

that they never sought him at all; nor took any pains to get any knowledge of him, or of his mind and will, and manner of worship; but were altogether careless about these things, and unconcerned for them.

Ver. 7. *Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord God,* &c.] When he comes forth, and appears in the way of his judgments, don't dispute the point with him, or pretend to offer reasons against his proceedings, or in order to disprove the justice of them; stand in awe and reverence of him, who is the Lord God omniscient and omnipotent, holy, just, and true; humble yourselves under his mighty hand; be still, and know that he is God; and let not one murmuring and repining word come out of your mouth. The Targum is, "let all the wicked of the earth perish "from before the Lord God:" *for the day of the Lord is at hand:* the time of his vengeance on the Jewish nation for their sins, which he had fixed in his mind, and had given notice of by his prophets: this began to take place at Josiah's death, after which the Jews enjoyed little peace and prosperity; and his successor reigned but three months, was deposed by the king of Egypt, and carried thither captive, and there died; and Jehoiakim, that succeeded him, in the fourth year of his reign was carried captive into Babylon, or died by the way thither; so that this day might well be said to be at hand: *for the Lord hath prepared a sacrifice;* his people the Jews, who were to fall a victim to his vengeance, and a sacrifice to his justice, to atone in some measure for the injury done to it by their sins; thus they that had offered sacrifice to idols, and neglected the sacrifices of the Lord, and especially the great sacrifice of Christ typified by them, the only proper atoning one, should themselves become a sacrifice to the just resentment of God; this he had prepared in his mind, determined should be done, and would bring about in his providence; see Isa. xxxiv. 6: *he hath bid his guests; or called ones**; the Chaldeans, whom he invited and called to this sacrifice and feast: or whom he *prepared,* or *sanctified*†; he prepared them in his purpose and providence; he set them apart for this service, and called them to it; to be the sacrificers of this people, and to feast upon them; to spoil them of their goods and riches, and enjoy them. These guests may also design, as Kimchi observes, the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, invited to feast upon the slain; see Ezek. xxxix. 17. Rev. xix. 17.

Ver. 8. *And it shall come to pass in the day of the Lord's sacrifice,* &c.] When the above sacrifice prepared shall be offered, and the slaughter of his people made, when his wrath shall be poured out upon them, within the time of its beginning and ending: *that I will punish the princes, and the king's children;* either the children of Josiah, who, though a good prince, his children did evil in the sight of the Lord, and were punished by him: Jehoahaz, after a three-months' reign, was carried down to Egypt, and died there: Jehoiakim, his elder brother, that succeeded him, rebelling against the king of Babylon, in the fourth year of his reign, fell into his hands, and died, and was buried with the burial of an ass; and Jeconiah his son was carried captive into Babylon, and there remained to the day of his death; and with him were carried the whole royal family, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, 2 Kings xxiii. 14. or else the children of Zedekiah, another son of Josiah, and the last of the kings of Judah, who was carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, who before his eyes slew his sons, and all the princes of Judah, and then put out his eyes, and bound him in chains, Jer. lii. 10, 11. and thus this prophecy had its accomplishment: *and all* such as are *clothed with strange apparel;* either which they put on in honour of the idols they worshipped, as Jarchi; so the Heathens wore one sort of garments for one idol, and another sort for another; or these were men of a pharisaical cast, who wore garments different from others, that they might be thought to be very holy and religious, which sense is mentioned by Kimchi; or they were such, which he also observes, who, seeing some to have plenty of good clothes, stole them from them, and put them on; or such who arrayed themselves in garments that did not belong to their sex, men put on women's garments, and women clothed themselves with men's, and both strange apparel; or rather this points at such persons, who, in their apparel, imitated the fashions and customs of foreign nations; which probably began with the king's children and courtiers, and were followed by others. The Targum is, "and upon all those that make a "noise at the worship of idols."

Ver. 9. *In the same day also will I punish all those that leap on the threshold,* &c.] Not in a ludicrous way, who, by dancing and leaping, made sport for persons, and brought their masters much gain, as the damsel possessed with a spirit of divination did, Acts xvi. 16. rather, that entered rashly and irreverently into the house of God; or else in an idolatrous way, who, when they went into an idol's temple, did not tread upon the threshold, but leaped over it, as the priests of Dagon, after the fall of that idol on the threshold, 1 Sam. v. 4, 5. So the Targum, "and I will visit all "those that walk in the laws (or according to the "customs) of the Philistines;" whose idol Dagon was: but it seems better to interpret it of such, who, seeing houses full of good things, in a rude, bold, insolent manner, thrust themselves, or jumped into them, and took away what they pleased; or when they returned to their masters' houses with their spoil, who set them on, and encouraged them in these practices, leaped over the threshold for joy of what they had got, as Aben Ezra observes; which agrees with what follows: *which fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit;* that is, with goods got by rapine and force, and by fraudulent ways and methods: this is to be understood of the servants of great men, who, to feed the ambition and avarice of their masters, used very oppressive methods with inferior persons to get their substance from them, and gratify their masters. Cocceius interprets these *three* verses of the day of Christ's coming

* קראיו vocatos suos, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Burkius; invitatos suos, Vatablus, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius.

† הקדיש præparavit, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Ben Melech; sanctificavit, V. L. Montanus, Cocceius, Burkius.

in the flesh being at hand, when the true sacrifice should be offered up, and God would call his people to feed by faith upon it; when all civil power and authority in the sanhedrim and family of David should be removed from the Jews; and all friendship with the nations of the world, signified by likeness of garments; and the priestly dignity, the priests, according to him, being those that leaped over the threshold; that is, of the house of the Lord, the temple, and filled it with the spoil of widows' houses, unsupportable precepts, and false doctrines.

Ver. 10. *And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord,* &c.] In the day of the Lord's sacrifice, when he shall punish the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem by the Chaldeans; which, as well as what follows, shall surely come to pass, because the Lord has said it; for not one word of his shall pass away, but all be fulfilled: that there shall be *the noise of a cry from the fish-gate:* a gate of the city of Jerusalem so called, which suffered as the rest in the destruction of the city by the Babylonians, and, after the captivity, was rebuilt by the sons of Hassenaah, Neh. iii. 3. according to Jerom, it was on the west side of the city, and led to Diospolis and Joppa; and was the nearest road to the Mediterranean sea, or any of the roads to Jerusalem, from whence fish were brought, and brought in by this gate; and very probably the fish-market was near it, from whence it had its name; though Cocceius places it in the north corner of the east side of the city, and so was nearer Jordan, the sea of Tiberias, and the city of Tyre, from whence fish might be brought hither, and sold, Neh. xiii. 16. however, be it where it will, the enemy it seems would attack it, and enter in by it; upon which a hideous cry would be made, either by the assailants, the Chaldeans, at their attack upon it, and entrance through it; or by the inhabitants of it, or that were nearest to it, upon their approach, or both: *and an howling from the second:* either from the second gate; and if the fish-gate is the same with the first gate, Zech. xiv. 10. then this may be pertinently called the second. Jarchi calls it the bird-gate, which was the second to the fish-gate. So the Targum, " from the bird, or the bird-gate;" though some copies of it read, from the tower or high fortress: or else this designs the second wall, and the gate in that which answered to the fish-gate; for Jerusalem was encompassed with three walls; the fish-gate was in the outermost, and this was in the second, to which the Chaldeans came next, and occasioned a dreadful howling and lamentation in the people that dwelt near it. Kimchi interprets it of the school or university that was in Jerusalem; the same word is rendered the cottage in which Huldah the prophetess lived, 2 Kings xxii. 14. and there, by the Targum, " the house of doc- " trine or instruction;" so then the sense is, a grievous outcry would be heard from the university or school of the prophets; the enemy having entered it, and were slaying the students, or seizing them in order to carry them captive: *and a great crashing from the hills:* either that were in Jerusalem, as Mount Zion and Moriah, on which the temple stood; or those that were round about it, as Gareb, and Goath, and others; though some interpret this of the houses of nobles that stood in the higher parts of the city, where there would be a shivering, a breaking to pieces, as the word signifies, of doors and windows without, and of furniture within.

Ver. 11. *Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh,* &c.] The name of a street in Jerusalem, as Aben Ezra; perhaps it lay low in the hollow of the city, and in the form of a mortar, from whence it might have its name, as the word [q] signifies; which is used both for a hollow place and for a mortar, Judg. xv. 19. Prov. xxvii. 22. unless it might be so called from such persons dwelling in it, that used mortars for spice, and other things. The Targum is, " howl, all ye that dwell in the valley of " Kedron;" and Jerom thinks the valley of Siloah is intended, which is the same; which, Adrichomius [r] says, was broad, deep, and dark, and surrounded the temple in manner of a foss, or ditch; and was disposed in the form of a mortar, called in Hebrew *machtes*; in Latin, *pila*; in which merchants and tradesmen of all kinds dwelt. It is thought by others to be the same which Josephus [s] calls *the valley of the cheesemongers*, which lay between the two hills Zion and Acra. The reason of their howling is, *for all the merchant-people are cut down:* either cut to pieces by the sword of the enemy, and become silent, as the word [t] sometimes signifies, and the Vulgate Latin version here renders it; become so by death, and laid in the silent grave, and no more concerned in merchandise; or else stripped of all their wealth and goods by the enemy, and so cut down, broke, and become bankrupts, and could trade no more. The word for merchant signifies a Canaanite; and the Targum paraphrases it thus, " for all the people are broken, " whose works are like the works of the people of the " land of Canaan:" *all they that bear silver are cut off;* that have large quantities of it, and carry it to market to buy goods with it as merchants; these shall be cut off, and so a great loss to trade, and a cause of howling and lamentation; or such that wear it in their garments, embroidered with it; or rather in their purses, who are loaded with this thick clay, abound with it. The Targum is, " all that are rich in substance shall be " destroyed."

Ver. 12. *And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles,* &c.] To find out the sins of the inhabitants of it, and the authors of them, and punish them for them, however hid and concealed from the eyes of others, or thought to be: this must be understood consistent with the omniscience of God, who knows all persons and things; nothing is hid from him; men may fancy their sins are hid, being privately and secretly committed; but all will be manifest, sooner or later; if not now, yet at the day of judgment; and sometimes they are made manifest by God in this life, as here; for what the Lord here says he would do, he did it by instruments, by the Chaldeans, whom he sent to Jerusalem; and to

[q] המכתש mortarii, Vatablus, Tigurine version; cavi, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; loci concavi, Calvin.
[r] Theatrum Terræ Sanctæ, p. 160.
[s] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 4. sect. 1.
[t] נדמה conticuit, V. L. in silentium redactus est, Drusius.

whom the gates of the city, the doors of houses, and the innermost recesses of them, were opened and plundered by them; and all for the sins of the people, which were hereby exposed. So the Targum, "and "it shall be at that time that I will appoint searchers, "and they shall search Jerusalem, as they that search "with candles;" and no doubt but this was literally true of the Chaldeans, who with candles might search vaults and cellars, and such-like dark places, where they supposed goods and riches were concealed. The allusion may be to the searching with lamps for leaven on the fourteenth of Nisan, when the passover began, in every corner of a house, and, when they found it, burnt it*; or in general to searching for any thing which lies concealed in dark places, where the light of the sun comes not, and can only be discovered by the light of candles; and denotes that nothing should escape the sight and knowledge of God, by whom a full discovery would be made of their persons and sins, and cognizance taken of them in a vindictive way, as follows: *and punish the men that are settled on their lees;* like wine on the lees, quiet and undisturbed; in a good outward estate and condition, abounding in wealth and riches, and trusting therein; and which, as the Targum paraphrases it, they enjoy in great tranquillity; Moab-like, having never been emptied from vessel to vessel, Jer. xlviii. 11. and so concluded they should ever remain in the same state, and became hardened in sin, or *curded*, and thickened, as the word* signifies; and were unconcerned about the state of religion, or the state of their own souls; and fearless and thoughtless of the judgments of God; but should now be visited, disturbed in their tranquil state, and be troubled and punished: *that say in their heart;* not daring to express with their lips the following atheism and blasphemy; but God, who searched and tried their hearts, knew it: *the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil;* which is a flat denial of his providence; saying that he takes no notice of what is done by men on earth, whether good or bad; and neither rewards the one, nor punishes the other. So the Targum, as Kimchi quotes it, "it is not the good "pleasure of God to do good to the righteous, or to "do evil to the wicked;" than which nothing is more false! the Lord does good to all in a providential way, and to many in a way of special grace; and rewards with a reward of grace all good men, both here and hereafter; and though he does not do any moral evil, yet he executes the evil of punishment in this world, and in that to come, on evil-doers.

Ver. 13. *Therefore their goods shall become a booty,* &c.] To the enemy; the riches they trusted in, and thought themselves so secure of; and therefore denied divine Providence, which ought to be depended upon amidst the greatest affluence; or otherwise the Lord has various ways by which he can soon strip men of all their enjoyments, and dispose of them to others: *and their houses a desolation;* be pulled down by the enemy; or left uninhabited, they being killed or carried captive, even their whole families: *they shall also build houses, but not inhabit them;* not long, at least; not always, as they expected, and promised themselves when they built them: *and they shall plant vineyards, and not drink the wine thereof;* but before the vines planted by them bring forth grapes, and these are pressed, and wine made of them, they should fall into the hands of the enemy, who would drink it, and not they; and all this agreeably to what was threatened them in the law of Moses, which they ought to have regarded, Deut. xxviii. 30.

Ver. 14. *The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly,* &c.] Not the day of judgment, but the day of God's vengeance upon the Jews, which yet bore some resemblance to that day of the Lord, and it may be therefore so called; as the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans had some likeness to it, and therefore the signs of the one and of the other are given together by our Lord in Matt. xxiv. and this was a day in which he would do great things, by the Chaldeans, and against the Jews; and thus is represented as very *near;* and repeated again for the confirmation of it, and to arouse the thoughtless and careless about it, and who put away this evil day far from them; yea, it is said to make great haste, and to fly away swiftly, even faster than time usually does; though in common it has wings ascribed unto it: *even the voice of the day of the Lord;* in which the Lord's voice will be heard; not his voice of grace and mercy, as in the day of salvation; but of wrath and vengeance, which will be terrible; hence it follows: *the mighty men shall cry there bitterly;* not the voice of the mighty men besieging the city, making a hideous noise to animate the soldiers in making the assault, as some; but the mighty men within the city of Jerusalem besieged, who, when they see the city broken up, would be in the utmost terror, and cry bitterly, like women and children, being quite dismayed and dispirited; even the men of war upon the walls, and in the garrisons, with their officers and generals; and if this would be the case with them, how must it be thought to be with others, the weak and timorous?

Ver. 15. *That day is a day of wrath,* &c.] Both of the wrath of God against his people for their sins; these judgments being the effects of his wrath, provoked by their iniquities; and of the wrath and cruelty of the Chaldeans, exercised in a furious manner: *a day of trouble and distress;* to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, they being taken and led captive, their houses plundered and demolished, and the whole city and temple laid in ruins: *a day of wasteness and desolation;* of the whole country of Judea, and the metropolis of it; of their houses, fields, and vineyards: *a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness;* as it might be in a natural sense; the displeasure of God being shewn in the very heavens, by the darkness and gloominess of them, and the thick clouds with which they were covered; and made still more dark and gloomy by the burning of the city, and the smoke of it; and, in such circumstances, gloominess and melancholy must sit upon the minds of men: and thick clouds and darkness portend greater troubles and calamities coming on; and the whole is expressive of

* Vid. Misn. Pesachim, c. 1. sect. 1, 4.

* הקפאים concreti sunt, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; congelati, Calvin; coagulatos, Montanus, Cocceius; qui concreverunt glaciei, vel casei ad instar, Burkius.

great adversity: for, as light frequently designs prosperity, so darkness adversity.

Ver. 16. *A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, &c.*] The trumpet of the enemy, sounding the alarm of war against the fenced cities of Judea, which were taken before Jerusalem; calling and gathering the soldiers together, and animating them to the assault of them; and blowing them in a way of triumph, and as expressive of victory, having got possession of them: *and against the high towers; or corners* *; towers being usually built corner-wise, and full of corners, and on the corners of walls of cities; sometimes these signify princes, magistrates, and great men, Zech. x. 4.

Ver. 17. *And I will bring distress upon men, &c.*] Not upon men in general, but particularly on the men of Judea, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; and especially those that were in the fenced cities and high towers; and who might think themselves safe and secure; but, being besieged, should be distressed with famine and pestilence, and with the enemy; and more especially when stormed, and a breach made, and the enemy just entering: *that they shall walk like blind men;* not knowing which way to go, where to turn themselves, what methods to take, or course to steer, no more than a blind man. The phrase is expressive of their being at their wits' ends, void of all thought and consultation: *because they have sinned against the Lord:* and therefore he gives them up, not only into the hand of the enemy, but unto an infatuation of spirit, and a judicial blindness of mind: *and their blood shall be poured out as dust:* in great quantities, like that, without any regard to it, without shewing any mercy, and as if it was of no more value than the dust of the earth. The Targum is, "their blood shall be "poured out into the dust;" or on it, and be drunk up by it: *and their flesh as the dung,* or their carcasses, as the same paraphrase; that is, their dead bodies shall lie unburied, and rot, and putrefy, and shall be cast upon fields like dung, to fatten them. The word for *flesh*, in the Hebrew language, signifies bread or food; because dead bodies are food for worms; but in the Arabic language, as Aben Ezra and Jarchi observe, it signifies *flesh*.

Ver. 18. *Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath, &c.*] Which they have gotten in an unjust way, and have hoarded up, and put their confidence in; these were the lees on which they were settled; but now, as they would be disregarded by the Lord, as insufficient to atone for their sins, and appease his wrath, and procure his favour; see Job xxxvi. 18, 19. Prov. xi. 4. so they would be of no avail to them, to deliver from their enemies, who would not be bribed therewith to save their lives; the same is said of the Medes at the taking of Babylon, Isa. xiii. 17: *but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy;* his zeal against sin, and for his own glory, shall burn like fire; which shall consume the whole land, and all the inhabitants of it, and was not to be stopped by any thing that could be done by them; so furious and raging would it be: *for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land;* burn up at once all the briers and thorns, even all that offend, and do iniquity, and spare neither root nor branch; or, as when a field is cleared of the stubble on it, after the wheat is gathered in; or a corn-floor of its chaff, after the wheat is separated from it; thus with the besom of destruction would the Lord sweep away the sinful inhabitants of Judea, and clear it of them, as he did by the sword, by famine, by pestilence, and by captivity.

CHAP. II.

In this chapter the prophet exhorts the Jews to repentance; and foretels the destruction of several neighbouring nations. The body of the people of the Jews in general are first called upon to gather together and humble themselves, who were a people neither desirable, nor deserving of the favours of God, nor desirous of them, ver. 1. and to this they are pressed, from the consideration of God's decree of vengeance being ready to bring forth and break forth upon them, ver. 2. and then the few godly among them are exhorted to seek the Lord, and what is agreeable to him; since there was at least a probability of their being protected by him in a time of general calamity, ver. 3. and that the destruction of this people might appear the more certain, and that they might have no dependence on their neighbours, the prophet proceeds to predict the ruin of several of them, particularly the Philistines; several places belonging to them are by name mentioned, and the whole land threatened with desolation; the maritime part of it to be only inhabited by shepherds and their flocks; and afterwards the coast possessed by the Jews, on their return from their captivity, ver. 4, 5, 6, 7. Next the Moabites and Ammonites are prophesied of; whose destruction should come upon them for their pride, and for their contempt and reviling of the people of God; and which should be like that of Sodom and Gomorrah; and would issue in the abolition of idolatry, and the setting up of the worship of God in their country, and elsewhere, ver. 8, 9, 10, 11. As for the Ethiopians, they should be slain with the sword, ver. 12. and the whole monarchy of Assyria, with Nineveh the metropolis of it, should be utterly laid waste, and become a desolation, and a wilderness; and the habitation, not only of flocks, but of beasts and birds of prey, ver. 13, 14, 15.

Ver. 1. *Gather yourselves together, &c.*] This is said to the people of the Jews in general; that whereas the judgments of God were coming upon them, as predicted in the preceding chapter, it was high time for them to get together, and consider what was to be done at such a juncture; it was right to call a solemn

* פנות pinnas, Montanus, Castalio; angulos, Junius & Tremellius, Burkius.

assembly, to gather the people, priests, and elders, together, to some one place, as Joel directs, ch. i. 14. and ii. 15, 16. the inhabitants of Jerusalem to the temple, and the people of the land to their respective synagogues, and there humble themselves before the Lord; confess their sins, and declare their repentance for them; and pray that God would shew favour to them, and avert his wrath and judgments from them: or, *gather the straw*[y]; from yourselves, and then gather it from others, as follows: or, *first adorn yourselves*, and *then others*, as in the Talmud[z]; and the sense is the same with the words of Christ, *first cast out the beam out of thine own eye*, &c. Matt. vii. 3, 4, 5. and the meaning of both is, first correct and amend yourselves, and then reprove others: this sense is given by the Jewish commentators, and is approved by Gussetius[a]: or *search yourselves*[b]; as some render the word; and that very diligently, as stubble is searched into, or any thing searched for in it; let the body of the people inquire among themselves what should be the cause of these things; what public sins prevailed among them, for which they were threatened with an utter destruction; and let every one search into his own heart and ways, and consider how much he has contributed to the bringing down such sad calamities upon the nation: thus it became them to search and inquire into their state and circumstances of affairs, in a way of self-examination; or otherwise the Lord would search them in a way of judgment, as threatened ch. i. 12. or *shake out*[c], or *fan yourselves*, as others; remove your chaff by repentance and reformation, that you be not blown away like chaff in the day of God's wrath, as afterwards suggested: *yea, gather together*: or *search*, or *shake out*, or *fan*, as before: this is repeated, to shew the necessity and importance of it, and the vehemency of the prophet in urging it: *O nation not desired*: by other nations, but hated by them, as Abarbinel observes; not desirable to God or good men; not amiable or lovely for any excellencies and goodness in them, but the reverse; being a disobedient and rebellious people; a seed of evil-doers, laden with iniquity, who, from the crown of the head to the sole of the feet, were full of wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores; or of disorders and irregularities, sins and transgressions, comparable to them; and therefore, instead of being desirable, were loathsome and abominable: or, as some render the word, *O nation void of desire*[d]; or *not affected* with it; who had no desire after God, and the knowledge of his will; after his word and worship; after a return unto him, and reconciliation with him; after his favour, grace, and mercy; not desirous of good things, nor of doing any. So the Targum, "gather together, and come, and draw near, "this people who desire not to return to the law." Joseph Kimchi, from the use of the word in the Misnic language, renders it, *O nation not ashamed*; of their evil works, being bold and impudent; and yet, such was the goodness and grace of God to them, that he calls them to repentance, and gives them warning before he strikes the blow.

Ver. 2. *Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff*, &c.] Which was like a woman big with child, ready to be delivered. The decree of God concerning the people of the Jews was pregnant with wrath and ruin for their sins, and just ripe for execution; and therefore, before it was actually executed, they are exhorted as above; not that the decree of God which was gone forth could be frustrated and made void by any thing done by them; only that, when it was put into execution, such as repented of their sins might be saved from the general calamity; which they are called upon to do before the day come appointed by the Lord for the execution of this decree, which lingered not, and was not delayed, but slided on as swiftly as chaff before the driving wind. There is some difficulty in the rendering and sense of these words; some thus, *before the day, which passes as chaff, brings forth the decree*[e]; that is, before the time, which moves swiftly, brings on the execution of the decree, or of the thing decreed in it, it is big with: others, *before the decree brings forth the day that passeth as chaff*[f]; or in which the chaff shall be separated from the wheat, pass away, be dispersed here and there; that is, before they were scattered about by it as chaff: and to this sense the Septuagint and Arabic versions, *before ye are as a flower*; or, as the Syriac, *as chaff that passeth away*; and so the Targum more fully, "before the decree of the house "of judgment come out upon you, and ye be like "chaff which the wind blows away, and like a shadow "which passes from before the day." See Psal. i. 5. *Before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you*: these phrases explain the former, and shew what the decree was big with, and ready to bring forth, even the judgments of God, in wrath and fierce anger; and what the day is, said to pass as the chaff; the day of God's vengeance fixed by him, which should come upon them, and scatter them like chaff among the nations of the world: or rather the words may be rendered thus, as by Gussetius[g], *whilst as yet the decree hath not brought forth, the day passeth away like chaff*; being neglected and spent in an useless and unprofitable manner; for which they are reproved; and therefore are exhorted to be wiser for the future, and redeem precious time; and, before the Lord's anger comes upon them, do what is before exhorted to, and particularly what follows:

Ver. 3. *Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth*, &c.] Or *of the land*, of the land of Judea. In this time of great apostacy, there was a remnant according to the election of grace, whom the Lord reserved for himself, and bestowed his grace upon; and it is for the sake of these that the general exhortations to repentance and reformation are given out, to whom alone

[y] התקוששו legite paleas vestras, Gussetius. קשש proprie est stipulas colligere, Drusius, Piscator, Tarnovius.

[z] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 107. 2. & Bava Bathra, fol. 60. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 19. 1.

[a] Ebr. Comment. p. 762.

[b] Scrutamini, Pagninus; disquirite, Munster; examinate, Vatablus; perscrutamini, Cocceius.

[c] Excutite vos, Junius & Tremellius, Tarnovius; so Stockius, p. 975.

[d] לא נכסף vacua desiderio, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; quæ nullo desiderio afficeris, Burkius; quæ nullo teneris affectu, Munster.

[e] בטרם לדת antequam dies, quæ transit ut palea, pariat decretum, Drusius; so Ben Melech.

[f] Priusquam decretum Dei pariat diem veluti glumæ transeuntis, Grotius.

[g] Ebr. Comment. p. 303.

they were to be useful, that they might be protected and preserved from the general ruin; for such as are here described are persons the Lord takes great notice of; he gives them more grace; he lifts them up when bowed down; he beautifies them with salvation; he feeds them to full satisfaction; he teaches them his ways, his mind and will; he dwells with them here, and will cause them to inherit the new heaven and new earth hereafter: they are such who have a true sense of sin, and the exceeding sinfulness of it, which humbles them; and, conscious of the imperfection of their own righteousness, submit to the righteousness of Christ; acknowledge they are saved alone by the grace of God; and that all they have and expect to enjoy is owing to that; they are humble under the mighty hand of God, in every afflictive providence; patiently take all wrongs, abuses, and injuries done them by men; and not envious at the superior gifts, grace, and usefulness of others, but rejoice therein; have mean sentiments of themselves, and very high ones of others that excel in grace and holiness; these are truly gracious persons; and are like unto, and are followers of, the meek and lowly Jesus: and are here exhorted *to seek the Lord*; that is, by prayer and supplication, to know more of his mind and will, and especially their duty in their present circumstances; implore his grace and mercy, protection and safety, in a day of common danger; and attend the public ordinances of his house, in order to enjoy his presence and communion with him: for to seek the Lord is to seek his face and favour, to have the light of his countenance, and the discoveries of his love; and to seek his honour and glory in all things: particularly the Lord Christ may be meant, who was to come in the flesh, and good men sought for before he came, and now he is come; and to him should men seek for righteousness and life; for peace and pardon; for grace, and all supplies of it; and for everlasting salvation; and all this before as well as since his coming: and such seek him aright, who seek him early, in the first place, and above all things; who seek him with their whole hearts, sincerely, diligently, and constantly; and where he is to be found, in the ministry of his word and ordinances: *which have wrought his judgment;* the judgment of the Lord; acted according to his mind and will, revealed in his word, which is the rule of judgment, both as to faith and practice; observed his laws and statutes; kept his ordinances, as they were delivered; and did works of righteousness from right principles, and with right views, as fruits of faith, and as meet for repentance: *seek righteousness;* not their own, and justification by that; for this would be doing what the carnal Jews did, and in vain, and is inconsistent with seeking the Lord, as before; but the righteousness of God, the kingdom of God and his righteousness, even the righteousness of Christ, who is God, and which only gives a right unto the kingdom of God or heaven: seeking this supposes a want of righteousness, which is in every man; a sense of that want, which only some have; a view of a righteousness without a man, in another, even in Christ; and of the glory, fulness, and excellency of his righteousness, which make it desirable, and worth seeking for; though this exhortation may also include in it a living to him soberly and righteously, as a fruit of divine grace, and to the glory of God, and according to his will, without trusting in it, and depending upon it, for life and salvation: *seek meekness;* even though they were meek ones already, yet it became them to seek after more of this grace of meekness, that they might increase therein, and abound in the exercise of it, and be careful that they failed not in it; since the enemy of souls often attacks the saints in that in which they most excel, and succeeds: so Moses, the meekest man on earth, being off of his guard, and provoked, spoke unadvisedly with his lips; and it went ill with him on that account. Numb. xii. 3. Psal. cvi. 32, 33. besides, this exhortation, as well as the preceding, may have a respect to their concern with others; that they should study, as much as in them lay, not only to do righteousness and exercise meekness themselves, but to cultivate these among others; with which agrees Kimchi's note, "seek righteousness and meekness with "others; as if it was said, study with all your might "and main to return them to the right way:" *it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger;* in the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, when some were put to the sword, and others carried captive: now there was a possibility, yea, a probability, that such persons before described would be saved at this time from the general calamity; be hid, protected, and preserved, by the power and providence of God, as Jeremiah, Baruch, and others, were: this, though it is not said as a certain thing, because a corporeal blessing, which the people of God cannot always be assured of in a time of public distress; yet not expressed in a doubting manner, much less despairing; but rather as presuming, at least hoping it would be, being possible and probable; and so encouraging to the above exercises of religion; and such that have the grace of God, and seek him, and seek to Christ alone for righteousness and life, may depend upon it that they shall be hid, and be safe and secure, when the wrath of God at the last day comes upon an ungodly world, Isa. xxxii. 2. Rom. v. 9. The Targum of the whole is, "seek "the fear of the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, who "do the judgments of his will; seek truth, seek meek- "ness; it may be there will be a protection for you in "the day of the Lord's anger." The Vulgate Latin version is, *seek the Lord—seek the just, seek the meek One;* as expressive of a person, even the Lord Christ, the just and holy One, the meek and lowly Jesus.

Ver. 4. *For Gaza shall be forsaken,* &c.] Therefore seek the Lord; and not to the Philistines, since they would be destroyed, to whom Gaza, and the other cities after mentioned, belonged; so Aben Ezra connects the words, suggesting that it would be in vain to flee thither for shelter, or seek for refuge there; though others think that this and what follows is subjoined, either to assure the Jews of their certain ruin, since this would be the case of the nations about them; or to alleviate their calamity, seeing their enemies would have no occasion to insult them, and triumph over them, they being, or quickly would be, in the like circumstances. Gaza was one of the five lordships of the Philistines; a strong and fortified place, as its name signifies; but should be demolished, stripped of its fortifications, and forsaken by its inhabitants. It was smitten by Pharaoh king of Egypt; and was laid waste

by Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. xlvii. 1, 4, 5. and afterwards taken by Alexander the great; and, having gone through various changes, was in the times of the apostles called Gaza the desert, Acts viii. 26. There is a beautiful paronomasia in the words, not to be expressed in an English translation [h]. According to Strabo's account [i], the ancient city was seven furlongs from the haven, for which (he says) it was formerly very illustrious; but was demolished by Alexander, and remained a desert. And so Jerom [k] says, in his time, the place where the ancient city stood scarce afforded any traces of the foundations of it; for that which now is seen (adds he) was built in another place, instead of that which was destroyed; and which, he observes, accounts for the fulfilment of this prophecy: and so Monsieur Thevenot [l] says, the city of Gaza is about two miles from the sea; and was anciently very illustrious, as may be seen by its ruins; and yet, even this must be understood of new Gaza; so a Greek writer [m], of an uncertain age, observes this distinction; and speaks of this and the following places exactly in the order in which they are here, "after Rhinocorura lies new "Gaza, which is the city itself; then *Gaza the desert* "(the place here prophesied of); then the city Asca-"lon; after that Azotus (or Ashdod); then the city "Accaron" (or Ekron): *and Ashkelon a desolation:* this was another lordship belonging to the Philistines, that suffered at the same time as Gaza did by Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. xlvii. 5, 7. This place was ten miles from Gaza, as Mr. Sandys [n] says, and who adds, and now of no note; and Strabo [o] speaks of it in his time as a small city; indeed new Ashkelon is said by Benjamin of Tudela [p] to be a very large and beautiful city; but then he distinguishes it from old Ashkelon, here prophesied of; and which (he says) is four *parsæ*, or sixteen miles, from the former, and now lies waste and desolate: *they shall drive out Ashdod at the noon day:* that is, the Chaldeans shall drive out the inhabitants of Ashdod, another of the principalities of the Philistines; the same with Azotus, Acts viii. 40. *at noon-day*, openly and publicly, and with great ease; they shall have no occasion to use any secret stratagems, or to make night-work of it; and which would be very incommodious and distressing to the inhabitants, to be turned out at noon-day, and be obliged to travel in the heat of the sun, which in those eastern countries at noon-day beats very strong. This place was distant from old Ashkelon four *parsæ*, or twenty-four miles, as Benjamin Tudelensis [q] affirms; and with which agrees Diodorus Siculus [r], who says, that from Gaza to Azotus are 270 furlongs, which make thirty-four miles, ten from Gaza to Ashkelon, and twenty-four from thence to Azotus or Ashdod. This place, according to the above Jewish traveller [s], is now called Palmis, which he says is the Ashdod that belonged to the Philistines, now waste and desolate; by which this prophecy is fulfilled. It was once a very large and famous city, strong and well fortified; and held out a siege of twenty-nine years against Psamittichus king of Egypt, as Herodotus [t] relates, but now destroyed; see Isa. xx. 1: *and Ekron shall be rooted up:* as a tree is rooted up, and withers away, and perishes, and there is no more hope of it: this denotes the utter destruction of this place. There is here also an elegant allusion to the name of the place [u], not to be imitated in a version of it: this was another of the lordships of the Philistines, famous for the idol Beel-zebub, the god of this place. Jerom [w] observes, that some think that Accaron (or Ekron) is the same with Strato's tower, afterwards called Cæsarea; and so the Talmudists say [x], Ekron is Cæsarea; which is not at all probable: he further observes, that there is a large village of the Jews, which in his days was called Accaron, and lay between Azotus and Jamnia to the east; but Breidenbachius [y] relates, that, in his time, Accaron was only a small cottage or hut, yet retaining its ancient name; so utterly rooted up is this place, which once was a considerable principality. Gath is not mentioned, which is the other of the five principalities, because it was now, as Kimchi says, in the hands of the kings of Judah.

Ver. 5. *Woe unto the inhabitants of the sea-coasts, the nation of the Cherethites,* &c.] Which is a name of the Philistines in general, as Kimchi and Ben Melech; or these were a particular tribe belonging to them, that inhabited the southern part of their country; see 1 Sam. xxx. 14, 16. those on the sea-coast, the coast of the Mediterranean sea, and so lay between that and Judea: out of this nation, in the times of David and Solomon, were some choice soldiers selected, called the Cherethites and Pelethites, who were their body-guards, as Josephus [a] calls them; a royal band, which never departed from the king's person; see 2 Sam. xv. 18. and xx. 7, 23. The Septuagint version calls them *strangers of the Cretians:* and are thought by some to be a colony of the Cretians; a people that came originally from the island of Crete, and settled here; but, on the contrary, rather Crete was a colony of the Philistines, and had its name from them: for by the Arabians [b], the country of Palestine, or the Philistines, is called Keritha; and by the Syrians Creth; and, by the Hebrews the inhabitants thereof are called Cherethites, as here, and in Ezek. xxv. 16. and so the south of the Cherethites, in 1 Sam. xxx. 14, is, in ver. 16, called the land of the Philistines. In all the above places, where they are spoken of as the attendants of Solomon and David, they are in the Targum called *archers;* and it is a clear case the Philistines were famous for archery, whereby they had sometimes the advantage of their enemies; see 1 Sam. xxxi. 3. and

[h] עזה עזובה.
[i] Geograph. l. 16. p. 522.
[k] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 91. K.
[l] Travels, par. 1. B. 2. ch. 36. p. 160.
[m] Apud Reland. Palestina Illustrata, l. 2. p. 509.
[n] Travels, p. 151.
[o] Geograph. l. 16. p. 502.
[p] Itinerarium, p. 51.
[q] Ibid.
[r] Bibliothec. l. 19. p. 723.
[s] Itinerarium, p. 51.
[t] Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 157.
[u] עקרון תעקר.
[w] De locis Heb. fol. 88. D.
[x] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 6. 1.
[y] Apud Adrichom. Theatrum Terræ Sanctæ, p. 20.
[a] Antiqu. l. 7. c. 5. sect. 4. and c. 11. sect. 8. Vid. Opitii Exercitat. de Crethi & Plethi.
[b] Giggeius apud Bochart. Canaan, l. 1. c. 15. col. 422.

bows and arrows were the arms the Cretians made use of, and were famous for, as Bochart [c] from various writers has shewn; the use of which they learned very probably from the Philistines, from whom they sprung; though Solinus [d] says they were the first that used arrows; and, according to Diodorus Siculus, Saturn introduced the art of using bows and arrows into the island of Crete; though others ascribe it to Apollo [e]; and it is said that Hercules learnt this art from Rhadamanthus of Crete; which last instance seems to favour the notion of those, that these Cherethites were Cretians, or sprung from them; to which the Septuagint version inclines; and Calmet [f] is of opinion that Caphtor, from whence the Philistines are said to come, Amos ix. 7. and who are called the remnant of the country of Caphtor, Jer. xlvii. 4. is the island of Crete; and that the Philistines came from thence into Palestine; and that the Cherethites are the ancient Cretians; the language, manners, arms, religion and gods, of the Cretians and Philistines, being much the same; though so they might be, as being a colony of the Philistines; see the note on Amos ix. 7. though a learned man [g], who gives into the opinion that these were royal guards, yet thinks they were not strangers and idolaters, but proselytes to the Jewish religion at least; and rather Israelites, choice selected men, men of strength and valour, of military courage and skill, picked out of the nation, to guard the king's person; and who were called Cherethites and Pelethites, from the kind of shields and targets they wore, called *cetra* and *pelta*: and it is a notion several of the Jewish writers † have, that they were two families in Israel; but it seems plain and evident that a foreign nation is here meant, which lay on the sea-coast, and belonged to the Philistines. Another learned man [z] thinks they are the Midianites, the same with the Cretians that Luke joins with the Arabians, Acts ii. 11. as the Midianites are with the Arabians and Amalekites by Josephus [h]; however, a woe is denounced against them, and they are threatened with desolation. The Vulgate Latin version is, *a nation of destroyed ones*; and the Targum, "a people who have sinned, that "they might be destroyed:" *the word of the Lord is against you*; inhabitants of the sea-coast, the Cherethites; the word of the Lord conceived in his own mind, his purpose to destroy them, which cannot be frustrated. So the Targum, "the decree of the "word of the Lord is against you:" and the word pronounced by his lips, the word of prophecy concerning them, by the mouth of former prophets, as Isaiah, ch. xiv. 29, 31. and by the mouth of the present prophet: *O Canaan, the land of the Philistines*; Palestine was a part of Canaan; the five lordships of the Philistines before mentioned belonged originally to the Canaanite, Josh. xiii. 3. and these belonged to the land of Israel, though possessed by them, out of which now they should be turned, and the country wasted, as follows: *I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant*; so great should be the desolation; all should be removed from it, either by death or by captivity; at least there should be no settled inhabitant.

Ver. 6. *And the sea-coast shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds*, &c.] That tract of land which lay on the coast of the Mediterranean sea, inhabited by the Philistines, should now become so desolate, that instead of towns and cities full of merchants and seafaring persons, and houses full of inhabitants, and warehouses full of goods, there should now only be seen a few huts and cottages for shepherds to dwell in, to shelter them from the heat by day, and where they watched their flocks by night, and took their proper repose and rest. The last word is by some rendered *ditches* [i], which were dug by them to receive rain-water for their use: or rather may signify *cottages dug by shepherds* [k]; in subterraneous places, whither they retired in the heat of the day, to shelter themselves from the scorching sun; and some of them were so large as to receive their flocks also; such was the cave of Polyphemus, as Bochart [l] observes, in which the cattle, namely, the sheep and goats, lay down and slept; and in Iceland such are used to secure them from the cold; where we are told [m] there are caverns in the mountains capable of sheltering a hundred sheep or more; and whither they very cordially retreat in bad weather. These holes are in such mountains as have formerly burned, and are of infinite service to them, both winter and summer; in the winter for shelter, and in the summer for very good pastures, which they find in plenty all around. Such sort of huts and cottages as these, in hot countries, Jerom seems to have respect unto, when, speaking of Tekoa, he says [n], there is not beyond it any little village, nor indeed any field-cottages like to ovens (subterraneous ones, Calmet [o] calls them), which the Africans call *mapalia*: these Sallust [p] describes as of an oblong figure, covered with tiles, and like the keels of ships, or ships turned bottom upwards; and, according to Pliny [q], they were movable, and carried from place to place in carts and waggons; and therefore cannot be such as before described; and so Dr. Shaw [r] says, the Bedoween Arabs now, as their great ancestors the Arabians, live in tents called *hhymas*, from the shelter which they afford the inhabitants; and adds, they are the very same which the ancients call *mapalia*: *and folds for flocks*; in which they put them to lie down in at evening. The phrases express the great desolation of the land; that towns should be depopulated, and the land lie untilled, and only be occupied by shepherds, and their flocks, who lead them from place to place, the most convenient for them.

Ver. 7. *And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah*, &c.] The same tract of land become

[c] Ibid. col. 423.
[d] Polyhistor. c. 16.
[e] Diodor. Sicul. Bibliothec. l. 5. p. 334, 341.
[f] Dictionary, in the word *Caphtor*.
[g] Fortunati Scacchi Elæochrism. Myrothec. l. 3. c. 18, 19.
† Kimchi & Ben Gersom in 2 Sam. viii. 18. and xv. 18.
[z] Texelii, Phœnix. l. 2. c. 21. sect. 4. p. 289, 290.
[h] Antiqu. l. 5. c. 2. sect. 1.
[i] כרת fossas, Tigurine version; fossuris, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Ben Melech; but disapproved of by Gussetius, p. 402.

[k] Mansiones effossionum pastorum, Drusius; caulæ effossionum pastorum, i. e. effossæ a pastoribus, Bochart.
[l] Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 45. col. 467, 468.
[m] Horrebow's Natural History of Iceland, ch. 29. p. 46.
[n] Proœm. in Amos.
[o] Dictionary, in the word *Shepherds*.
[p] Bell. Jugurth. p. 51.
[q] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 3.
[r] Travels, p. 220. Ed. 2.

so desolate through the Chaldeans, should in future time, when those that remained of the Jews were returned from their captivity in Babylon, be inhabited by them. This was fulfilled in the times of the Maccabees, when the cities of Palestine, being rebuilt, were subdued by the Jews, and fell into their hands; and it is plain that in the times of the apostles those places were inhabited by the Jews, as Gaza, Ashdod, and others, Acts viii. 26, 40. and perhaps will have a further accomplishment in the latter day, when they shall be converted and return to their own land: *they shall feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening*; either the shepherds shall feed their flocks here, and cause them to lie down in the evening on the very spot of ground where the houses of Ashkelon stood. This place is very properly represented as on the sea-coast; for so it was; Philo[s] says, who some time dwelt there, that it was a city of Syria by the sea: or rather the remnant of Israel shall feed and dwell here, and lie down in safety; and this was made good in a spiritual sense, when the apostles of Christ preached the Gospel in those parts, and were the instruments of converting many; and there they fed them with the word and ordinances, and caused them to lie down in green pastures, in great ease and security: *for the Lord their God shall visit them*: in a way of grace and mercy, bringing them out of Babylon into their own land, and enlarging their borders there; and especially by raising up Christ, the horn of salvation, for them; and by sending his Gospel to them, and making it effectual to their conversion and salvation: *and turn away their captivity*: in a literal sense from Babylon; and in a spiritual sense from sin, Satan, and the law; and may have a further respect to their present captivity in both senses.

Ver. 8. *I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the revilings of the children of Ammon*, &c.] Two people that descended from Lot, through incest with his daughters; and are therefore mentioned together, as being of the same cast and complexion, and bitter enemies to the people of the Jews; whom they reproached and reviled, for the sake of their religion, because they adhered to the word and worship of God: this they did when the Jews were most firmly attached to the service of the true God; and the Lord heard it, and took notice of it; and put it down in the book of his remembrance, to punish them for it in due time; even he who hears, and sees, and knows all things: *whereby they have reproached my people*: whom he had chosen, and avouched to be his people; and who were called by his name, and called on his name, and worshipped him, and professed to be his people, and to serve and obey him; and as such, and because they were the people of God, they were reproached by them; and hence it was so resented by the Lord; and there being such a near relation between God and them, he looked upon the reproaches of them as reproaches of himself: *and magnified themselves against their border*: either they spoke reproachfully of the land of Israel, and the borders of it, and especially of the inhabitants of the land, and particularly those that bordered upon them; or they invaded the borders of their land, and endeavoured to add it to theirs; or as the Jews were carried captive by the Chaldeans, as they passed by the borders of Moab and Ammon, they insulted them, and jeered them, and expressed great pleasure and joy in seeing them in such circumstances; see Ezek. xxv. 3, 8. Jarchi represents the case thus; when the children of Israel went into captivity to the land of the Chaldeans, as they passed by the way of Ammon and Moab, they wept, and sighed, and cried; and they distressed them, and said, what do you afflict yourselves for? why do ye weep? are not you going to the house of your father, beyond the river where your fathers dwelt of old? thus jeering them on account of Abraham's being of Ur of the Chaldees.

Ver. 9. *Therefore as I live, saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*, &c.] The Lord here swears by himself, by his life; partly to shew how provoked he was at, and how grievously he resented, the injuries done to his people; and partly to observe the certain fulfilment of what is after declared; and it might be depended upon it would surely be done, not only because of his word and oath, which are immutable; but because of his ability to do it, as *the Lord of hosts*, of armies above and below; and because of the covenant-relation that subsisted between him and Israel, being their God; and therefore would avenge the insults and injuries done them: *surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah*; that is, should be utterly destroyed, as these cities were; whose destruction is often made use of to express the utter ruin and destruction of any other people; otherwise it is not to be supposed that these countries were to be destroyed, or were destroyed, in like manner, by fire from heaven; the similitude lies in other things after expressed: even *the breeding of nettles*: or *left to nettles* *; or rather to *thorns*, as the Targum: and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it *the dryness of thorns*, though to a very poor sense. In general the meaning of the phrase is, that those countries should be very barren and desolate, like such places as are overrun with nettles, thorns, briers, and brambles; and these so thick, that there is no passing through them without a man's tearing his garments and his flesh: for Schultens †, from the use of the word ‡ in the Arabic language, shews that the words are to be rendered *a thicket of thorns which tear*; and cut the feet of those that pass through them; and even their whole body, as well as their clothes; and, wherever these grow in such plenty, it is a plain sign of a barren land, as well as what follow: *and salt-pits, and a perpetual desolation*: signifying that the countries of Moab and Ammon should be waste, barren, and uncultivated, as the above places were, where nothing but nettles grew, as do in great abundance in desolate places; and where salt-pits should be, or heaps of salt, as Kimchi interprets it; and wherever salt is found, as Pliny[t] says, it

[s] Apud Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. l. 8. p. 398.

* ממשק חרול locus urticæ derelictus, Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 1. col. 872. Stockius, p. 629; derelictio urticæ, Burkius. So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 68. 2.

† De Defect. Hodiern. Ling. Heb. p. 32.

‡ [Arabic] laceravit, laceratus est, Golius, col. 2231. Castel. col. 2165.

[t] Nat. Hist. l. 31. c. 7. Sales autem tellus—frugibus infelix. Virgil. Georgic. l. 2.

is a barren place, and produces nothing; though Herodotus [r] speaks of places where were hillocks of salt, and very fruitful; and where the people used salt in manuring and improving their ground; which must be accounted for by the difference of climate and soil: this passage is produced by Reland [s] to prove that the lake Asphaltites is not the place, as is commonly believed, where Sodom and Gomorrah stood; since those cities were not overflown, or immersed in and covered with water, but were destroyed by fire and brimstone, and so became desolate; and had no herbs and plants, but nettles, and such-like things; and such these countries of Moab and Ammon should be, and ever remain so, at least for a long time; and especially should be desolate and uninhabited by the former possessors of it; see Deut. xxix. 23. this was fulfilled about five years after the destruction of Jerusalem, when Nebuchadnezzar, as Josephus [t] relates, led his army into Cœlesyria, and made war upon the Ammonites and Moabites, and subjected them to him, who were the inhabitants of it, as the same writer says [u]: *the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them;* that is, the Jews, the remnant of them that returned from Babylon: now these, in the times of the Maccabees, and those that descended from them, seized on several places in these countries, and possessed them; for, after these countries had been subdued and made desolate by Nebuchadnezzar, they became considerable nations again. Josephus [w] says the Moabites in his time were a great nation; though in the third century, as Origen [x] relates, they went under the common name of Arabians; and, even long before the times of Josephus, they were called Arabian Moabites, as he himself observes; when he tells us that Alexander Jannæus subdued them, and imposed a tribute on them; and who also gives us an account of the cities of the Moabites, which were taken and demolished by them, as Essebon, Medaba, Lemba, Oronas, Telithon, Zara, the valley of the Cilicians, and Pella; these he destroyed, because the inhabitants would not promise to conform to the rites and customs of the Jews [y]; though Josephus ben Gorion, who also makes mention of these cities as taken by the same prince, says [z] he did not demolish them, because they entered into a covenant and were circumcised; and he speaks of ten fortified cities of the king of Syria, added at the same time to the kingdom of Israel, not destroyed: likewise the children of Ammon, after their captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, became a powerful people: we read of the country of the Ammonites in 2 Maccab. iv. 26. and, in the times of Judas Maccabeus, Timotheus, their general, got together a strong and numerous army, which being worsted by Judas, he took their city Jasoron, or Jaser, 1 Maccab. v. 6, carried their wives and children captive, and burnt their city [a]; and this people, as well as the Moabites in the third century, as before observed, were swallowed up under the general name of Arabians; and neither of them are any more; all which has fulfilled this prophecy, and those of Jeremiah and Amos concerning them: this, likewise, in a spiritual sense, might have a further accomplishment in the first times of the Gospel, when it was preached in these countries by the apostles, and churches were formed in them; and may be still further accomplished in the latter day, when those parts of the world shall be possessed by converted Jews and by Gentile Christians. Kimchi owns it may be interpreted as future, of what shall be in the times of the Messiah.

Ver. 10. *This shall they have for their pride, &c.*] This calamity shall come upon their land, the land of the Moabites and Ammonites, for their pride, which often goes before a fall; and has frequently been the cause of the ruin of kingdoms and states, and of particular persons; and indeed seems to have been the first sin of the apostate angels, and of fallen man. Of the pride of Moab see Isa. xvi. 6: *because they have reproached and magnified* themselves *against the people of the Lord of hosts;* they looked with disdain upon them, as greatly below them; and spoke contemptibly of them, of their nation, and religion; and *made* themselves *great,* and set up themselves *above* them, opened their mouths wide, and gave their tongues great liberties in blaspheming and reviling them: what was done to them is taken by the Lord as done to himself; see Jer. xlviii. 42.

Ver. 11. *The Lord will be terrible unto them, &c.*] To the Moabites and Ammonites in the execution of his judgments upon them, and make their proud hearts tremble; for with him is terrible majesty; he is terrible to the kings of the earth, and cuts off the spirit of princes, Job xxxvii. 22. Psal. lxxvi. 12. or, as Kimchi observes, this may be understood of the people of God reproached by the Moabites and Ammonites, by whom the Lord is to be feared and reverenced with a godly and filial fear: so it may be rendered, *the Lord is to be feared by them* [b]; and to this inclines the Targum, "the fear of the Lord is to redeem them:" *for he will famish all the gods of the earth;* particularly of those countries mentioned in the context, the Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, Ethiopians, and Assyrians; as Dagon, Chemosh, Moloch, Bel, and others; called *gods of the earth,* in distinction from the God of heaven, to whom they are opposed; and because made of earthly matter, and worshipped by earthly and carnal men; these the Lord, who is above them, and can destroy them at pleasure, threatens to *famish;* or to bring *leanness* [c] upon them, as the word signifies; to bring them into a consumption, and cause them to pine away gradually, by little and little, till they are no more; and that by reducing the number of their worshippers, so that they shall not have the worship and honour paid them, nor the sacrifices offered to them, supposed by the Heathens to be the food of

[r] Melpomene, sive l. 4. c. 182, 183.
[s] Palestina Illustrata, l. 1. c. 38. p. 254, 255.
[t] Antiqu. l. 10. c. 9. sect. 7.
[u] Ibid. l. 1. c. 11. sect. 5.
[w] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 11. sect. 5.
[x] Comment. in Job, fol. 2. 1. A.
[y] Antiqu. l. 13. c. 13. sect. 5. c. 15. sect. 4. De Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 4. sect. 2.

[z] Hist. Heb. l. 4. c. 10. p. 297.
[a] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 12. c. 8. sect. 1. 1 Maccab. v. 6.
[b] נורא יהוה עליהם timendus Jehovah super ipsis, Cocceius, Burkius.
[c] רזה emaciabit, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; quasi macie consumit, Vatablus; quum emaciaverit, Cocceius; quia emaciavit, Burkius.

their gods; and, this being the case, their priests would be starved and become lean, who used to be fat and plump. The Septuagint version renders it, *he will destroy all the gods of the nations of the earth*; which is approved of by Noldius, and preferred by him to other versions. This had its accomplishment in part when these nations were subdued by Nebuchadnezzar; for idols were usually demolished when a kingdom was taken; and more fully when the Gospel was spread in the Gentile world by the apostles of Christ, and first ministers of the word; whereby the oracles of the Heathens were struck dumb, and men were turned everywhere from the worship of idols; the idols themselves were destroyed, and their temples demolished, or converted to better uses; and will have a still greater accomplishment in the latter day, at the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles, when the worship of idols will cease everywhere. The Syriac version renders it, *all the kings of the earth*; very wrongly: *and men shall worship him, every one from his place*; or, *in his place* [g]; that is, every man shall worship the true God in the place where he is; he shall not go up to Jerusalem to worship, but in every place lift up holy hands to God, pray unto him, praise and serve him; the worship of God will be universal; he'll be King over all the earth, and his name and service one, and shall not be limited and confined to any particular place, Mal. i. 11: *even all the isles of the Heathen*: or *Gentiles*; not only those places which are properly isles, as ours of Great Britain and Ireland; though there may be a particular respect had to such, and especially to ours, who have been very early and long favoured with the Gospel, and yet will be; but all places beyond the seas, or which the Jews went to by sea, they called isles.

Ver. 12. *Ye Ethiopians also*, &c.] Or, *as for ye Ethiopians also* [h]; not the Ethiopians in Africa beyond Egypt, at a distance from the land of Israel, and the countries before mentioned; but the inhabitants of Arabia Chusea, or Ethiopia, which lay near to Moab and Ammon; these should not escape, but suffer with their neighbours, who sometimes distressed the people of the Jews, and made war with them, being nigh them; see 2 Chron. xiv. 9. and xxi. 16: *they shall be slain by my sword*; or, *the slain of my sword are they* [i]; R. Japhet thinks here is a defect of the note of similitude *as*, which should be supplied thus, *ye* are, or shall be, *the slain of my sword*, as they; as the Moabites and Ammonites; that is, these Ethiopians should be slain as well as they by the sword of Nebuchadnezzar; which is called the sword of God, because he was an instrument in the hand of God for punishing the nations of the earth. This was fulfilled very probably when Egypt was subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, with whom Ethiopia was confederate, as well as near unto it, Jer. xlvi. 1. The destruction of these by the Assyrians is predicted, Isa. xx. 4.

Ver. 13. *And he will stretch out his hand against the north*, &c.] Either the Lord, or Nebuchadnezzar his sword; who, as he would subdue the nations that lay southward, he would lead his army northward against the land of Assyria, which lay to the north of Judea, as next explained: *and destroy Assyria*; that famous monarchy, which had ruled over the kingdoms of the earth, now should come to an end, and be reduced to subjection to the king of Babylon: *and will make Nineveh a desolation*; which was the capital city, the metropolis of the Assyrian monarchy: Nahum prophesies at large of the destruction of this city: *and dry like a wilderness*; which before was a very watery place, situated by rivers, particularly the river Tigris; so that it was formerly like a pool of water, Nah. ii. 6, 8. but now should be dry like a heath or desert. Dr. Prideaux places the destruction of Nineveh in the 29th year of Josiah's reign; but Bishop Usher earlier, in the 16th year of his reign; and, if so, then Zephaniah, who here prophesies of it, must begin to prophesy in the former part of Josiah's reign.

Ver. 14. *And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her*, &c.] In the midst of the city of Nineveh; in the streets of it, where houses stood, and people in great numbers walked; but now only should be seen the cottages of shepherds, and flocks of sheep feeding or lying down, as is before observed of the sea-coast of the Philistines, ver. 6: *all the beasts of the nations*; that is, all sorts of beasts, especially wild beasts, in the several parts of the world, should come and dwell here; instead of kings and princes, nobles, merchants, and the great men thereof, who once here inhabited, now there should be beasts of prey, terrible to come nigh unto; for these are to be understood properly and literally, and not figuratively, of men, for their savageness and cruelty, comparable to beasts: *both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it*; of the doors of the houses in Nineveh: or, *on its pomegranates* [k]; the figures of these being often put on chapiters, turrets, pinnacles, pillars, and posts in buildings, and over porches of doors; and on these those melancholy and doleful creatures here mentioned, which delight in solitary places, should take up their abode. The *cormorant* is the same with the *corvus aquaticus*, or *sea-raven*, about the size of a goose; it builds not only among rocks, but often on trees: what is called the *shagge* is a species of it, or the lesser cormorant, a water-fowl common on our northern coasts; is somewhat larger than a common duck, and builds on trees as the common cormorant [l]. Bochart [m] takes it to be the *pelican* which is here meant; and indeed, whatever bird it is, it seems to have its name from vomiting; and this is what naturalists [n] observe of the pelican, that it swallows down shell-fish, which, being kept awhile in its stomach, are heated, and then it casts them up, which then open easily, and it picks out the flesh of them: and it seems to delight in desolate places, since it is called the pelican of the wilderness, Psal. cii. 6. Isidore says [o] it is an Egyptian bird, dwelling in the desert by the river Nile, from whence

[g] ממקומו.

[h] גם אתם כושים etiam ad vos Æthiopes quod attinet, Piscator.

[i] חללי חרבי המה interfecti gladio meo ipsi, Montanus.

[k] בכפתריה in malogranatis ejus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius.

[l] Vid. Supplement to Chambers's Dictionary, in the words *Cormorant*, *Corvus Aquaticus*, and *Shagge*.

[m] Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 2. c. 24. col. 294.

[n] Aristot. Hist. Animal. l. 9. c. 10. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 10. c. 40. Ælian de Animal. l. 3. c. 20.

[o] Originum, l. 12. c. 7.

it has its name; for it is called *canopus Ægyptus*: and the Vulgate Latin version renders the word here *onocrotalus*, the same with the pelican; and Montanus translates it the *pelican*: and so do others. The *bittern* is a bird of the heron kind; it is much the size of a common heron; it is usually found in sedgy and reedy places near water, and sometimes in hedges; it makes a very remarkable noise, and, from the singularity of it, the common people imagine it sticks its beak in a reed or in the mud, in order to make it; hence it is sometimes called the *mire-drum*[p]. It is said it will sometimes make a noise like a bull, or the blowing of a horn, so as to be heard half a German mile, or one hour's journey; hence it is by some called *botaurus*, as if *bootaurus*, because it imitates the bellowing of a bull[q]. The Tigurine version renders it the *castor* or *beaver*[r]; but Bochart[s] takes it to be the *hedgehog*; and so the word is rendered in the Vulgate Latin, Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, and by others; which is a solitary creature, and drives away all other animals from society with it by its prickles: *their voice shall sing in the windows*; of desolate houses, the inhabitants being gone who used to be seen looking out of them; but now these creatures before named should dwell here, and utter their doleful sounds, who otherwise would not have come near them: *desolation shall be in the thresholds*; there being none to go in and out over them. The Septuagint version, and which is followed by the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions, render it, *the ravens shall be in its gates*; mistaking חרב, *desolation*, for ערב, *a raven*: *for he shall uncover the cedar-work*; the enemy Nebuchadnezzar, or Nabopolassar, when he should take the city, would unroof the houses cieled with cedar, and expose all the fine cedar-work within to the inclemencies of the air, which would soon come to ruin. All these expressions are designed to set forth the utter ruin and destruction of this vast and populous city; and which was so utterly destroyed, as Lucian says, that there is no trace of it to be found; and, according to modern travellers, there are only heaps of rubbish to be seen, which are conjectured to be the ruins of this city; see the note on Nah. i. 8.

Ver. 15. *This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly*, &c.] Once exceeding populous, and the inhabitants full of mirth and gaiety, abounding with wealth and riches, and indulging themselves in all carnal delights and pleasures; and, being well fortified, thought themselves out of all danger, and were careless and unconcerned, not fearing any enemy that should attack them; imagining their city was impregnable and invincible: these are the words of the prophet, concluding his prophecy concerning the destruction of this city, and having, by a spirit of prophecy, a foresight of its ruin and desolation; or of passengers, and what they should say when they saw it lie in its ruins: *that said in her heart, I am, and there is none besides me*; or, *is there any besides me*[t]? there is none, no city in the world to be compared to it for the largeness of the place, the strength of its walls, the number of its inhabitants, its wealth and riches: at least so she thought within herself, and was elated with these things; and concluded it would never be otherwise with her; *I am*, and shall always continue so: *how is she become a desolation!* what a desolate place is this! its walls broken down, its houses demolished, its wealth and riches plundered, its inhabitants destroyed; and now the hold and habitation of beasts of prey, and hateful birds: *a place for beasts to lie down in!* and not for men to dwell in: this is said, either as wondering, or as rejoicing at it, as follows: *every one that passeth by her*; and sees her in this ruinous condition; *shall hiss, and wag his hand*; in scorn and derision, as pleased with the sight, and having no pity and compassion for her, remembering her cruelty to and oppression of others, when in her prosperity; see Nah. iii. 19.

CHAP. III.

IN this chapter the character of the city of Jerusalem, and its inhabitants in general, is drawn, as it would be, and as it was, in the times of Christ and his apostles, ver. 1, 2. and of the principal persons of it in particular, its princes, judges, prophets, and priests, ver. 3, 4. The hardness, impenitence, and shamelessness of this people, are exposed and aggravated by the just Lord being among them; who, by his example and doctrine, taught them otherwise; yet they were not amended, or made ashamed, ver. 5. nor received instruction, nor took warning by the judgments of God on other nations, ver. 6, 7. wherefore the followers of God are called upon to wait his time, who would gather many people together, and destroy the whole land of Judea, ver. 8. at which time he would send his Gospel among the Gentiles, who should thereby be brought to the true worship and service of God, ver. 9, 10. though there should be a remnant among the Jews, according to the election of grace, that should be saved from that general calamity, ver. 11, 12, 13. and the spiritual Israel are encouraged with promises of better times, when the Jews in general should be converted and gathered into the church of God, have the presence and protection of God with them, and deliverance from all their enemies, and be a praise among all people of the earth, ver. 14—20.

Ver. 1. *Woe to her that is filthy and polluted*, &c.] Meaning the city of Jerusalem, and its inhabitants; not as before the Babylonish captivity, but after their return from it, under the second temple, as Abarbinel owns; and even as in the times before and at the coming of Christ, and the preaching of his apostles among them; as the whole series of the prophecy, and the connexion of the several parts of it, shew; and

[p] Supplement, ut supra, in the word *Bittern*.
[q] Schotti Physica Curiosa, par. 2. l. 9. c. 24. p. 1169.
[r] Vid. Fuller. Miscel. Sacr. l. 1. c. 18.
[s] Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 3. c. 36. col. 1036.
[t] אני ואפסי עוד & præter me adhuc quicquam est? Cocceius.

there are such plain intimations of the conversion of the Gentiles, and of such a happy state of the Jews, in which they shall see evil no more, as can agree with no other times than the times of the Gospel, both the beginning and latter part of them. The character of this city, and its inhabitants, is, that it was *filthy*, and *polluted* with murders, adulteries, oppression, rapine, and other sins: our Lord often calls them a wicked and an adulterous generation; and yet they pretended to great purity of life and manners; and they were pure in their own eyes, though not washed from their filthiness; they took much pains to make clean the outside of the cup, but within were full of impurity, Matt. xxiii. 25—28. In the margin it is, *woe to her that is gluttonous*. The word is used for the craw or crop of a fowl, Lev. i. 16. hence some render it[t] *woe to the craw;* to the city that is all craw, to which Jerusalem is compared for its devouring the wealth and substance of others. The Scribes and Pharisees in Christ's time are said to devour widows' houses, Matt. xxiii. 14. and this seems to be the sin with which they were defiled, and here charged with. Some think the word signifies one that is publicly infamous; either made a public example of, or openly exposed, as sometimes filthy harlots are; or rather one *that has made herself infamous*[u]; by her sins and vices: *to the oppressing city!* that oppressed the poor, the widow, and the fatherless. This may have respect to the inhabitants of Jerusalem stoning the prophets of the Lord sent unto them; to the discouragements they laid the followers of Christ under, by not suffering such to come to hear him that were inclined; threatening to cast them out of their synagogues if they professed him, which passed into a law; and to their killing the Lord of life and glory; and the persecution of his apostles, ministers, and people: see Matt. xxiii. 13, 37. John ix. 22. 1 Thess. ii. 14, 15, 16. Some render it, *to the city a dove*[w]; being like a silly dove without heart, as in Hos. vii. 11. R. Azariah[x] thinks Jerusalem is so called because in its works it was like Babylon, which had for its military sign on its standard a dove; see the notes on Jer. xxv. 38. and xlvi. 16. Hos. xi. 11. but the former sense is best.

Ver. 2. *She obeyed not the voice*, &c.] Of his servants the prophets, as the Targum, by way of explanation, adds, who warned her of her sins and of her ruin. The inhabitants of Jerusalem hearkened not to the voice of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, who gave notice of his coming; nor to the voice of Christ himself, who stretched out his hand all the day to a disobedient and gainsaying people; nor to the voice of his apostles, whose doctrines they contradicted and blasphemed; and put away the word of God from them, thereby judging themselves unworthy of eternal life: *she received not correction;* by the rod, by the judgments of God upon her: or *instruction*[y]; by the Gospel preached to her inhabitants. So the Targum interprets it, "she received not doctrine;" the doctrine of baptism, repentance, and remission of sins, preached by John; but rejected the counsel of God by him against themselves, Luke vii. 31. nor the doctrine and instruction of Christ and his apostles, though of more worth than gold and silver; but, on the contrary, slighted and despised it, and rejected it with the utmost contempt: *she trusted not in the Lord;* not in the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; the essential Word, Christ Jesus; the Word made flesh, and dwelling among them; they trusted in the law of Moses, and in their obedience to it; in their rites and ceremonies, and in the observance of them, and the traditions of their elders; they trusted in the flesh, in their carnal privileges; in their own legal righteousness, and in themselves, that they were righteous, and despised others; and particularly the righteousness of Christ they submitted not unto; they trusted not in him, nor in that; though they were told, that, if they believed not that he was the Messiah, they should die in their sins: *she drew not near to her God;* Immanuel, God manifest in the flesh, who was promised to the Jews, and sent unto them, whom their fathers expected, and whose God he was, and theirs also; being in his human nature of them, and God over all blessed for ever; so far were they from drawing near to him, and embracing him, that they hid, as it were, their faces from him; they would not come to him for life and light, for grace, righteousness, and salvation; nor even to hear him preach, nor suffer others to do the same; but, as much as in them lay, hindered them from attending his ministry, word, and ordinances. The Targum is, "she drew not nigh to the worship of her "God."

Ver. 3. *Her princes within her* are *roaring lions*, &c.] Or, *as roaring lions;* there being a defect of the note of similitude; which is supplied by the Targum, Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions. This is to be understood, not of the princes of the blood; but of civil magistrates in common; the members of the grand sanhedrim; the princes of the Jewish world, that crucified the Lord of glory; and who gaped upon him with their mouths like ravening and roaring lions, as is foretold they should, Psal. xxii. 12, 13. and who breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Christ; and by their menaces endeavoured to frighten and deter them from preaching in his name, and from a profession of him; see 1 Cor. ii. 8. Acts iv. 5, 6, 18. and v. 27, 28: *her judges are evening wolves;* or, like them, cruel, voracious, never satisfied; especially are very ravenous in the evening, having had no food all day; not daring to go abroad in the day-time to seek their prey; see Jer. v. 6. The Septuagint and Arabic versions read *wolves of Arabia;* but wrongly; see the note on Hab. i. 8. such rapacious covetous judges were there in Christ's time; who gives us an instance in one, by which we may judge of the rest, who feared not God, nor regarded men, Luke xviii. 2. such as these were hungry and greedy after gifts and bribes to pervert judgment, and to devour the poor, the widow, and the fatherless, on whom they had no mercy: *they gnaw not the bones till the morrow;* or rather, *in the*

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[t] מראה ingluviei, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[u] Οὐαὶ ἡ ἐπιφανὴς, Sept.; væ huic quæ infamatur, L'Empereur Not. in Mosis Kimchii ὁδοιπορία ad scientiam, p. 174. so Drusius and Tarnovius.

[w] העיר היונה ἡ πόλις ἡ περιστερὰ, Sept.; civitas columba, V. L.; so Syr. Ar. Jarchi, and other Jewish interpreters.

[x] Meor Enayim, c. 21. fol. 90. 1.

[y] מוסר institutionem, Drusius, Tarnovius.

morning[r]; that is, either they leave not the bones till the morning, as Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it; they are so hungry, that they eat up bones and all at once, and reserve nothing for the next day; which expresses both the greediness of these judges, and the total consumption of the estates of men made by them: or else the sense is, that not having gnawn any bones in the morning, or eaten any thing that day, hence they are so greedy in the evening; and so this last clause gives a reason why evening wolves are so voracious; for which such cruel judges are compared to them.

Ver. 4. *Her prophets are light and treacherous,* &c.] The false prophets, as the Targum and Kimchi explain it: these seem to design the lawyers spoken of in the New Testament, whose business it was to interpret the law to the people; these were *light* men, good for nothing, of no worth and value; light in knowledge, as Kimchi gives the sense of the word; men of no brains; empty-headed men, that had no substantial knowledge; giddy, unstable, and inconstant, and compliant with the humours and vices of the people; men of no gravity in their countenance, speech, and conversation. Schultens[s], from the use of the word in the Arabic language, renders it *proud*, as these men were, proud boasters; for, though they had but a superficial knowledge of things, they boasted of much, and carried it with a haughty and insolent air to the common people: and they were *treacherous* to God, and to his truths, and to the souls of men, and took away the key of knowledge from them; and particularly were so to Christ, of whom they were the betrayers and murderers, delivering him up into the hands of the Gentiles to be scourged and crucified, Matt. xx. 18, 19: *her priests have polluted the sanctuary;* the temple; by selling, or suffering to be sold in it, various things, whereby it became a den of thieves, which once was called a house of prayer, Matt. xxi. 12, 13. and also our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the sanctuary or temple was a type, by denying, blaspheming, and reproaching him, and by shedding his blood: *they have done violence to the law;* by not teaching it as they should; and by their false glosses, senses, and interpretations of it; and by the traditions of the elders they preferred unto it, and whereby they made it void; see Matt. v. and xv.

Ver. 5. *The just Lord is in the midst thereof,* &c.] In the midst of the city of Jerusalem, where those princes, judges, prophets and priests, were, that behaved so ill, and saw and observed all their evil actions; and yet they were not deterred from them by his presence, even though he is the *just* and holy One, who loves righteousness, and hates iniquity, and will punish for it; nor were they directed and allured to do what is righteous and good by his example. This character of the just Lord well agrees with Christ, who is perfectly righteous in both his natures, and in the execution of his offices; and is the author of righteousness to his people; and this is to be understood of his incarnation and personal presence in human nature in Jerusalem, and in the temple, where he taught his doctrine, and wrought his miracles: *he will not do iniquity;* Christ was holy in his nature, harmless in his life; he knew no sin; he did not commit any; no violence was done by him, or guile found in him; he was not guilty of sin against God, nor of doing any injury to men; and should have been imitated by the men of the age in which he lived, as well as by others; and should have been valued and esteemed, and not traduced and vilified as he was, as if he had been the worst of men: *every morning doth he bring his judgment to light;* the doctrine of the Gospel, which he set in the clearest light, and preached with the greatest constancy, day after day, morning by morning, and very early in the morning, when the people came to hear him in the temple; and he continued in it all the day; he waking morning by morning to this service, as was predicted of him, Isa. l. 4. see Luke xxi. 37, 38: *he faileth not;* in this work of preaching the word, with the greatest evidence and assiduity: *but the unjust knoweth no shame:* those unjust persons, who aspersed the character of Christ, and traduced his doctrine and miracles; though there was nothing in his life, nor in his ministry, that could be justly blamed, yet they blushed not at their sin and wickedness; and though they were sharply reproved by him, and their errors in principle, and sins in practice, were exposed by him, yet they were not ashamed; such were the hardness and obduracy of their hearts.

Ver. 6. *I have cut off the nations,* &c.] Utterly destroyed them, as the Philistines, Moabites, Ethiopians, and Assyrians, as in the preceding chapters; all which were done before the coming of Christ in the flesh; and by which instances the Jews should have took warning, lest by their sins they should provoke the Lord to destroy their nation, city, and temple: *their towers are desolate:* built on their frontiers, or on the walls of their cities, to defend them; these were demolished, and laid waste, and of no use: or, *their corners*[t]; towers being usually built on the angles or corners of walls. Some interpret this of their princes, nobles, and great men, who were destroyed; see Zech. x. 4: *I made their streets waste, that none passeth by;* the streets of their cities, the houses being pulled down by the enemy, the rubbish of them lay in the streets, so that there was no passing for any; and indeed, the houses being demolished, the streets were no more in form: *their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant;* the houses being burnt with fire, or pulled down, and plundered of the goods and substance in them, and the people cut off by famine, pestilence, or sword; and the rest carried captive, there was scarce a man or inhabitant left; so general was the destruction.

Ver. 7. *I said, surely thou wilt fear me,* &c.] This is spoken after the manner of men; as if God should say within himself, and reason in his own mind, upon a view of things, surely the people of the Jews will take notice of my judgments executed on other nations, and will stand in awe of me on account of them; and fear to offend me, lest the same calamities should come upon them; this, humanly speaking, might be reasonably thought would be the case: *thou wilt receive*

[r] לבקר in mane, Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius; matutino, Cocceius.
[s] Animadv. Philol in Job, p. 144.

[t] פנותם anguli earum, Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius, Cocceius, Burkius.

instruction; by these judgments, taking warning by them; repent, reform, and amend, and thereby escape the like: *so their dwelling should not be cut off*; or, *its dwelling*; the dwelling of the city of Jerusalem, the houses in it; the dwelling-places of the inhabitants of it; the singular being put for the plural; unless the temple should be meant, as Abendana interprets it; and so it may be rendered *his dwelling*[c]; their house, which was left desolate to them, because they feared not the Lord; nor received instruction by the example of others; nor repented of their sins, and altered their course of life; which, if done, their dwelling would have been preserved, Matt. xxiii. 38: *howsoever I punished them*, or *visited*[d] them; chastised them in a gentle manner, in order to reform them, but in vain. Some render it, *all which I committed to them*[e]; the oracles of God, his word and ordinances, his promises, and the blessings of his goodness, which he deposited with them, in order to do them good, and bring them to repentance. The Targum is, "all the good things "which I have said unto them (or promised them), I "will bring unto them;" and to the same sense Jarchi. The goodness of God should have brought them to repentance, yet it did not; *but they rose early*, and *corrupted all their doings*: they were diligent and industrious, eager and early, in the commission of sins, in doing corrupt and abominable works; receiving and tenaciously adhering to the traditions of the elders; seeking to establish their own righteousness, not submitting to Christ's; rejecting him the true Messiah; blaspheming his doctrines, despising his ordinances, and persecuting his people; besides other vices, which abounded among them; for which the wrath of God came upon them to the uttermost, as expressed in the following verse.

Ver. 8. *Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord*, &c.] Or *nevertheless*[f]: this is said to the disciples and followers of Christ among the Jews; for there were some few that did fear the Lord, and received his doctrine, and submitted to his ordinances, and walked in his ways; and these are encouraged to wait upon the Lord; upon the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; or for him, and to expect that he would appear, and work salvation and deliverance for them, when distress should come upon the unbelieving Jews: *until the day that I rise up to the prey*; until the day that he rose from the dead, quickly after which he ascended to heaven, leading captivity captive; Satan, and his principalities and powers, which he made a prey and spoil of upon the cross: or, till I rise up *for a testimony*, or witness[g]; of his being the true Messiah; for his resurrection from the dead was the signal he gave as a testimony of it, Matt. xii. 39, 40. Some render it, *till I rise up to perpetuity*; or, *for ever*[h]; for, when Christ rose from the dead, he rose to an immortal life, never to die more; and ever live he does to make intercession for his people, to secure their happiness for them, and to preserve them unto it; and therefore they have great encouragement to wait upon him, and for him: *for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms*: not the Chaldeans or Babylonians, as some; nor the armies of Gog and Magog, as Kimchi; but the Romans under Titus Vespasian, with whom were people of many nations, who came against Jerusalem, according to the decree, will, and appointment of God: *to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger*; not upon the nations and kingdoms assembled; but by them upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea, against whom they would be gathered; who had corrupted their doings, and provoked the Lord to stir up and pour out all his wrath upon them, in utterly destroying their nation, city, and temple: and the apostle, speaking of the same thing, at least of the beginning of it, calls it *wrath upon them to the uttermost*; and which answers to the expressions of the Lord's indignation, and all his fierce anger, here used, 1 Thess. ii. 16: *for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy*: not the whole world, and the several nations of it; but the whole land of Judea, and its inhabitants. The same phrase is used of the destruction of it by the Babylonians, ch. i. 18. and which shews, that not that destruction, but the destruction by the Romans, is here meant; or otherwise a tautology is here committed; but the following words shew clearly that this respects, not the former, but the latter destruction of Jerusalem; since a pure language was not given to the nations or Gentiles after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians; but has been since it was destroyed by the Romans; and which was in a few years after Christ's resurrection from the dead, predicted in the beginning of this verse; by which may be observed the connexion of things in this prophecy.

Ver. 9. *For then will I turn to the people a pure language*, &c.] That is, at or about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans; when the Jews, both in their own land, and in the Gentile world, would have the Gospel first preached to them, but would reject it; upon which the apostles and first ministers of the word would turn to the Gentiles, as the Lord commanded them; when he would turn or change his speech and language towards them, and their speech and language towards him would be turned and changed also; for the words may be taken either way; either of God's speech to the Gentiles, which is his Gospel sent unto them; as it was quickly after Christ's resurrection from the dead, and the rejection of it by the Jews; for many hundred years the Lord took no notice of them; winked at the times of their ignorance; sent no prophet to them, nor any message by any one, to instruct them; yea, he spake roughly to them, in a providential way; in the way of his judgments; particularly they raging and imagining vain things against his Messiah, he spake to them in his wrath, and vexed them in his sore displeasure; see Acts xvii. 30. Psal. ii. 1, 5. but now he alters the tone of his voice, changes his language, and sends his Gospel to them; which is a *language* of love, grace, and mercy; of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation; encouraging souls to believe in Christ for those things: and this is a *pure*

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[c] מעונה habitaculum, *vel* habitatio ejus, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Burkius; mansio ejus, Cocceius.

[d] פקדתי visitavi, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus.

[e] Omne id quod commendavi illi, Cocceius.

[f] לכן, as in Hos. ii. 14. See Noldius.

[g] לעד εις μαρτύριον, Sept.

[h] In futurum, Vulg. Lat.; in perpetuum, some in Calvin; so Abendana; in perpetuitatem, Cocceius.

speech or language; a pure doctrine, fetched out of the sacred Scriptures; free from the dross of error; unmixed, consistent, and all of a piece; and which has a tendency to promote purity of heart, life, and conversation: or, is a *choice speech* [h]; as some render it; it speaks of choice things, more valuable than gold and silver, pearls, and precious stones; the doctrines of it being an inestimable treasure, the unsearchable riches of Christ; and this, by the commission of Christ, upon his resurrection from the dead, was ordered to be spoke unto all nations, Matt. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 15. or this may respect the different language spoken by the converted Gentiles, when the Gospel should come with power to them: who should speak, as all converted persons do, a different language than they spake before; instead of swearing and cursing, lying, filthy, and frothy speaking, now they speak the language of repentance towards God, confessing their sins, and praying for the pardon of them; the language of faith in Christ, first in a more weak and feeble manner, then with more strength and assurance, believing their interest in him, and in the everlasting love of God, and the covenant of grace; the language of love to Christ, his people, truths, and ordinances; a soul-abasing, Christ-exalting, and free-grace-magnifying language; the language of praise and gratitude for mercies received, temporal and spiritual; and especially for Christ, and grace and glory by him: they then speak the language of gracious experience to one another; and in the language of the Scriptures, in the taught words of the Holy Ghost; and, in common conversation, their language is pure, and free from that corruption and vitiosity it was before tainted with: this arises from pureness of heart; from a rich experience of the grace of God; from the teachings of the spirit of God; and which bewrays a man, and shews that he has been with Jesus; this is the language of Canaan, Isa. xix. 18: *that they may all call upon the name of the Lord*; which sometimes takes in the whole worship and service of God; but, since that is after expressed, it rather intends, in particular, prayer to God; for which men are fitted and qualified, by having a pure language turned to them; or through the Gospel coming with power on them; and by virtue of efficacious grace converting them, and causing them to speak differently from what they did before; and then it is their voice is heard in prayer to God; and which is delightful and pleasant to him, Acts ix. 11. Cant. ii. 14. and this is the case of *all* such that have this pure language; there is not a prayerless soul among them: it follows, *to serve him with one consent*: or, *with one shoulder* [i]; the allusion is, either to bearers of burdens, that join together in carrying any burden, who put shoulder to shoulder as they carry it; or else to oxen drawing in a yoke, who are yoked together shoulder by shoulder; hence the Septuagint version renders it *under one yoke*: in which it is followed by the Syriac and Arabic versions. The phrase signifies, that the Gentiles having the Gospel brought to them, and they called by it, and all speaking the same language, should join in fellowship with one another, and sing the praises of God together; agree in prayer to ask of God the same things; stand fast in the faith of the Gospel, and strive for it, being of the same mind; meet constantly together to carry on the several branches of religious worship, and promote the Redeemer's interest; all drawing the same way, like a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots; having one heart, and one way given them to fear the Lord; and so, with one mind and one mouth, glorify God; so Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it with one heart and one mind. This passage is applied to the times of the Messiah by the Jews, ancient and modern [k].

Ver. 10. *From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia*, &c.] Either the African Ethiopia, or Arabia Chusea, which lay between Judea and Egypt: here some particular places and people are mentioned, in whom the preceding prophecy would be fulfilled. If these rivers of Ethiopia are such as ran in the midst of the country, and so point at some parts of it, though on the other side of them, then this prophecy might have its accomplishment, at least when the Evangelist Matthew went thither, and preached the Gospel, and very likely the Apostle Paul; as also when the Ethiopian eunuch was converted, who doubtless did what in him lay to promote the interest of Christ in those parts. Ben Melech makes this parallel with and illustrates it by Isa. xviii. 1, 7. see the notes there; but if these design rivers on the furthermost borders of the country, which divided it from others, then Egypt, which lay beyond it, seems to be intended; and so the prophecy, in connexion with the foregoing verse, is the same with Isa. xix. 18. *in that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan*: of these rivers of Ethiopia, whether in Africa or Arabia Chusea, see the note on Isa. xviii. 1. The Targum renders it "beyond the rivers of India:" *my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed*: Aben Ezra, Kimchi, Abarbinel, and Ben Melech, take the words *Atharai Bathpusai* to be the proper name of a nation or family beyond the rivers of Ethiopia [l]; whereas they are characters which describe persons there, who should have the pure language turned to them, and call on the name of the Lord; even such, who, being made sensible of sin, and of their danger, would be humble supplicants at the throne of grace, and pray to the Lord for the discovery and application of pardoning grace and mercy to them, agreeably to the prophecy in Psal. lxviii. 31. *princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God*; that is, in prayer: and these are the sons and daughters of the Almighty, who are scattered abroad in the several parts of the world, and among the rest here; but as they are gathered together by Christ in redemption, so they are found out and reached by efficacious grace in vocation, whether Jews or Gentiles. Some think the Jews are here meant, even the elect of God among them, who were dispersed in several nations, and particularly in Egypt and Ethiopia; who were met with

[h] שפה ברורה labium electum. Pagninus, Drusius.

[i] שכם אחד humero uno, Vulg. Lat. Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.

[k] Zohar in Gen. fol. 74. 1. Maimon. Hilchot Melachim, c. 11. sect. 5. Aben Ezra in Psal. cxlix. 7.

[l] So Menasseh ben Israel. Spes Israelis, p. 27.

by the Gospel, and converted in the first times of it; to these Peter and James direct their epistles: and of whom, being called by grace, it is said, they *shall bring mine offering*: themselves as an offering to the Lord, souls and bodies, with all other spiritual sacrifices of prayer, praise, and well-doing; and likewise such persons they may be the instruments of the conversion of, called the offering of the Gentiles, Rom. xv. 16.

Ver. 11. *In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me,* &c.] Because these shall not be continued in, but repented of, and forsaken; and, besides, shall be forgiven, blotted out, covered, and remembered no more; so that they shall not be charged with them, condemned for them, or be confounded before God, angels, and men, on account of them; not but that shame always arises from a true sense of sin; and the more, as it is beheld in the glass of pardoning love, which is a branch of true evangelical repentance, at least a fruit and evidence of it, Ezek. xvi. 63. but then such are not ashamed to appear before God; but can with a holy confidence stand in his sight, their sins being pardoned, and their persons justified. This respects the Christian church or churches in Judea, the few that believed in Christ, called in a following verse the remnant of Israel, at the time when the generality of the people of the Jews rejected the Messiah, and their city and temple were destroyed, and the Lord turned the pure language of the Gospel to the Gentiles: *for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride*; the Scribes and Pharisees, and those that adhered to them of the Jewish nation, who rejoiced in those things which that people generally prided themselves in and boasted of; their descent from Abraham; their observance of the rites and ceremonies of the law, and the traditions of their elders, and their external legal righteousness; and they rejoiced in their boastings of these things, which rejoicing was evil; and they, in the pride of their hearts, despised Christ and his righteousness, his Gospel, ordinances, and people, which were the things in which they transgressed against the Lord, and for which they were taken away by the sword, famine, and pestilence, at the destruction of Jerusalem: this is further explained by the next clause: *and thou shalt no more be haughty because of mine holy mountain*; the temple; or, *in* [m] it; since it should now be destroyed: the Jews gloried in the temple, and behaved proudly and haughtily on the account of it: reckoned themselves secure, because of that; and trusted and gloried in the sacrifices there offered up, and the services there performed; see Jer. vii. 4.

Ver. 12. *I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people,* &c.] Of a character just the reverse of the proud and haughty, that should be removed from Jerusalem and Judea by death or captivity: these are they that should be preserved from the general calamity, as the Christians were, and were left in the church of God: these were an *afflicted* people, as the Lord's people in all ages are afflicted with a body of sin; with the temptations of Satan; with the hidings of God's face; with bodily infirmities, and with the reproaches and persecutions of men; the first Christians, both among Jews and Gentiles, justly bore this character, especially with respect to the last article: and they were also *poor*, for the most part the poor of this world, being stripped of their worldly enjoyments for the sake of Christ; but especially poor in spirit, broken-hearted, contrite, lowly ones; that had a mean opinion of themselves, modest, meek, and humble; sensible of their spiritual poverty, and seeking after the true riches of grace and glory. The Targum renders it, "a meek people, and receiving injuries;" quietly and patiently: *and they shall trust in the name of the Lord*: not in men, but in the Lord; not in descent from men, from the patriarchs, as the Jews were wont to do; not in Moses, as they, in his law, and obedience to it; not in any creature or creature-enjoyment; not in wealth and riches; nor in their own hearts, or in their own righteousness; but in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; in his person for acceptance with God; in his righteousness for justification; in his blood for pardon and cleansing; in his sacrifice for atonement; in his fulness for supplies of grace; in his power and strength for protection and preservation; and in his obedience, sufferings, and death, for salvation and eternal life. This trust signifies, according to the sense of the word [n], a betaking of themselves to Christ as a refuge; a hiding themselves under the shadow of his wings; under his person, blood, and righteousness, where they are covered and sheltered from the avenging justice of God; from the curses of the law, and wrath to come: it is a committing themselves into the hands of Christ; a leaning and staying upon him, expecting grace and glory from him; trusting him with all they have, and for all they want in time and eternity: and this the chosen, redeemed, and called ones, *shall do*; for, through the efficacious grace of God, faith is given to them, and wrought in them; and this is drawn forth into act and exercise by the same grace, and is continued in them, and shall never fail, through the powerful intercession of Christ for them; they shall believe, and go on believing, to the saving of their souls.

Ver. 13. *The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity,* &c.] This is the remnant, according to the election of grace, the few the Lord reserved for himself, left in the land, and in his church, for his own glory; who, being truly convinced of sin, and brought to believe in Christ, should leave and forsake their former course of sinning; not that they should be without sin, or none be committed by them; but should not live in it, and be workers of it; make a trade of sinning, and continue therein; or should not commit the sin against the Holy Ghost, as great numbers of the Jews did, in rejecting Jesus as the Messiah, against clear evidence, and the light of their own consciences: *nor speak lies*; in common talk and conversation; which a child of God, a true believer in Christ, a real Christian, should not and dare not do, Isa. lxiii. 8. or doctrinal lies,

[m] בהר קדשי in monte sancto meo, V. L. Vatablus, Coccerius; in monte sanctitatis meæ, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Calvin, Burkius.

[n] חסו se recipient, Junius & Tremellius, Drusius, Burkius; confugient, Cocceius.

lies in hypocrisy; such doctrines as are not of the truth of the Gospel, but contrary to it; such as the doctrine of justification by works; atonement by ceremonial sacrifices; acceptance with God, through the merits of their fathers; and keeping the traditions of the elders; and other Jewish lies and fables of the same stamp; but rejected by those who have embraced the truth, as it is in Jesus: *neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth;* having clean hearts created and right spirits renewed in them; being Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile, and true followers of Jesus, in whom nothing of this kind could be found: *for they shall feed;* like a flock of sheep, to which they may be compared for their innocence and harmlessness, meekness and patience; feed in the fat pastures of the word and ordinances of Christ, under the care and guidance of him the good Shepherd; and so go in and out, and find pasture, food, and fulness of it, in him, his flesh, and blood; in his precious truths, and Gospel provisions made in his house: *and lie down* in green pastures of ordinances, beside the still waters of everlasting love and divine grace, and in the good fold of the church; all which is a reason why they do not and cannot sin as others do; nor tell lies, and be guilty of deceit and falsehood; for they are better taught; and the grace of God, in giving them spiritual food and rest, influences and engages them to such a conduct and behaviour: or, *therefore they shall feed*[x], &c. being truly gracious and sincere souls, who cannot indulge themselves in sin, nor act a false and deceitful part: *and none shall make them afraid:* of feeding in those pastures, and lying down in those folds; or shall deter them from an attendance on the word and ordinances; joining in fellowship with the churches of Christ wherein; neither Satan, the roaring lion, nor false teachers, and persecuting tyrants, those grievous wolves, and cruel bears; or so frighten them, that in their fright they shall tell lies, and use deceit.

Ver. 14. *Sing, O daughter of Zion,* &c.] The congregation of Zion, as the Targum; the church of Christ in Gospel times, which has great reason to sing and rejoice, because of the coming of Christ, redemption by him, and all other benefits and blessings of grace; because of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, and the numbers of souls converted, both among Jews and Gentiles; especially the church in the latter day is here called upon to sing for joy, when the Jews will be converted; to which these words and what follow relate: *shout, O Israel;* the ten tribes, as Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it; which shall now return, and all Israel shall be saved, Rom. xi. 26. and therefore just cause of shouting, and of keeping a jubilee on that account: *be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem;* the metropolis of the two tribes; for now the children of Israel and of Judah shall be together, and seek the Lord their God, and the true Messiah, and find him; and shall embrace him, profess and serve him; which will be matter of great joy; and this will be sincere and hearty, and devoid of all hypocrisy. Several terms are used, describing the people of the Jews, to comprehend them all; and several words to express their joy, in order to set forth the greatness of it, as their happy case would require; as follows:

Ver. 15. *The Lord hath taken away thy judgments,* &c.] Both outward and inward; not only exile, poverty, contempt and reproach among the nations of the earth; but hardness of heart, blindness of mind, impenitence and unbelief, to which the Jews are now given up, in a judicial way; but at this time these shall be removed, through the goodness of God unto them, and the power of divine grace upon them: they will be brought to a sense of sin, and an acknowledgment of it; their iniquities will be pardoned; and, the cause being removed, the effects will cease; and all calamities, corrections and punishment, will end; and they will be put into the possession of their own land, and enjoy all the privileges of the church of God; and so will have just reason to sing, shout, and rejoice: *he hath cast out thine enemy;* that is, the Lord has removed the enemy that was in possession of their land, and so made way, and prepared it for them; he has swept him away, as the word[y] signifies, with great force, with much ease, and like so much dirt and filth; he stood in their way, nor could they have easily removed him; but the Lord did it, or will do it; though it may be by instruments, by means of the Christian princes. This is to be understood of the eastern antichrist, the Turk, now in possession of the land of Israel; but shall be obliged to quit it, when this prophecy shall take place, for a reason following: *the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee;* that is, the Lord Jesus Christ, the true Messiah; one of whose titles is the King of Israel, of the spiritual Israel, King of saints, both Jews and Gentiles; in whose hearts he rules by his spirit and grace; and to this passage the Jews in Christ's time seem to have respect, allowing this to be the character of the Messiah, Matt. xxvii. 42. and also Nathanael, John i. 49. now at this time Christ will be in the midst of the converted Jews, by his spiritual and gracious presence, as their King, to reign over them, to whom they will be subject; and to protect and defend them, and deliver them out of the hands of all their enemies; and so he is in all his churches, and will be to the end of the world: *thou shalt not see evil any more;* the evil of affliction or punishment; the evil of captivity, disgrace, and contempt. This shews that this prophecy does not respect the Babylonish captivity, and deliverance from that; for, since that time, they have seen evil by Antiochus Epiphanes, in the times of the Maccabees; and by the Romans; and have had a large and long experience of it; but when they are converted, and returned to their own land in the latter day, all their afflictions and troubles will be at an end, they'll know them no more. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, *thou shalt not fear evil any more.* So the Targum, "thou shalt not be afraid from "before evil any more." In the same sense Aben Ezra understands it, "thou shalt not be afraid of the "enemy any more;" taking the word to come from another root[z].

Ver. 16. *In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, fear*

[x] כי ideo, Grotius.

[y] פנה everrit, Drusius; so Ben Melech; see Gen. xxiv. 31. evacuavit, Cocceius.

[z] A ירא timuit, so Vulg. Lat.; non timebis, Pagninus, Piscator; fore ut non timeas, Junius & Tremellius; hinc non erit quod timeas amplius quicquam mali, Burkius.

thou not, &c.] Don't be afraid of any enemies; neither outward ones, the armies of Gog and Magog, the Turk, who will threaten, and will attempt to dispossess them of their land, now returned to it; nor inward and spiritual enemies, sin, Satan, death, and hell, being all vanquished and subdued by Christ: this will be said, not by the enemies themselves, who will confess they have no power to stand before the mighty God, as Aben Ezra; but either by the prophets of the Lord, or by the people themselves, encouraging one another, every man his neighbour, as Kimchi; or rather by the Lord himself, as the Septuagint and Arabic versions supply it, "the Lord shall say to Jerusalem;" this will be said at the time of the Jews' conversion, when reinstated in their own land, and shall be threatened with another remove from it, which they will have no reason to fear: *and to Zion, let not thine hands be slack*; weak, remiss, hang down through fear of mind, and fainting of spirit; and so unfit to meet the enemy, or perform duty; but, on the contrary, pluck up a good heart, be of good courage, fear not the enemy, be vigorous, active, and diligent, in the performance of the service of the Lord, animated by the following considerations:

Ver. 17. *The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty*, &c.] Every word carries in it something very encouraging to the church and people of God; and is an antidote against those fears and faintings they are subject to; Christ is *in the midst of* them; near at hand to support and supply them, to assist and strengthen them, to protect and defend them; he is not only near by his essential presence, which is everywhere; and by his providential presence, which is concerned with all his creatures; but by his gracious presence, peculiar to his church and people; and which gives them unspeakable joy, and is a sufficient security from all fears and dismayings; see Isa. xli. 10. and he, who is in the midst of them, is the Lord, Jehovah, the Being of beings, eternal, immutable, and all-sufficient, possessed of all divine perfections; and their *God*, God in their nature, *Immanuel*, God with us; and who is *mighty*, the Almighty God, the mighty Mediator, who has all power in heaven and earth; and, as man, the man of God's right hand, made strong for himself, and so able to save his people to the uttermost; to deliver them out of the hands of every enemy; to raise up his interest when ever so low, and to maintain and support it; to help and assist his people in every duty and service he calls them to: *he will save*; he is as willing to save as he is able; he readily undertook in counsel and covenant to save the chosen ones; he came in the fulness of time to seek and to save that which was lost; he has wrought out salvation for them, and sees that it is applied unto them, and will come again to put them into the full possession of it: he saves them freely, fully, and everlastingly; he saves them from sin, Satan, the law, hell and wrath, and every spiritual enemy: nor has the church of Christ any thing to fear from any temporal enemy; the converted Jews will have no reason to fear the Turk that will come against them with a vast army; for Christ, who will be in the midst of them, and at the head of them, will save them from him; to which salvation this passage has chiefly a respect: *he will rejoice over thee with joy*; with exceeding great joy, not to be conceived of, or expressed; as a bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride: this will be the time of the open marriage of the Lamb with the Jewish church; and there will be strong expressions of joy on this occasion; Christ will rejoice over them to do them good; and there will be such singular instances of his goodness to them as will abundantly shew the joy he will have in them: *he will rest in his love*; continue in his love, without any variation or change; nothing shall separate from it; it shall always remain the same; he will take up his contentment and satisfaction in it; he will solace himself with it; it will be a pleasing thing to him to love his people, and to shew it to them; he will take the utmost complacency and delight in expressing his love by words and deeds unto them: or, as some render it, *he will be silent because of his love*[r]; and not upbraid them with their sins; or reprove, correct, and chastise them in his hot displeasure; or say one word in a way of vindictive wrath; and he *will make* all others *silent*; every enemy, or whatever is contrary to them; such is his great love to them[s]; he will forgive their iniquities, and cover their sins, and in love to them cast them behind his back; or, *will be dumb*[t]; and not speak; as sometimes persons, when their affections are strong, and their hearts are filled with love at the sight of one they bear a great regard unto, are not able to speak a word. The phrase expresses the greatness of Christ's love to his people; the strength, fulness, and continuance of [illegible] words seem to be wanted, and more are added. *He will joy over thee with singing*; there is a pleonasm of joy in Christ's heart towards his people, and so a redundancy in his expression of it; he rejoices with joy, and joys with singing; which shews how delighted he is with his people, as they are his chosen, redeemed, and called ones; as they have his own righteousness upon them, and his own grace in them; they are his *Hephzi-bah*, in whom he delights; his *Beulah*, to whom he is married; and it is his love of complacency and delight, which is the source of all the grace and glory he bestows upon them; see Isa. lxii. 3, 4, 5. Luke xv. 23, 24, 25.

Ver. 18. *I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly*, &c.] Who are grieved and troubled, because they cannot meet at the time and place of religious worship, or attend the word and ordinances of the Lord; either through distance of place, or infirmity of body; or through the menaces and persecutions of men: and to be prevented the use of the means of grace, upon any account, is a great concern of mind to truly gracious souls: or who are filled with grief and sorrow *for the appointed time*[u]; for the time of the Jews' deliverance from their present exile, and return to their own land, which seems to be delayed, and thought long; and so it may seem to some of them in

[r] יחריש באהבתו silebit, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Calvin; so Ben Melech; tacebit, Munster, Cocceius.
[s] So Burkius.

[t] Obmutescet, so some in Drusius.
[u] ממועד propter tempus, sub. diuturnum exilii, Vatablus; ex tempore statuto *judiciorum pœnarumque*, Burkius.

distant parts, after they are converted; and for whose encouragement this is said, that the Lord will in his own due time and way gather such out of all places where they are, into his church, and among his people, to join with them in religious worship, and partake of all the ordinances and privileges of his house; and also gather them into their own land, and comfortably settle them there: *who are of thee;* belong to the church of Christ; or however have a right to, and meetness for, a place in it; are her true and genuine children, being born again; and which appears by the taste they have for, and their desire after, the word and ordinances: *to whom the reproach of it was a burden;* it being grievous and burdensome to them to hear the enemy reproach them with their exile and dispersion; with their distance from the place of worship, and their want of opportunity of attending to it: this was intolerable, a burden too heavy for them; it was like a sword in their bones, when they were asked, where is your God? and where are the ordinances of divine worship? and when will it ever be that you will attend them? see Psal. xlii. 1, 2, 3, 10.

Ver. 19. *Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee,* &c.] Or, *I will do*[w]; their business for them; *slay* them, as the Vulgate Latin version; and make an entire destruction of them, as the Targum; bring them to utter ruin. This must be understood of antichrist, both eastern and western, the Turk and Pope, and all the antichristian states that have afflicted the Jews, or shall attempt to distress them at the time of their conversion; and will be fulfilled at the time of the pouring out of the seven vials of God's wrath upon them, which will issue in the entire undoing and ruin of them, especially the seventh and last of them: which, when poured out, will clear the world of all the enemies of Christ, his church and people; and because this will be a wonderful event, and of great moment and importance, hence the word *behold* is prefixed to it, as exciting attention, as well as a note of admiration and asseveration: *and I will save her that halteth;* that has sinned, and is weak in faith, and cannot walk, at least but haltingly; which is like a lame and maimed sheep, of which there is danger of its being left behind and lost; but the Lord here promises he'll take care of such, and save them from all their sins, and out of the hands of all their enemies; and bring them through all difficulties and discouragements into his church, and to their own land; they shall none of them be lost, even the meanest and weakest of them, any more than the healthful and strong: *and gather her that was driven out;* even every one that was scattered abroad in the several nations of the world; see the note on Mic. iv. 6, 7: *and I will get them praise and fame in every land, where they have been put to shame;* being converted, they shall be spoke well of everywhere; they shall be praised for their ingenuous acknowledgment of their sins; for their sincere repentance of them; and for their faith in Christ, and for their ready submission to his Gospel and ordinances; and the fame of their conversion shall be spread everywhere; and they shall be in great credit and esteem in all Christian countries, where their name has been used for a taunt and a proverb; and so, *instead of their shame,* as R. Moses interprets it, they shall have glory and honour in all places.

Ver. 20. *At that time I will bring you again, even in the time that I gather you,* &c.] That is, at the time that the Lord will gather them in effectual vocation to himself and to his church, he will return them to their own land; and, as soon as the Jews are converted, they'll not only be gathered into Christian churches, but will be gathered together in one body, and appoint themselves one head; and will go up out of the several lands wherein they have been dispersed, and enter into their own land, and possess it; at the same time they are made partakers of the grace of God, they will enjoy all their civil privileges and liberties; see Hos. i. 11: *for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth:* this is repeated from the preceding verse, for the confirmation of it; and in connexion with the following clause, to shew when it will be: *when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord;* or *captivities*[x]; meaning not the several captivities of the kings of Judah in Babylon, as of Manasseh, Jehoiakim, Jechoniah, and Zedekiah; but the two-fold captivity of this people, literal and spiritual; their present outward exile from their own land, captivity and dispersion among the nations; and their spiritual captivity or bondage, to sin, Satan, the law, and the traditions of their elders; from both which they will be delivered at one and the same time; and which will be notorious and manifest; what their eyes will see with pleasure and admiration; and which may be depended upon will be done, since the Lord has said it, whose purposes, promises, and prophecies, never fail of their accomplishment: he is God omniscient, and knows with certainty what will be done; he is God omnipotent, and can and will do whatever he has determined, promised, or said should be done.

[w] עשה agam, Tigurine version; conficiam, Castalio; ego conficiens, Calvin; ego faciens, vel facio, Burkius.

[x] את שבותיכם captivitates vestras, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Drusius.

HAGGAI.

THIS part of sacred Scripture is in some Hebrew copies called *Sepher Haggai*, the Book of Haggai; in the Vulgate Latin version, the Prophecy of Haggai; and, in the Syriac and Arabic versions, the Prophecy of the Prophet Haggai. His name comes from a word[a] which signifies to keep a feast; and, according to Jerom[b], signifies festival or merry; according to Hillerus[c], the feasts of the Lord; and, according to Cocceius[d], my feasts: and the issue of his prophecy answered to his name; by which the people were encouraged to build the temple, whereby the feasts of the Lord were restored and observed; and a particular feast appointed for the dedication of the temple. The notion entertained by some, that he was not a man, but an angel, founded on ch. i. 13, deserves no regard; since the character there given of him respects not his nature, but his office. Indeed no account is given of his parentage; very probably he was born in Babylon; and, according to Pseudo-Epiphanius[e] and Isidore[f], he came from thence a youth to Jerusalem, at the return of the Jews from their captivity. The time of his prophecy is fixed in ch. i. 1. to the second year of Darius, that is, Hystaspis; which, according to Bishop Usher, was in A. M. 3485; and of the Julian period 4194; and in the 65th Olympiad; about 520 years before the birth of Christ; and about 17 or 18 years after the proclamation of Cyrus for the Jews to return to their own land. Jerom says this was in the 27th year of Tarquinius Superbus, the last of the Roman kings. Haggai was the first of the three prophets that prophesied after their return; and all his prophecies were within the space of four months, and have their dates severally put to them. Of the authority of this prophecy of Haggai there is no room to question; not only because of the internal evidence of it, but from the testimony of Ezra, ch. iv. 24. and v. 1, 2. and vi. 14. and from a quotation out of ch. ii. 7, 8, by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, ch. xii. 26. The general design of this book is to reprove the Jews for their negligence in building the temple, after they had liberty granted them by Cyrus to do it, and to encourage them in this work; which he does by the promise of the Messiah, who should come into it, and give it a greater glory than the first temple had. The name of this prophet is wrongly prefixed, with others, to several of the psalms, especially those, called the Hallelujah-psalms, in the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, as Psal. cxii. cxxxviii. cxlvi. cxlvii. cxlviii. Where he died is not certain; very probably in Jerusalem; where, according to Pseudo-Epiphanius and Isidore[g], he was buried, by the monuments of the priests; but, according to the Cippi Hebraici[h], he was buried in a large cave, in the declivity of the mount of Olives.

CHAP. I.

THIS chapter contains the first sermon of the Prophet Haggai to the people of the Jews, directed to Zerubbabel the governor, and Joshua the high-priest; the date of which is fixed, ver. 1. It begins with a charge against that people; saying the time to build the house of the Lord was not come, ver. 2. which is refuted by the prophet; arguing, that, if the time to ciel their dwelling-houses was come, then much more the time to build the Lord's house, ver. 3, 4. They are urged to consider how unsuccessful they had been in their civil employments and labours, which was owing to their neglect of building the temple; wherefore, if they consulted their own good, and the glory of God, the best way was to set about it in all haste, and with diligence, ver. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. yea, even the famine, which they had been afflicted with for some time, and which affected both man and beast, sprung from the same cause, ver. 10, 11. This discourse had such an effect upon the governor, high-priest, and people, that they immediately rose up, and went about the work they were exhorted to; upon which the prophet, by a special message from the Lord, promises his presence with them, ver. 12, 13, 14, 15.

Ver. 1. *In the second year of Darius the king, &c.*] That is, of Persia; he is spoken of as if he was the only king in the world; and indeed he was the then greatest king in it; and therefore is emphatically called *the king*. This was not Darius the Mede, as Genebrard; who was cotemporary with Cyrus, and partner in the kingdom; nor Darius Nothus, as Scaliger, and those that follow him; since the second year of this Darius was, according to Cocceius, who follows this opinion, 138 years after the first edict of Cyrus; and so Zerubbabel and Joshua must exercise their office, the one of governor, the other of high-priest, such a term of years, and more, which is not credible; and some of the Jews in captivity must have lived upwards of 200

[a] חגג festum celebravit, Buxtorf.
[b] Comment. in c. i. 1. So Stuckius, p. 266.
[c] Onomast. Sacr. p. 264, 779.
[d] Comment. in c. i. 1.
[e] De Prophet. Vita & Interitu, c. 20.
[f] De Vita & Morte Sanct. c. 49.
[g] Ut supra.
[h] Ed. Hottinger, p. 27.

years; even those who saw the temple in its first glory, before the captivity, and now beheld it in Haggai's time, in a very different condition, ch. ii. 3. It seems therefore more probable, according to Josephus[i], and others, that this was Darius Hystaspis, who was chosen king by the nobles of Persia, upon his horse's neighing first, as Herodotus[k] relates: the second year of his reign was about 17 or 18 years after the proclamation of Cyrus; during whose reign, he being much engaged in affairs abroad, and the reign of his successor Cambyses, the enemies of the Jews, encouraged by the latter, greatly obstructed the building of the temple, and discouraged them from going on with it; but when this king came to the throne, things took another turn, being favoured by him; for Josephus[l] relates, that, when a private person, he vowed, if ever he became king, whatever of the holy vessels were in Babylon, he would send to the temple at Jerusalem; and upon solicitations made to him, the Jews were encouraged to go on with the building of it: *in the sixth month*; the month Elul, answering to part of August, and part of September; which was the sixth, reckoning from the month Nisan: *in the first day of the month*; which was the feast of the new moon: *came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet*; or, *by the hand of Haggai*[m]; by his means; he was the instrument by whom the Lord delivered his word; the word was not the prophet's, but the Lord's; and this is observed, to give weight and authority to it: *unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel*; the same who is called Salathiel, Matt. i. 12. Luke iii. 27. according to Kimchi and Ben Melech, he was the grandson of Salathiel; though rather Salathiel seems to be his uncle, he being the son of Pedaiah his brother, 1 Chron. iii. 17, 18, 19. however, he was his heir and successor in the government, and so called his son; see the note on Matt. i. 12: *governor of Judah*; not king; for the country was under the dominion of the king of Persia, and Zerubbabel was a deputy-governor under him; so the apocryphal Ezra calls him governor of Judea, 1 Esdr. vi. 27. and, according to Josephus[n], he was made governor of the captive Jews, when in Babylon, being in great favour with the king of Babylon; and, with two more, were his body-guards; and he was continued governor by the Persians, when the Jews returned to their land: *and to Joshua the son of Josedech the high-priest*: who is called Jeshua, and his father Jozadak, Ezra iii. 2. his father was carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar, 1 Chron. vi. 15. now, to these two principal persons in the commonwealth of Judea was the word of the Lord sent by the prophet; the one having the chief power in civil things, and the other in things ecclesiastical; and both had an influence upon the people; but very probably were dilatory in the work of building the temple; and therefore have a message sent to them, to stir them up to this service: *saying*; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, &c.*] Of armies above and below; whom all ought to reverence, honour, and obey; who was able to support his people in building his house, and protect them from their enemies, which should have been an encouragement to them; and to punish them for their neglect of it, which might have deterred them from it. This preface is made, to shew that what follow were not the words of the prophet, but of the Lord; and therefore to be the more regarded, and the truth of them not to be doubted of: *saying, this people say*; repeating the words of the people of the Jews to Zerubbabel and Joshua, that they might observe them, and the wickedness and ingratitude in them. *This people*, lately brought out of the captivity of Babylon, and loaded with various blessings and benefits; and not a few of them, but the generality of them, the body of them, expressed themselves after this manner, when pressed to build the temple: *the time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built*; suggesting that the seventy years of Jerusalem and the temple lying in ruins, reckoning from the destruction of them in the 19th year of Nebuchadnezzar, were not yet fulfilled; or rather intimating that it was not the time in Providence, since they had been forbid and hindered in former reigns from going on with the work; or, since it had been a time of famine and distress with them, it was not a time fit and convenient to carry on such a service; and though they did not lay aside all thoughts of it, yet they judged it right and proper to defer it to a more convenient time, when they were better settled, and in a better capacity to engage in it.

Ver. 3. *Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, &c.*] This is a second prophecy, distinct from the former; that was delivered to the two governors, setting forth the sentiments and language of the people concerning the building of the temple, which was left with them to consider how just it was; but this is sent to the people themselves, expostulating with them about the folly and ingratitude of it: *saying*; as follows:

Ver. 4. *Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, &c.*] They could not only find time, leisure, and conveniency to build houses to dwell in; but to wainscot them, and ciel them with boards of cedar, as the Targum; as bad as the times were complained of; and could sit in them, indulging themselves in luxury, ease, and sloth; and why then was it not a fit and convenient time as well to build the house of the Lord in? *and this house lie waste?* or, *and shall this house lie waste?* or, *when this house lies waste*[o]? not indeed in its rubbish and ruins, as it was demolished by the Chaldeans, and left; but with a bare foundation, laid some years ago; and ever since neglected; the superstructure not carried on, and much less built up to be fit for service; and therefore might be said with propriety to lie waste and desolate, being unfinished, unfit for use, and no regard had unto it. David was of another mind, 2 Sam. vii. 2. and truly religious persons will be more concerned for the house of God than for their own houses.

Ver. 5. *Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, &c.*] The Lord God omniscient and omnipotent, that

[i] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 3. sect. 1. and c. 4. sect. 5, 7.
[k] Thalia, sive l. 3. c. 84, 85, 86.
[l] Ut supra.
[m] בְּיַד חַגַּי in manu Aggei, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius.

[n] Ut supra.
[o] והבית הזה חרב & domus ista deserta manebit? Drusius; quum domus hæc vasta est? Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; dum domus hæc desolata est? Cocceius.

saw all their actions, and could punish for them; since they were so careful of their own houses, and adorning them, and so careless of his house; he would have them now sit down, and seriously think of these things, and of what he should further observe unto them: *consider your ways*: their sinful ways, and repent of them, and forsake them, particularly their ingratitude before observed; and their civil ways, their common ways of life; their labour, work, and business, they were continually employed in; and observe the event of them; what success they had, what these issued in; whether there were not some visible tokens of the divine displeasure on them, which rendered all their attempts to support and enrich themselves and families vain, and of no effect: and they would do well to consider to what all this was to be imputed; whether it was not chiefly owing to this, their neglect of the house of God; and this he would have considered, not in a slight cursory way; but with great earnestness, diligence, and application of mind: *put*, or *set your hearts upon your ways*[p]; so it may be literally rendered.

Ver. 6. *Ye have sown much, and bring in little*, &c.] Contrary to what is usually done; the seed that is sown is but little, in comparison of what springs up, is reaped, and gathered into the barn; which commonly affords seed again to the sower, and bread to the eater; but here much land was tilled, and a great deal of seed was sown in it; but a thin crop was produced, little was gathered into the barn; a blessing being withheld from the earth, and from their labours, because of their sins, which they would do well to think of, and the cause of it: *ye eat, but ye have not enough*; what the earth did yield, and which they gathered in, they made food of, and ate of it; yet it was not sufficient to satisfy their hunger; or it was not blessed for their nourishment; or they had a canine appetite in judgment given them, so that they were never satisfied: or, it was *not for fulness*[q]; they were not filled with it to satisfaction, but still craved more; and yet, it may be, durst not eat more, if they had it, lest they should want the next day: *ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink*; or, *not to inebriation*[r]; it was not sufficient to quench their thirst, much less to make them merry and cheerful: the vines produced such a small quantity of grapes, and those so little wine, that they had not enough to drink, at least could not drink freely, but sparingly, lest it should be all spent before another vintage came: *ye clothe you, but there is none warm*; or, *but* it is *not for heat to him*[s]; to any one; so rigorous the season, so extreme the cold, that his clothes will not keep him warm, even though the climate was naturally and usually hot: *and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put into a bag with holes*; or, *pierced through*[t]; if a man is hired as a labourer, and gets much wages, and brings it home, and lays it up; or if he trades and merchandises, and has great gains by it, and thinks to amass great riches; yet, what through losses, and the dearness of provisions, and the many ways he has for the spending of his money, it is as if he put it into a bag full of holes, and it ran through as fast as put into it; signifying hereby that all his pains and labour were in vain.

Ver. 7. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways.*] What they have been; what has been the consequence of them; and to what the above things are to be ascribed. This exhortation is repeated, to impress it the more upon their minds; and to denote the importance of it, and the necessity of such a conduct; see the note on ver. 5.

Ver. 8. *Go up to the mountain*, &c.] Or, *that mountain*[u]; pointing either to Lebanon, to cut down cedars, and bring them from thence for the building of the temple; or Mount Moriah, on which the temple was to be built; and thither carry the wood they fetched from Lebanon, or were brought from thence by the Tyrians: *and bring wood*; or, *that ye may bring wood*; from Lebanon, or any other mountain on which wood grew, to Mount Moriah: *and build the house*; the temple, whose foundation was already laid, but the superstructure was neglected: now the Lord would have them go on with it immediately, out of hand, with the utmost diligence, alacrity, and vigour; and not desist till the whole building was completed: *and I will take pleasure in it*; as a type of Christ, for whose sake he was so desirous of having it built; into which he was to come, and there appear as the promised Saviour. It signifies, moreover, that the Lord would not only take pleasure in the temple built, but in their work in building it; which would be acceptable to him, being according to his mind and will; and that he would take pleasure in, and accept of them, being worshippers therein, when they worshipped him in spirit and in truth in it; and in their services, sacrifices, prayers, and praises, being rightly offered; and that he would forgive their sins, and be propitious to them for his Son's sake, the antitype of the temple: *and I will be glorified, saith the Lord*; by his people here, and by the worship and service they should perform: or, *I will shew myself glorious*[w]; that is, shew his glory, causing his Shechinah to dwell here in glory, as the Targum is. The Jews observe, that the letter ה is wanting in the word here used, which numerically signifies *five*; hence they gather that five things were wanting in the second temple, the ark, the Urim and Thummim, the fire from heaven, the Shechinah, or the divine Majesty, and the Holy Ghost.

Ver. 9. *Ye looked for much, and, lo*, it came *to little*, &c.] They looked for a large harvest, and very promising it was for a while; but in the end it came to little; it was a very small crop, very little was reaped and gathered in: or, *in looking*, ye looked *to increase*[x]; your substance; had raised expectations of making themselves and families by their agriculture, and by their plantations of vines and olives, and by their trade and merchandise; and it dwindled away, and came to

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[p] שימו לבבכם ponite corda vestra, V. L.; ponite cor vestrum, Burkius.

[q] לשבעה ad satietatem, Calvin, De Dieu; ad saturitatem, Munster.

[r] לשכרה ad ebrietatem, Tigurine version, Vatablus, Calvin, De Dieu.

[s] ואין לחם לו & non est ad calorem ei, De Dieu; sed nemo ita ut sit calor ipsi, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; ut calefiat ei, Burkius.

[t] נקוב pertusum, V. L. Munster, Tigurine version, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; perforatum, Munster, Varenius.

[u] ההר in istum montem, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[w] אכבד gloriosum me ostendam, Vatablus.

[x] אל הרבה ad rem augendam, Grotius.

little or nothing; their riches, instead of being increased, were diminished: *and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it*: when they brought into their barns or houses the produce of their land, labour, and merchandise, which was but little, the Lord blew a blast upon that little, and brought rottenness and worms into it, as Jarchi; so that it was not a blessing to them, but a curse. So the Targum interprets it, "behold, I sent "a curse upon it:" or, *I blew it away*[y]; as any light thing, straw or stubble, or thistle-down, are blown away with a wind; so easily can the Lord, and sometimes he does, strip men of that little substance they have: riches by his orders make themselves wings, and flee away; or he, by one providence or another, blows them away like chaff before the wind: *why? saith the Lord of hosts*: what was the cause and reason of this? which question is put, not on his own account, who full well knew it; but for their sakes, to whom he speaks, that they might be made sensible of it; and in order to that to introduce what follows, which is an answer to the question: *because of mine house that is waste*: which they suffered to lie waste, and did not concern themselves about the rebuilding of it: this the Lord resented, and for this reason blasted all their labours: *and ye run every man unto his own house*; were very eager, earnest, and diligent, in building, beautifying, and adorning their own houses; taking care of their own domestic affairs; sparing no cost nor pains to promote their own secular interest; running in all haste to do any thing and every thing to increase their worldly substance; but sat still, were idle and slothful, careless and negligent, about the house of God and the affairs of it.

Ver. 10. *Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, &c.*] Or, *therefore over*, or *upon you*[z]; where should be a stop; that is, because of your neglect of the house of God; therefore upon you, and upon you only, and not upon other nations, the heaven is restrained from letting down the dew: or, *therefore* I am *against you*[a]; for the above reason, and which the following things shew; and sad it is to have God to be an enemy, and against a people! or, *for your sake*: so the Syriac version, to which sense is the Targum, "therefore for your sins;" and so Jarchi, *the heaven is stayed from dew*; none descends from it; the Lord, who has the ordering of it, will not suffer it: to have the dew fall upon the earth in the night-season is a great blessing; it makes the earth fruitful, revives the corn, plants, and herbs, and causes them to flourish and increase; and to have it restrained is a judgment: *and the earth is stayed* from *her fruit*: from bringing forth its increase, which is the consequence of the dew being withheld.

Ver. 11. *And I called for a drought upon the land, &c.*] Upon the whole land of Judea; as he withheld the dew and rain from falling on it to moisten it, refresh it, and make it fruitful; so he ordered a vehement heat to dry and parch it; and directed the rays of the sun to strike with great force upon it, and cause the fruits of it to wither; and which is done by a word of his; when he calls, every creature obeys. There is an elegant paronomasia, which shews the justness of such a proceeding, that it was according to the law of retaliation; they suffered the house of God to lie חרב, *waste*, and therefore he calls for חרב, a *wasting* drought, to come upon their land: *and upon the mountains*: where herbage grew, and herds of cattle and flocks of sheep were fed; but now the grass through the drought was withered away, and so no pasturage for them, and in course must perish: *and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil*; that is, upon the corn-fields, and upon the vines and olive-trees; so that they produced but very little corn, wine, and oil, and that not very good, and which was not satisfying and refreshing; at least there were not enough for their support and comfort: now these three things were the principal necessaries of life in the country of Judea, and therefore a scarcity of them was very distressing: *and upon that which the ground bringeth forth*; whatever else not mentioned the earth produced, as figs, pomegranates, and other fruit: *and upon men, and upon cattle*; who not only suffered in this drought, by the above-said things it came upon; but by diseases it produced upon them, as the pestilence and fever among men, and murrain upon the cattle: *and upon all the labour of the hands*; of men; whatsoever fields and gardens, trees and plants of every kind, that were set and cultivated by them. Of this drought, and the famine that came upon it, we nowhere else read; but there is no doubt to be made of it.

Ver. 12. *Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Josedech the high-priest, &c.*] Here follows an account of the success of Haggai's prophecy; with what power and efficacy the word of the Lord by him was attended; how it at once reached and affected the hearts of princes and people, and brought them to obedience to the will of God. The governor and high-priest are mentioned first, as being the principal persons, and who very probably first declared their sense of their former neglect, and their readiness to do as they were directed; which was setting a good example to the people, and doubtless had some influence upon them: *with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord their God*; not the two leading men in church and state only; but all the people that came out of the Babylonish captivity, who were but a remnant; a few that were left through various calamities they had been exposed unto; these, one and all, signified how willing and ready they were to do the work of the Lord enjoined them: or, *they heard the voice of the Lord*[b]; by the prophet, very attentively and seriously; and received and regarded it, not as the word of men, but as the word of God; and determined to act according to it: *and the words of Haggai the prophet*; or, *and for the words of Haggai the prophet*[c]; because of them, considering them as coming from the Lord himself: *(as the Lord their God had sent him;)* regarding him as having a mission and commission from the Lord to deliver them to them: *and the people did fear before*

[y] נפחתי בו exsufflo illud, Vatablus; efflo illud, Junius & Tremellius; difflo, Piscator; difflavi, Drusius, Cocceius.
[z] על־כן עליכם propterea super vos, Varenius, Reinbeck, Burkius.

[a] Idcirco contra vos, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[b] וישמע & audivit, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus, Montanus, Burkius.
[c] ועל דברי חגי idque propter verba Chaggai, Varenius, Reinbeck.

the Lord: perceiving that he was displeased with them for the neglect of his house; and that this drought upon them was a chastisement and correction for this sin; and fearing lest his wrath should continue, and they should be more severely dealt with, on account of their transgressions.

Ver. 13. *Then spake Haggai the Lord's messenger*, &c.] Which some render *angel*; hence sprung that notion, imbibed by some, that he was not a man, but an angel; whereas this only respects his office, being sent of God as an ambassador in his name with a message to his people: he now observing what effect his prophecy had upon the people; they being convinced of their sin, and terrified with the judgments of God upon them, and fearing that worse still would attend them; in order to revive their spirits and comfort them, spake the words unto them which follow: and this he *did in the Lord's message unto the people*; not of his own head, nor out of the pity of his own heart merely; but as a prophet of the Lord, having a fresh message from him to carry a promise to them for their comfort and encouragement: *saying, I am with you, saith the Lord*; to pardon their sins; to accept their persons; to remove his rod from them; to assist them in the work of building the temple, they were now willing to engage in; to protect them from their enemies, and to strengthen them to go on with the work till they had finished it; a short promise, but a very full one: it was saying much in a little, and enough to remove all their fears, to scatter all their doubts, and to bear them up, and through all discouragements.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high-priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people*, &c.] He roused them up from that sleep and sloth in which they were before, both the governors and common people; he wrought in them both to will and do; or a willing mind to do his work in building his house; he gave them a spirit both of industry and courage; he enabled them to shake off that sluggish disposition they were attended with, and that fear of men which possessed them; he inspired them with zeal and resolution to enter upon the work at once, and pursue it with close application; the Lord only could do this: *and they came and did work in the house of the Lord of hosts, their God*: the governor and high-priest came to direct and oversee, encourage and animate the people by their presence and example; and the people to do the several parts of service that belonged to them, according to their genius and employment.

Ver. 15. *In the four-and-twentieth day of the sixth month*, &c.] Or, *in the four-and-twentieth of the month, in the sixth*; in that sixth month before mentioned, ver. 1. On this day they came and worked; not the sixth from Tisri, for the Jews had two ways of beginning their years, which would have answered to part of February; and, therefore, chose by some interpreters as being a proper time to begin building; but no regard is had to the fitness of the season, but to the order of the Lord; but the sixth month from Nisan, and answers to part of August; for so the months are reckoned in the prophecy of Zechariah, who began to prophecy the same year as Haggai did; see Zech. i. 1, 7. and vii. 1. this was three-and-twenty days after the prophecy was delivered out; during which time they might be employed in cutting of stones, and sawing and hewing of wood, as Jarchi suggests, and preparing for work in the temple: *in the second year of Darius the king*; see the note on ver. 1. Here some begin a new chapter, but wrongly; since, if these words do not belong to the preceding, there would be a contradiction in joining them with the beginning of the next.

CHAP. II.

THIS chapter contains three sermons or prophecies, delivered by the prophet to the people of the Jews. The design of the first is to encourage them to go on with the building of the temple, though it might seem to come greatly short of the former temple, as to its outward form and splendour. The time of the prophecy, ver. 1. an order to deliver it to the governor, high-priest, and all the people, ver. 2. A question is put concerning the difference between this temple and the former; between which it is suggested there was no comparison; which is assented to by silence, ver. 3. nevertheless, the prince, priest, and people, are exhorted to go on strenuously in the work of building; encouraged with a promise of the presence of the Lord of hosts, and of his Word, in whom he covenanted with them at their coming out of Egypt, and of the blessed Spirit, and his continuance with them, ver. 4, 5. and, the more to remove their fears and faintings, it is declared that in a very short time a most wonderful thing should be done in the world, which would affect all the nations of the earth; for that illustrious Person would come, whom all nations do or should desire; and, not only come into the world, but into that temple they were building, and give it a greater glory than the former; yea, a greater glory than if all the gold and silver in the world were laid out upon it, or brought into it; which being all the Lord's, could have been easily done by him; but he would give in it something infinitely greater than that, even the Prince of peace, with all the blessings of it, ver. 6, 7, 8, 9. then follows the second sermon or prophecy, the time of which is observed, ver. 10. and it is introduced with some questions concerning ceremonial uncleanness, by an unclean person's touching holy flesh with the skirt of his garment; and other things, which is confirmed by the answer of the priests, ver. 11, 12, 13. the application of which is made to the people of the Jews, who were alike unclean; they, their works, and their sacrifices, ver. 14. and these are directed to consider, that, during the time they had neglected to build the temple, they were attended with scarcity of provisions; their fields and vineyards being blasted with mildew or destroyed by hail, and their labours proved unsuccessful, ver. 15, 16, 17. but

now, since they had begun the work of building, it is promised they should be blessed with every thing, though they had nothing in store, and every thing was unpromising to them; which is designed to encourage them to go on cheerfully in their begun work, ver. 18, 19. and the chapter is concluded with the last discourse or prophecy, the date of which is given, ver. 20. an instruction to deliver it to Zerubbabel, ver. 21. foretelling the destruction of the kingdoms of the Heathen; and the setting up of the kingdom of the Messiah, of whom Zerubbabel was a type, precious and honourable in the sight of God, ver. 22, 23.

Ver. 1. *In the seventh month*, &c.] The month Tisri, which answers to part of September and part of October: *in the one-and-twentieth* day *of the month*; being a month, wanting three days, from the time the Jews came and worked in the house of the Lord, ch. i. 14, 15. it was toward the close of the feast of tabernacles: see Lev. xxiii. 34: *came the word of the Lord by the Prophet Haggai;* the word of prophecy, as the Targum: this was from the Lord, not from the prophet himself; he was only the messenger sent with it to deliver it: *saying;* to him the prophet, giving him orders as follow:

Ver. 2. *Speak now to Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah*, &c.] Of whom, his descent and dignity, see the note on ch. i. 1. The Septuagint version wrongly renders it *of the tribe of Judah;* in which it is followed by the Arabic version; for, though he was of the tribe of Judah, this does not sufficiently distinguish him; nor does it answer to the word here used, which is expressive of his office and dignity. The Vulgate Latin version, Luther, and Castalio, omit the particle נא, rendered *now*, which is very emphatical. The prophet is ordered to go and say what he is bid, directly, immediately, at once, without any delay; the very day before mentioned, yea, at that very instant or moment, the people being now at work, under the eye of their governor; in order to remove an offence, which might discourage them in their work, taken from the meanness of the building, in comparison of the former temple: *and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high-priest, and to the residue of the people;* these, besides the two former, even the whole body of the people, the remnant that were come out of the captivity of Babylon: *saying;* to the above persons, as follows:

Ver. 3. *Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory?* &c.] Not taken away by death, yet alive, and dwelling among them; and who lived before the destruction of the first temple, built by Solomon; and has seen it in all its magnificence; its grand and noble structure; its stately pillars; its carved work, and decorations of gold. This shews that it was not in the times of Darius Nothus, but of Darius Hystaspis, that Haggai prophesied: those who go the former way make these men to have lived near two hundred years at least, which was greatly beyond the common time of man's life in that age; or consider these words as a mere supposition, that, if there were or had been such persons then living, this building, in comparison of the former, must have appeared mean and contemptible unto them: but the words manifestly imply that there were persons among them then living, who had seen Solomon's temple in all its glory; and who are particularly and personally addressed in the following clauses; and of whom there might be several at this time, going the latter way; for the seventy-years' captivity are to be reckoned from the fourth year of Jehoiakim, in which the captivity began, and which was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. xxv. 1, 11, 12. but it was not until the nineteenth year of his reign that the temple was burnt by him, Jer. lii. 12, 13. and the time of Haggai's prophesying being about seventeen or eighteen years after the proclamation of Cyrus, when the seventy-years' captivity ended; this shews that it was scarcely seventy years from the time the temple was destroyed; and therefore it may be reasonably supposed there were several ancient persons living that could remember to have seen it; and it is certain that there were a great number of such living that returned from Babylon, who wept when they saw the foundation of the second temple laid, which was but fifteen years before this, Ezra iii. 12. some of whom, in all probability, were now alive, yea, it is certain there were, to whom the following questions were put: *and how do ye see it now?* is not this that is building very different from that? does it promise any thing like it? what ideas have you of it? can you conceive in your minds that it will ever rise up to such grandeur and stateliness as the former? what is your judgment, and what your sentiments concerning it? can you think of it with equal delight and pleasure as of the former? *is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?* don't you think that it is not to be mentioned, or once named, in comparison of the former temple? or that a man had as good say nothing at all, as to attempt a comparison of them? or that this building and nothing are alike? and that the one is a nonentity, as well as the other, comparatively speaking, when set in competition with the first temple? and are not you of opinion that the people had as good do nothing, and that in effect they are doing nothing, and all their labour lost, who are working in this house? no answer is returned, nor any waited for: but it is as if the Lord had said, I, who am the omniscient God, the discerner of the thoughts of men, know that these are your sentiments, and these the reasonings of your minds; and but now lest discovering these thoughts of theirs, and speaking out their minds freely as they might, which would tend to discourage the governors and the people in carrying on the work they had engaged in; the Lord by the prophet says to them, as follows:

Ver. 4. *Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord*, &c.] Take heart, be of good courage, don't be dismayed at these things; though the building may be contemptible in the eyes of some, nevertheless go on with it manfully and vigorously; let none despise the day of small things; for from these low beginnings great things will arise, and glorious things will follow, as hereafter predicted; see Zech. iv. 9, 10. attend this work diligently, desist not from it, continue to preside over it, and encourage the people in it; let not thine heart faint, or thine hands be slack; act the part of a man, of a good man, and of a governor: *and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech the high-priest;* don't be disheartened at what the ancients think and say concerning this temple, in which thou art to officiate as

a high-priest, and as a type of him who shall come into this house, and so give it a glory the former never had; continue to give the necessary instructions to the builders, that every thing may be done in proper order, and to answer their end and use in the service of the priesthood; faint not, nor be discouraged, but act according to thy character, and shew thyself worthy of the office with which thou art invested; consider in whose name thou actest, whose priest thou art, and in whose service thou art employed: *and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord;* let not your hearts sink, or spirits fail, at hearing what the more ancient among you say of the difference between this and the former building, which your eyes never saw: don't desist from your work on this account, but go on with it; consider what God has done for you, in bringing you out of captivity, and into your own land, and to the enjoyment of your civil privileges; consider the obligations you lie under to build a house for God; that this is not only a piece of gratitude, and shews a sense of mercies received; but that it is for the glory of God, for your spiritual profit and advantage, and for the use and good of future posterity; quit yourselves therefore like men, and be strong; see Josh. i. 6, 7, 9. 1 Cor. xvi. 13: *and work:* that is, continue working, for they were at work; but there was danger of their leaving off working, being discouraged at what the ancient people said; and therefore they are exhorted to go on in their work, and go through it, and finish it; for so the word here used signifies, *and do*[e]; that is, the work thoroughly and effectually; or, as others render it, *and perfect*[f] the work begun, and leave it not unfinished. Aben Ezra, Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, connect this word with the beginning of the following verse, thus, *and do the word*, or *thing*, *which I covenanted with you*, &c.; that is, observe the law, and do the commandment then given; but very wrongly: nor is it only to be considered as directed to the people, but to the prince and priest also; for they had all work to do in the house of the Lord, as all ranks and degrees of men now have in the church of Christ; of which that house was typical: the prince or civil magistrate, not to prescribe laws and rules to be observed in it, which only belongs to Christ, who is the sole Head, King, and Lawgiver; but to attend the service of it, to protect and defend it, to promote the interest of it, and distribute cheerfully to the maintenance of its ministers, and to the necessities of the poor saints. Priests or ministers of the word are to work; they are to labour in the word and doctrine; in preaching the Gospel; administering ordinances; governing the church; comforting saints; reproving vice, and refuting error: deacons are to do their work, in taking care of the poor, and minding the secular affairs of the church: and all private Christians are to work, to labour in prayer for the good of it; to hear the word, attend on all ordinances, and hold fast the profession of their faith; all which is to be done in the strength and grace of Christ, without dependence on it, or seeking justification and salvation by it: encouraged, as the Jews are here, with the promise of the divine Presence: *(for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts:)* to help in every service, and to protect from all enemies; and this makes the work and service of the Lord's house pleasant and delightful, and secures from all doubts and fears, faintings and misgivings of heart. This is to be understood of God the Father, the Lord of armies above and below; and if he is for and with his people, they have nothing to fear from those that are against them; or to be discouraged in his service. The Targum wrongly interprets this of the Word of the Lord, since he is meant in the next verse.

Ver. 5. According *to the Word that I covenanted with you, when ye came out of Egypt*, &c.] Or rather, *with the Word, in* or *with whom I covenanted*[g], &c. as some render it; that is, Christ, the essential Word, who was promised to the people of Israel at that time, Deut. xviii. 15. and in whom all the promises are, and the covenant of grace itself; and which covenant was indeed made with him from eternity, but was made manifest, or more clearly manifest, to the Jewish ancestors, when they came out of Egypt: now it is here promised, for the encouragement of the Jews to go on in the work of the Lord in building the temple, that this divine Word should be with them also, to counsel, assist, strengthen, and protect them; even he who went before their fathers in the wilderness in a pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night; the Angel of God's presence, that redeemed, saved, and carried them all the days of old; the Word that was in the beginning with God, and was God; and by whom all things were created at first; and who would, as since he has, become flesh, and dwell among them, and appear in this very temple they were now building; and who will be with all his churches, ministers, and people, unto the end of the world: *so my Spirit remaineth among you:* or rather, *and*, or *also*, *my Spirit standeth*, continueth *in the midst of you*[h]; not only Jehovah the Father, and his divine Logos or Word, were with them; but his Spirit also, his Holy Spirit, the third Person in the Trinity, of which these words are a proof; the same Spirit which was in Moses and others in his time, for the building of the tabernacle, is now promised unto, and should continue with, the builders of this temple; as a Spirit of wisdom and counsel to direct them, and as a Spirit of might and power to strengthen and assist them: and so he is, and will be, in the churches of Christ, and in the midst of his people, to assist the ministers of the word in preaching, the people in hearing, praying, and praising; to carry on his own work in them; to be the Comforter of them, and the seal, earnest, and pledge of their future glory; nor does he, nor ever will he, depart from them; see Isa. lix. 21. John xiv. 16: *fear ye not:* succeeding in the work, and finishing it; nor be dismayed at what the ancient people had said; nor be afraid of enemies, who did all they could to hinder and discourage them from going on with their work; and indeed there is no reason to fear, let the service be what it will the Lord

[e] ועשו & facite, Vulg. Lat. Munster, Pagninus, Montanus, Burkius.
[f] Perficite, Piscator, Tarnovius, Varenius, Reinbeck.
[g] את הדבר אשר כרתי cum verbo quo pepigeram, Junius & Tremellius; cum verbo illo quo pepigi, Varenius; approved of by Reinbeck, Append. Doctrin. de Accent. p. 76, 77.
[h] ורוחי עמדת בתוככם & Spiritus meus stat in medio vestri, Pagninus, Cocceius; stans, Montanus; Spiritus quoque meus stabit in medio vestrûm, Vatablus.

employs his people in; if he, Father, Son, and Spirit, are with them; see Isa. xli. 10.

Ver. 6. *For thus saith the Lord of hosts*, &c.] For the further encouragement of the builders of the temple, they are told, from the Lord of hosts, that in a little time, when such circumstances should meet as are here pointed at, the Messiah should come, and appear in this house, and give it a greater glory than ever Solomon's temple had; for that this passage is to be understood of the Messiah and his times is clear from the apostle's application of it, Heb. xii. 25, 26. and even the ancient Jews themselves understood it of the Messiah, particularly R. Aquiba [i], who lived in the times of Bar Cozbi, the false Messiah; though the more modern ones, perceiving how they are embarrassed with it, to support their hypothesis, shift it off from him: *yet once, it is a little while*: or, *once more*, as the apostle in the above place quotes it; which suggests that the Lord had before done something of the kind, that follows, shaking the heavens, &c. as at the giving of the law on Mount Sinai; and would do the same again, and more abundantly in the times of the Gospel, or of the Messiah. Jarchi interprets this of one trouble by the Grecian monarchy after the Persian, which would not last long: his note is, "*yet* "*once*, &c. after that this kingdom of Persia that "rules over you is ended, yet one shall rise up to "rule over you, to distress you, the kingdom of "Greece; but its government shall be but a little "time;" and not very foreign from this sense does Bishop Chandler [k] render the words, *after one* kingdom (the Grecian) *it is a little while*: (or after that) *I will shake all the heavens*, &c.; and though it was five hundred years from this prophecy to the incarnation of Christ: yet this was but a little while with God, with whom a thousand years are as one day; and indeed with men it was but a short time, when compared with the first promise of his coming at the beginning of the world; or with the shaking of the earth at the giving of the law, quickly after Israel came out of Egypt: *and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land*; which either intends the changes and revolutions made in the several kingdoms and nations of the world, between this prophecy and the coming of Christ, and which soon began to take place; for the Persian monarchy, now flourishing, was quickly shook and subdued by the Grecians; and in a little time the Grecian monarchy was destroyed by the Romans; and what changes they made in the several nations of the world is well known: or else this designs the wonderful things that were done in the heavens, earth, and sea, at the birth of Christ, during his life, and at his death: at his birth a new star appeared in the heavens, which brought the wise men from the east to visit him; the angels of heaven descended, and sung Glory to God in the highest; Herod and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem were shaken, moved, and troubled at the tidings of his birth; yea, people in all parts of Judea were in motion to be taxed in their respective cities at this time: stormy winds were raised, which agitated the waters of the sea in his life-time; and on which he walked, and which he rebuked; and this shewed him to be the mighty God: at his death the heavens were darkened, the earth quaked, and rocks were rent asunder: if any particular earthquake about this time should be thought to be intended, the most terrible one was that which happened A. D. 17, when Cœlius Rufus and Pomponius Flaccus were consuls, which destroyed twelve cities of Asia [l]; and these being near the sea, caused a motion there also. The apostle applies these words to the change made in the worship of God by the coming of Christ, when the carnal ordinances of the law were removed, and evangelical ordinances instituted, which shall remain until his second coming, Heb. xii. 26.

Ver. 7. *And I will shake all nations*, &c.] By changing their governors, and forms of government; which was done by the Romans, when subdued by them; and by bringing in wars among them, which produced those changes; and by intestine wars among the Romans themselves, in the several nations that belonged to them, which were notorious a little before the coming of Christ: or else this was to be done, and was done, by the preaching of the Gospel, both in Judea, and in the Gentile world, when all the inhabitants thereof were shaken by it, in one sense or another; some had their hearts and consciences shaken by the spirit and grace of God through it, and were brought to embrace it, and profess it; yea, were brought to Christ, to yield obedience to him, his truths and ordinances; and others were moved with envy, wrath, and indignation at it, and rose up to oppose it, and stop the progress of it: *and the desire of all nations shall come*: not the desirable things of all nations, or them with them, as their gold and silver; and which is the sense of Jarchi, Kimchi, and Aben Ezra; but this is contrary to the syntax of the words, to the context, ver. 8, 9, and to facts; and, if true, would not have given this temple a greater glory than Solomon's: nor the elect of God, as others, brought in through the preaching of the Gospel; who are indeed the desire of God, he takes pleasure in them; and of Christ, whose delights have been always in them; and of the blessed Spirit, whose love to them, and esteem of them, are very manifest; and with the saints they are the excellent in the earth, in whom is all their delight: yet not they, but one far more glorious and excellent, is intended, even the Messiah, in whom all nations of the earth were to be blessed; and who, so far as he was known by good men or proselytes among the Gentiles, was desired by them, as by Job, and others; and who, when he came, brought all good things with him; and has all blessings in him, that may make him desirable to men, being what they want; and though he is not in fact desired by all, yet of right he should be, and to all sensible sinners he is; even above all persons and things in the whole world; on account of his excellencies and glories; his mediatorial qualifications; his names, offices, and relations; the blessings of grace in him; the works done by him; his truths and ordinances, people, ways, and worship: and when it is said, he *shall come*, the meaning is, not

[i] T. Bab Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 2. & Gloss. in ib.
[k] Defence of Christianity, p. 88. adhuc unum modicum est, sc. regni venturi. Akiba apud Lyram in loc.
[l] Taciti Annales, l. 2. c. 47.

only into the world by assumption of nature, to obtain redemption for his people; but into this temple now building, in that nature assumed; where he appeared at the presentation of him by his parents; and at the passover, when twelve years of age; and when he drove out the buyers and sellers from it; and when he often taught in it. The word *come* is in the plural number; and may denote his frequent coming thither, as well as in different respects; his personal coming; his spiritual coming; his coming to take vengeance on the Jews; and his last coming, of which some understand the words particularly: *and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord*; alluding to the glory which filled the tabernacle of Moses, and the temple of Solomon, Exod. xl. 35. 1 Kings viii. 10, 11. but that was but a shadowy glory, this a real one; here Christ appeared in person, who is the brightness of his Father's glory; here his glorious doctrines were taught, and glorious miracles wrought; and the Spirit of glory rested on the disciples, in his gifts and grace bestowed upon them in an extraordinary manner, on the day of Pentecost.

Ver. 8. *The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts.*] This seems designed to anticipate an objection taken from the gold and silver, with which the first temple was either decorated, or were in gifts dedicated to it; and which, it might easily be foreseen, would be wanting in the second temple; and in answer to which the Lord observes, that all the gold and silver in the world were his, were made by him, and were at his dispose; and therefore whatever were bestowed upon the former temple was only giving him his own; what he had a prior right to, and was no accession of riches or honour to him; and so it would be the same, let what would be expended on this; and therefore it was an article very inconsiderable, and of little significance; nor did he regard, or was he delighted with any thing of this kind; and, was he so disposed, he could easily command all the gold and silver in the world together, and bring it into this house, to enrich and adorn it, without doing any injury to any person; but these were things he delighted not in; and, besides, he had a far greater glory in view to put upon this house, as follows:

Ver. 9. *The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts*, &c.] The *former*, or first house, was the temple built by Solomon, which was a very glorious one, if we consider the vast treasure of riches laid up by David, and given to Solomon for the building of it; the great number of workmen employed in it; the stateliness of the fabric, the like to which was never seen, the model being drawn by the Lord himself; the decoration of it; the vessels in it; and, above all, the glory of the Lord that filled it, and continued in it; and yet this *latter* or second house exceeded it. It must be a glory very great indeed to exceed this! The Jews [n] themselves own there were several things wanting in the latter which were in the former, as the *ark*, the *Urim* and *Thummim*, the *fire* from heaven, the *Shechinah* (or, as in some books, the anointing oil, and, in others, the cherubim), and the *Holy Ghost*: by one of their writers [o], they are reckoned in this order, the ark, the mercy-seat, and cherubim, one; the Shechinah or divine Majesty, the second; the Holy Ghost, which is prophecy, the third; Urim and Thummim the fourth; and the fire from heaven the fifth: what could there be in it to compensate the want of these, and put it upon a level, and even to cause it to excel the temple of Solomon? the excelling glory did not lie in the fabric; when the foundation of it was laid, the old men wept, because it came so short of the other: and, as the building rose, it was in their eyes as nothing: who were better judges than later Jews, who magnify the building of the second temple, depending upon the authority of Josephus ben Gorion, who is not to be trusted: nor did it lie in the duration of it, it continuing ten years longer, they say [p], than the former; which, if true, could not answer to the deficiencies before mentioned; or be an encouragement to the builders to go on in their work: nor in the riches brought into it by the Gentiles in the times of the Maccabees, which was very inconsiderable; and could never make it equal to Solomon's temple, and much less preferable to it; nor by Alexander the great honouring it with his presence [q]; for surely Solomon was greater than he. It remains, that what gave it the greater glory was the personal presence of the Messiah in it, his doctrines, and his miracles: *and*, or *for*, *in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts*; not temporal peace, for there was little of that during the second temple; witness the times of the Maccabees, and the wars with the Romans; but spiritual peace, through the blood and righteousness of Christ; peace with God; reconciliation for sin, through the sacrifice of the Son of God, in whom he is well-pleased; yea, Christ himself may be meant, the Prince of peace, the Man the peace, who is our peace, Isa. ix. 6. Mic. v. 5. Ephes. ii. 14. the author of peace between God and men, between Jew and Gentile; the giver of spiritual and eternal peace: him the Lord gave, *put*, and set in this place, the temple, as before observed; and where the Gospel of peace was preached, and from whence it went forth into all the world. The Arabic version adds, "peace of soul, I say, to be possessed by every "one that labours to raise up this temple."

Ver. 10. *In the four-and-twentieth day of the ninth month*, &c.] The month Cisleu, which answers to part of November, and part of December: this was two months and three days after the former discourse or prophecy, and just three months from the time the Jews began to work in the house of the Lord, ch. i. 14, 15. and ii. 1. *in the second year of Darius*; the same year that all the former discourses and prophecies were delivered in: *came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet*; for what he delivered was not his own, but from the Lord; he was only his minister and messenger. The Vulgate Latin version, and so Munster, render it, *unto Haggai the prophet*; and indeed what is said following seems to be directed to him, and he is

[n] T. Hieros. Taanint, fol. 65. 1. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 21. 2. Jarchi & Kimchi in Hagg. i. 8.
[o] Baal Aruch in rad. כבד, fol. 75. 3.
[p] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 3. 1.
[q] Azariah, Meor Enayim, c. 51, fol. 160. 1. Vid. Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 23. 2. & 24. 1.

the only person that put the questions directed to: *saying*; as follows:

Ver. 11. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts*, &c.] To Haggai the prophet: *ask now the priests* concerning *the law*; whose business it was to understand it, and teach it, and to answer questions, and resolve doubts concerning it; not of their own heads, and according to their fancies, will, and pleasure; but according to the rules and instructions given in the word of God: and as this was their office, they were the proper persons to apply to; and Haggai, though a prophet, is sent to the priests to propose questions to them; though it may be not so much for his own information, as for the conviction of the priests of their impurity, out of their own mouths, and of the people by them: *saying*; putting the following questions to them.

Ver. 12. *If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment*, &c.] Or, *carry* it[s]; from one place to another in his pockets or bags, which were in the skirts of his garments. This is to be understood of the flesh of creatures offered in sacrifice, which were sanctified or separated for holy use; part of which belonged to the priests, who might carry it in their pockets to the proper place of eating it: *and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat*, which were not holy, and not separated for holy use, but were common meats and drinks: now the question upon this is, *shall it be holy?* that is, if either of those common things were touched by the skirt, in the pockets of which the holy flesh were carried, whether they were made holy by such a touch, and no more remained common or profane? *and the priests answered and said, no*; they were not sanctified; for though the garment itself was sanctified thereby, and might not be employed in common use till washed, Lev. vi. 27. yet a garment so touched could not convey holiness to whatsoever that touched, or that touched it.

Ver. 13. *Then said Haggai*, &c.] To the priests; having nothing to object to their answer; but being satisfied with it, he puts another question: *if any one that is unclean by a dead body*; by the touch of it, Lev. xix. 11: *touch any of these, shall it be unclean?* that is, if such an impure person, who was so in a ceremonial sense, should touch any of the above things, bread, pottage, wine, or oil, or any meat, would not they become unclean thereby, and so not fit for use? *and the priests answered and said, it shall be unclean*: which was rightly answered; for whatsoever such an unclean person touched was unclean, according to the law, Lev. xix. 22. Pollution is more easily and more extensively conveyed than holiness.

Ver. 14. *Then answered Haggai, and said*, &c.] To the priests, and before the people; and made an application of these things to them, which was the thing in view in putting the questions: *so is this people, and so is this nation before me, saith the Lord*; not only those people that were present and at work at the temple, but those that were absent, even the whole body of the people; who, though they were pure in their own eyes, yet were not so before the Lord; who knew their hearts, and the spring of all their actions; what were their ends and views in all they did: as a garment carrying in it holy flesh could not sanctify other things touched by it that were common and profane, but left them as they were; so their ritual devotions, and externally holy actions, did not and could not sanctify their impure hearts, but left them as unclean as before; nor did they sanctify their common mercies, their bread, pottage, wine, and oil: and, on the other hand, as an impure person made every thing impure he touched; so they, being impure in heart, all their actions, even their religious ones, were impure also, as follows: *and so is every work of their hands; and that which they offer there is unclean*; pointing at the altar, which they had built, and offered sacrifice on ever since they came out of Babylon, though the temple was not yet built, Ezra iii. 3—6. but all their outward religious services, and all the sacrifices they offered up, were in the Lord's account impure and abominable, as well as themselves; coming from an unsanctified heart, and offered up with unclean hands, and without repentance towards God, and faith in Christ; and living in other respects in disobedience to God, and especially whilst they neglected the building of the temple; satisfying themselves with offering sacrifices on the altar, when the house of God lay desolate; which is the principal thing respected, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 15. *And now, I pray you, consider from this day and upward*, &c.] This being their case, and they so polluted with sin, particularly through their neglect of building the temple; they are most earnestly and importunately entreated to *lay* it *to* their *hearts*, to ponder it in their minds, and thoroughly consider how it had fared with them from this twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in which the prophet was sent unto them to encourage them in their work, and upwards or backwards, for some years past: even *from before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the Lord*; the foundation of the temple was laid quickly after the Jews returned from Babylon, upon the proclamation of Cyrus, Ezra iii. 10. but, through difficulties and discouragements they met with, they desisted from the work, and went no further; a stone was not laid upon it; or, as the Targum, a row, or course upon course, until this time: and now all the intermediate space of time between the first laying the foundation of the temple, and their present going to work upon it, the prophet would have them take particular notice of; how it had been with them, as to their outward circumstances; whereby it would appear, they had sinned, and the Lord had been offended with them.

Ver. 16. *Since those days were*, &c.] From the time the foundation of the temple was laid, unto the time they began to work again, which was a space of about fifteen or sixteen years: *when one came to an heap of twenty* measures, *there were* but *ten*; when the husbandman having gathered in his corn, and who was generally a good judge of what it would yield, came to a heap of it on his corn-floor, either of sheaves unthreshed, or corn unwinnowed, and expected it would have produced at least twenty measures, seahs, or bushels; afterward it was threshed and winnowed, to his great disappointment he had but ten out of it; there were so much straw and chaff, and so little corn; or when he

[s] נשא portaverit, Munster; portet, Varenius, Reinbeck.

came to a heap of corn, wheat, or barley, in his granary, where he thought he should have twenty bushels of it; but when he had measured it, proved but ten; being either stolen by thieves, or eaten by vermin; rather the latter: *when one came to the press-fat for to draw out fifty vessels out of the press, there were* but *twenty;* by the quantity of grapes which he put into the press to tread and squeeze, he expected to have had fifty measures, or baths, or hogsheads of wine; but, instead of that, had but twenty; the bunches were so thin, or the berries so bad: there was a greater decrease and deficiency in the wine than in the corn.

Ver. 17. *I smote you with blasting,* &c.] That is, their fields and vineyards, with burning winds, which consumed them; with blights by east winds: this shews the reason of their disappointment, and that it was from the Lord, and for their sins, by way of chastisement and correction: *and with mildew;* a kind of clammy dew, which corrupts and destroys the fruits of the earth; and is a kind of jaundice to them, as the word signifies; see Amos iv. 9: *and with hail;* which battered down the corn and the vines, and broke them to pieces; see Exod. ix. 25: *in all the labours of your hands;* in the corn they sowed, and in the vines they planted: *yet ye* turned *not to me, saith the Lord;* did not consider their evil ways as the cause of all this; nor repent of them, and turn from them to the Lord; to his worship, as the Targum; or to the building of his house, the thing chiefly complained of. Afflictions, unless sanctified, have no effect upon men to turn them from their sins to the Lord.

Ver. 18. *Consider now from this day and upward,* &c.] Or forward; for time to come, as the Vulgate Latin version: *from the four-and-twentieth day of the ninth* month; before observed, ver. 10, 15: even *from the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid, consider it;* not from the time it was first laid after their return upon the proclamation of Cyrus, but from the time they began to clear that foundation, and to build upon it; and which having lain so long neglected, the renewal of it is represented as a fresh laying of it: now the prophet, as he had directed them to consider what adversity and calamities had attended them from the time of their neglect unto this time; so he would have them particularly observe what blessings they would enjoy from henceforward; by which it would appear how pleasing it was to the Lord that they had begun and were going on with the building.

Ver. 19. Is the *seed yet in the barn?* &c.] The seed for sowing the land, in order for the next harvest: this is by some answered in the affirmative, it was in the barn, it was not yet sown; this being the ninth month, the month Cisleu, which answers to part of our November; rather it should be in the negative, no, it was just sown; and therefore no conjecture could be made, whether it would be a good harvest, or no; yet the prophet, in the name of the Lord, promises them a good one so long before-hand: for the month Cisleu, which was the ninth month, was the last for sowing, and even the first half of that; for so say [t] the Jews, "half Tisri, "all Marchesvan, and half Cisleu, is seeds-time;" so that this being that month, seeds-time must have been just over; and the sense, is there any seed in the barn? no, it is sown; and so, is there any remaining in the granary for the support of families until the next harvest? they knew there were none, or very little: and yet the Lord promises to bless them, so that they should have enough: *yea, as yet the vine, and the fig-tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive-tree, hath not brought forth;* their several fruits; this not being the time of their bearing fruit, for it was winter-time; and it could not be said what they would bring forth in their season so long before-hand; yet it is suggested by the prophet that they would be very fruitful; which were the principal fruit-trees the land of Israel abounded with, Deut. viii. 8. and on which their comfortable subsistence depended. Kimchi observes, that it may be wondered at that the olive-tree should be mentioned, because the time of its bearing fruit were the months of Marchesvan and Cisleu; but perhaps the time of its bearing fruit was delayed (as he says) because of the curse upon it: *from this day will I bless* you; with plenty of all good things, in their fields and gardens, in their vineyards and oliveyards; so that a difference between former and present times, and those to come, would easily be discerned, and the reasons of it.

Ver. 20. *And again the word of the Lord came unto Haggai,* &c.] Or a *second* [u] time, even on the same day as the former: *in the four-and-twentieth* day *of the month;* of the ninth month Cisleu, ver. 10: *saying;* as follows:

Ver. 21. *Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah,* &c.] The former discourse or prophecy chiefly related to the people, for their encouragement in building; this is directed to the prince over them, to support him under all the changes and revolutions made in the world; that he should be regarded by the Lord in a very tender manner, and his government continued, as a type of Christ and his kingdom: *saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth;* make great commotions, changes, and revolutions in the world, by wars, and otherwise: the Persian kingdom being subdued by the Grecian; the Grecian by the Romans; the Roman empire by the Goths and Vandals; and the antichristian states, both Papal and Mahometan, by the vials of God's wrath poured out upon them, by means of Christian princes: such revolutions are often designed by the shaking of the heavens, especially by earthquakes in the book of the Revelation; see ch. vi. 14. and viii. 5. and xi. 13. and xvi. 18.

Ver. 22. *And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms,* &c.] The Persian monarchy, which consisted of various kingdoms and nations, and was destroyed under Darius Codomannus by Alexander the great, who fought with him three pitched battles, and overcame him; but the thing was of the Lord, according to his purpose and will, and by his power and providence; and therefore the overthrow is ascribed to him. The Jews [w] say that the Persian monarchy fell by the Grecians thirty-four years after the building of the temple; but very wrongly, it lasted longer: *and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the Heathen;* the empire of

[t] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 106. 2.

[u] שנית secundo, V. L. Paguinus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius; secunda vice, Burkius.

[w] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 30. p. 91. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 18. 1.

Alexander, which was a very strong one, and contained in it many kingdoms and nations, even the whole world, at least as he thought; and which was divided after his death into several kingdoms; the strength of which was greatly weakened by one another, and at last entirely destroyed by the Romans as instruments: *and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down;* which may refer either to the chariots and horses, and their riders, belonging to the Grecians, and used in their wars: or else this may describe the empire of the Romans, which in its turn should be destroyed, famous for their triumphal chariots: *every one by the sword of his brother;* by intestine wars, which was remarkably true of the successors of Alexander, as appears from Josephus [v] and Justin [w]: this may be applied to all the kingdoms of this world, which will all be demolished, and be brought into subjection to Christ, and his kingdom shall be set up in the world, the son and antitype of Zerubbabel, of whom the following words are to be understood; see Dan. ii. 44. 1 Cor. xv. 24. Rev. xi. 15. Abendana interprets it of the army of Gog and Magog, who shall fall every one by the sword of his brother.

Ver. 23. *In that day, saith the Lord of hosts,* &c.] When all these kingdoms, and their thrones and strength, are destroyed; which shews that what follows cannot be understood literally of Zerubbabel, who lived not to see these things done: *will I take thee, O Zerubbabel my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the Lord;* that is, the Messiah, as is owned by Abarbinel; who says [x], "the King Messiah shall come, who is of "the seed of Zerubbabel; and he shall be the seal of "the structure, and the end of the kingdoms; as it is "said, *I will make thee as a signet, for I have chosen* "*thee, saith the Lord of hosts;* for this no doubt is said "concerning the days of the Messiah:" and another Jewish writer [y], quoting the above author for the sense of this passage, and Ezek. xxxvii. 25, adds, "for the King "Messiah he will be David, and he will be Zerubbabel, "that he may be a rod going out of their stem;" and another [z] on these words observes, "without doubt "this is said concerning the expected Messiah, who "will be of the seed of Zerubbabel; and therefore this "promise was not at all fulfilled in him; for in the "time of this prophecy he was but governor of "Judah, and he never rose to greater dignity than what "he then had:" indeed these writers wrongly suppose the Messiah yet to come, and whom they in vain expect; and apply this, as they do many other prophecies, to the coming of Christ in the flesh, which belong to his spiritual appearance in his churches, or to his personal coming at the last day: however, this shews the conviction on their minds of the application of this and such-like prophecies to the Messiah, who may be called Zerubbabel, as he is sometimes David, because he sprung from him, was of his lineage, and because he was a type of him, in bringing the people of the Jews out of the Babylonish captivity, in rebuilding the temple, in the government of the people, and in being chosen of God, and precious; as well as a servant of the Lord, as here expressed, and which is often mentioned as a character of the Messiah, Isa. xlix. 3. and liii. 11: *and will make thee as a signet;* preserve, protect and defend, love, value, and esteem, and advance to great honour and dignity, power and authority: the signet or seal on a man's right hand, being what he always wears, is ever in sight, and he is careful of; as well as is what he greatly esteems, and is dear unto him, and he highly values; and by which a prince signs his decrees and edicts; see Isa. xlix. 2. Cant. viii. 6. Matt. xxviii. 18: *for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of hosts;* to be the Redeemer and Saviour of his people; to be their King and Governor, and the Judge of the world. Christ is peculiarly God's elect, and in whom all his people are chosen; he is the chosen of God, and precious, Psal. lxxxix. 19. Isa. xlii. 1. 1 Pet. i. 20. and ii. 4. The Targum is, "for "in thee I am well-pleased;" which is said by God the Father concerning Christ more than once, Matt. iii. 17. and xvii. 5. It is a prophecy of the exaltation of Christ after he had done his work, as the Lord's servant, and especially in the latter day, when he shall be King over all the earth; all which cannot be so well applied to Zerubbabel; unless with Reinbeck we understand it of the time of his resurrection from the dead at the last day; when great honour shall be put upon him as a faithful servant, and great love and affection expressed to him; but that will be no other than what will be common to all the saints and chosen of God; Christ, in whom all prophecies terminate, and so this, is doubtless intended.

[v] Antiqu. l. 12. c. 1. sect. 1.
[w] E. Trogo, l. 15. c. 6.
[x] Mayene Jeshuah, fol. 13. 4. Vid. & Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 67. 2.
[y] Abendana in Miclol Yophi in loc.
[z] R. Isaac, Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. c. 34. p. 289, 290.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL * THE TANJORE

ZECHARIAH.

THIS book is in the Hebrew copies called *the Book of Zechariah*: in the Vulgate Latin version, *the Prophecy of Zechariah*; and, in the Syriac and Arabic versions, the Prophecy of the Prophet Zechariah. His name, according to Jerom, signifies *the memory of the Lord*: but, according to Hillerus[a], *the Lord remembers*; either us, or his covenant; his promises of grace, and concerning the Messiah, of which there are many in this book. The writer of this prophecy could not be, as some have imagined, Zacharias the father of John the Baptist; since there must be some hundreds of years difference between them; nor the Zacharias, the son of Barachias, slain between the temple and the altar, our Lord speaks of in Matt. xxiii. 35. for though their names agree, yet it does not appear that this prophet was slain by the Jews; indeed the Jewish Targumist, on Lam. ii. 20, speaks of a Zechariah, the son of Iddo, a high-priest, slain in the temple; but it could not be this Zechariah, since he was no high-priest; Joshua was high-priest in his time; nor could he be slain in such a place, seeing the temple and altar were not yet built; nor was this prophet Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, slain in the court of the Lord's house, 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21. for, as their names do not agree, so neither their office, he being a high-priest, this a prophet; nor the times in which they lived, Zechariah the son of Jehoiada lived in the times of Joash king of Judah, two or three hundred years before this; but this was one of the captivity of Babylon, and who came up from thence with Zerubbabel, Neh. xii. 16. and was cotemporary with the Prophet Haggai; so that the time of his prophecy was after the Babylonish captivity, and was delivered to the Jews that were returned from thence; and the design of it is to stir them up to build the temple, and restore the pure worship of God; and to encourage their faith and hope in the expectation of the Messiah; for the book consists of various visions and prophecies relating to him, and to the times of the Gospel; and the visions are, as some Jewish writers[b] observe, very obscure, and like the visions of Daniel, and difficult of interpretation. There are several passages cited out of this book in the New Testament, as ch. viii. 16. in Ephes. iv. 25. ch. ix. 9. in Matt. xxi. 5. John xii. 14, 15. ch. xi. 12, 13. in Matt. xxvii. 9. ch. xii. 10. in John xix. 37. Rev. i. 7. and ch. xiii. 7. in Matt. xxvi. 31. Mark xiv. 27. which abundantly confirm the authentickness of it. This prophet seems to have lived and died in Jerusalem; and, according to Pseudo-Epiphanius[c], was buried near Haggai the prophet; and with which agree the Cippi Hebraici[d], which inform us that Haggai was buried in a cave in the declivity of the mount of Olives; and at the bottom of that mount was a large statue called the hand of Absalom, near to which was the grave of Zechariah the prophet, in a cave shut up, and over it a beautiful monument of one stone: and Monsieur Thevenot[e] tells us, that now is shewn, near the sepulchres of Absalom and Jehoshaphat, on the descent of the mount of Olives, the sepulchre of the Prophet Zacharias.—It is cut in a diamond point upon the rock, with many pillars about it. Sozomen[f] the historian, indeed, makes mention of Caphar Zechariah, a village on the borders of Eleutheropolis, a city in Palestine, where it is pretended the body of this prophet was found in the times of Theodosius, to which no credit is to be given; nor is there any dependence to be had on the former accounts.

CHAP. I.

IN this chapter, after the account of the prophet, and the time of the prophecy by him, are an exhortation of the people of the Jews to repentance; the vision of a rider upon a red horse, and the intercession of the angel of the Lord for Jerusalem; and another vision of the enemies of the Jews, and of their deliverers. In ver. 1 is the general inscription of the book; in which an account is given of the time of its writing, and of the writer of it: then follows the exhortation to repentance, enforced from the wrath of God, which came upon their fathers for not hearkening to the Lord, and turning from their evil ways; and from the advantage that would be received thereby, the Lord would return to them; and from the certain accomplishment of the divine word; for, though both their fathers and prophets died, the word of the Lord had its sure effect, ver. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. and next the vision of the rider on the red horse is presented; the year, month, day, and night, in which it was seen, are mentioned, ver. 7. and the rider is described by his form, a man; by the horse he rode upon, a red one; by the place he stood in among the myrtle-trees in the bottom; and by his attendants behind, red horses, speckled and white, ver. 8. The intepretation of

[a] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 508, 957, 952.
[b] Aben Ezra & Jarchi in loc. & R. Abendana in Miclol Yophi in loc. & Kimchi in ver. 8
[c] De Prophet. Vita & Interitu, c. 21.
[d] P. 29. Ed. Hottinger.
[e] Travels, par. 1. B. 2. ch. 37. p. 184.
[f] Hist. Eccles. l. 9. c. 17.

which last is given to the prophet by the angel, by the man among the myrtle-trees, and by the answer of them to the angel of the Lord themselves, ver. 9, 10, 11. After which the angel is represented as making intercession for Jerusalem, who is answered by good and comfortable words, ver. 12, 13. upon which the prophet is bid to publish the jealousy of the Lord for Jerusalem; his displeasure at the Heathens for afflicting them; his promise to return to the Jews, that the temple and city of Jerusalem should be rebuilt, and other cities of Judea, which should enjoy great prosperity, ver. 14, 15, 16, 17. and the chapter is concluded with a vision of four horns, signifying the enemies of Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem; and of four carpenters that should destroy them, ver. 18, 19, 20, 21.

Ver. 1. *In the eighth month,* &c.] The month Marchesvan, called the month Bul, in 1 Kings vi. 38. which answers to part of our October, and part of November: this was but two months from the first prophecy of Haggai, ch. i. 1. and but a few days after his second, ch. ii. 1. so near were the prophecies of these two prophets together: *in the second year of Darius*; king of Persia; not Darius the Mede, but Darius the son of Hystaspes: *came the word of the Lord unto Zechariah*; that is, *the word of prophecy from before the Lord*, as the Targum paraphrases it; which came to him, either in a dream, or in a vision, or by an impulse on his mind; who is described by his descent, the son of Barachiah; mention is made of this name in Matt. xxiii. 35. It signifies *the blessed of the Lord*; and is the same with Eulogius or Benedictus: *the son of Iddo the prophet*; the word *prophet*, as Kimchi observes, belongs to Zechariah; not but that his grandfather Iddo might be a prophet too; and the same writer takes notice, that in the Midrash mention is made of Iddo the prophet; and so there is an Iddo that is called the seer and the prophet in 2 Chron. ix. 29. and xii. 15. and xiii. 22. but whether the same with this is not certain. The name is by some thought to be the same with Firmicus, Statius, Robertus: *saying*; as follows:

Ver. 2. *The Lord hath been sore displeased with your fathers.*] Who lived before and at the time of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem, and which was manifest by their captivity; all which were occasioned by their sins, with which they provoked the Lord to sore displeasure against them; and this is mentioned as a caution to their children, that they might not follow their example, and incur the like displeasure.

Ver. 3. *Therefore say thou unto them,* &c.] This is an order from the Lord to Zechariah, to say unto them, in the name of the Lord: *thus saith the Lord of hosts*; of the hosts above and below, of angels and of men, of heaven and earth, and all that is therein: this is said, that the greater regard might be had to his words: *turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts*; by repentance, and acknowledgment of former sins; by reformation for the future; by attending to the worship and service of God, and seeking to glorify him. So the Targum, *return to my worship*; this is not the condition of what follows, but what follows is the motive and encouragement to this: *and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of hosts*; to dwell among them, manifest himself unto, and protect them. Three times the phrase, *the Lord of hosts*, is used in this verse: it may be with respect to the three Persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit; who manifest themselves unto, and take up their abode with, such as love the Lord, and keep his commandments; see John xiv. 21, 23.

Ver. 4. *Be ye not as your fathers,* &c.] Who lived before the captivity, and misused the prophets and messengers of the Lord, and despised his word, and fell into gross idolatry; the evil examples of parents and ancestors are not to be followed: *unto whom the former prophets have cried*; such as Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others: *saying, thus saith the Lord of hosts, turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings*; by their *evil ways* may be meant their idolatrous worship; and by their *evil doings* their immoralities; or, by both, their wicked lives and conversations, both before God and men; from whence they were exhorted by the former prophets to turn, and to reform; even *now*, at that present time they prophesied to them, immediately, lest destruction come upon them: *but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the Lord*; speaking by his prophets, who were sent by him, and came and spoke in his name; so that not hearing them was not hearing him who sent them, and whom they personated.

Ver. 5. *Your fathers, where are they?* &c.] They are not in the land of the living; they perished by the sword of the Chaldeans, or died in captivity: *and the prophets, do they live for ever?* meaning either the false prophets, as Hananiah and Shemaiah, Jer. xxviii. 17. and xxix. 32. or the true prophets of the Lord; and the words may be considered as a prevention of an objection the people might make, taken from their prophets dying in common with their fathers; and so the Targum paraphrases them, *and if you should say, the prophets, do they live for ever?* which is followed by Jarchi, and embraced by many interpreters: the answer is, 'tis true they died; but then their words live, and have had their full accomplishment.

Ver. 6. *But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets,* &c.] That is, the predictions which he ordered his prophets to declare in his name, that their fathers should die by the sword, or famine, or pestilence, or be carried captive, which he purposed in himself, and threatened them with: *did they not take hold of your fathers?* overtake them, seize upon them, and have their accomplishment in them? not one thing has failed, or come short of being fulfilled, of all that was determined, or said should be done: *and they returned and said*; that is, as many of them as perished not, but were carried captive; at least many of them, who either were thoroughly converted, and turned from their evil, or however in appearance: and who were obliged to own, *like as the Lord of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doing, so hath he dealt with us*; as he purposed, so he performed, and that with great justice and equity, being what their evil ways and doings righteously deserved; see Isa. xiv. 24.

Ver. 7. *Upon the four-and-twentieth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Sebat,* &c.] Called Sabat in the Septuagint version, and in 1 Maccab. xvi. 14. It

is said by the Jews [g] to be the beginning of the months of the year for trees, of which they bring the first-fruits. It answers to part of our January, and part of February. This is the first time that the name of a month is mentioned by any of the prophets; this prophet prophesying after the captivity in Babylon; from whence the Jews [h] say the names of months came along with the returning captives, as well as the names of angels; and we nowhere meet with them but in the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, all wrote after that time; for before they used only to say, the first, second, or third month, *&c.*; for, as for Abib, Zif, Bul, and Ethanim, mentioned in Exod. xiii. 4. 1 Kings vi. 1, 37, 38. and viii. 2. they are thought to be appellatives, and not proper names; though it may be observed that the books of Kings are said by the Jews [i] to be written by Jeremiah; more likely by several prophets, and at last brought into the order in which they now stand by Ezra, according to Huetius [k]; and which may be thought probable enough; and, if so, the above names may be reckoned proper names of months; and the original of them may be accounted for as before. There were two fasts appointed by the Jews in this month; one on the tenth day of it, for the death of the elders which succeeded Joshua, Judg. ii. 7. and another on the twenty-third, on account of the Israelites making war with the Benjaminites, in revenge of what was done to the wife of the Levite, Judg. xix. xx. [l]. This prophecy, and the visions following to the end of the sixth chapter, were three months after the former prophecy, or more, if that was on the first day of the eighth month; and just two months after the foundation of the temple was laid, Hagg. ii. 18: *in the second year of Darius*, &c. see the note on ver. 1.

Ver. 8. *I saw by night*, &c.] Or, *that night* [m]; the night of the twenty-fourth of Sebat; a proper and usual time for visions; and it may denote the obscurity of the vision, as it was in some respects to the prophet; and the state of the church at this time, it being a night-season with it, and in a low estate; and the care that the Lord, who is Israel's Keeper, has of them in such seasons, being in the midst of them: *and behold!* this is prefixed to the vision, to denote the wonderfulness of it, and to excite attention to it; there being something in it not only amazing, but of moment and importance: *a man riding upon a red horse;* not any mere *man*, as Alexander on his Bucephalus, as Abarbinel interprets it; and so Arias Montanus, as Sanctius on the place observes; though the time this vision refers to, and the state of the Jews then, will not admit of such an interpretation; for at this time all the earth was still and at rest, there were no wars in it, ver. 11. which agrees not with the times of Alexander, and of his reign, which was wholly spent in war; and the whole world in a manner was involved in it by him; but best agrees with the times of Cyrus and Darius, after they had subdued the Babylonian monarchy: besides, the Jews were now in a very low estate, like a grove of myrtle-trees in a bottom, plain, or valley; and not only surrounded and overtopped by other states and kingdoms, which were greatly superior to them; but oppressed by their enemies, who hindered them in the rebuilding of their city and temple; whereas this was not their case in the times of Alexander, when they were in better circumstances, and which were two hundred years after this; nor was he so very beneficial and serviceable to the Jews, as to be represented, in such a vision, as in the midst of them, for their relief and protection; but an angel of the Lord is here meant, as this man is expressly called, ver. 11. and not a created angel; for he is distinguished from the angel that talked with the prophet, ver. 9, 13, 14. The Jews, as Jerom relates, think that the Angel Michael is meant, by whom they understand a created angel; for otherwise, if they took him to be, as he is, the Son of God, the Archangel, the Head of principalities, who is, as his name signifies, like unto God, and equal to him, it would not be amiss: and it is usual for a divine Person to be called the Angel of the Lord, as was he that called to Abraham when sacrificing his son, and to Moses out of the bush; and who went before the Israelites in the wilderness, and who is called the Angel of God's presence, and the messenger and Angel of the covenant; and the ancient Jews themselves own that a divine Person is here meant; for, on quoting these words, *I saw a man*, &c. they say [n], there is no man but the holy blessed God; as it is said, *the Lord is a man of war, the Lord is his name;* and though he is distinguished from the Lord of hosts, ver. 12, the reason of this (or otherwise it is the title of this angel also, see Hos. xii. 4, 5,) is because he here appears in the form of a man; and because of his office as an intercessor and advocate for his people, ver. 12. a character which well agrees with Christ, who is the advocate with the Father for his saints, and who ever lives to make intercession for them, and is always heard and answered with good and comfortable words: and he is called a *man*; not that he is a mere man, or was really man when this vision was seen; but he then appeared in a human form, because he should become man, and quickly would be, as it was purposed, prophesied, and agreed he should be: and he is represented as *riding*, to denote his majesty and glory as a king, or as a general of an army, in which he rode prosperously; see Psal. xlv. 4. Rev. vi. 2. and xix. 11, 14. as also his readiness, swiftness, and haste he made to help and save his people; as the people of the Jews, in this their present time of distress, being opposed and hindered in building their city, in particular; so, in general, all his people, in whatsoever case or circumstances they may be: thus riding, when ascribed to a divine Person, is an emblem of haste and quick dispatch, to assist and relieve the distressed; see Deut. xxxiii. 26. Psal. lxviii. 4, 5, 32, 33. so Christ, who here appears as a man, was ready and forward, in the council and covenant of grace, to agree to become man, and be the surety of his people, and die in their room and stead, in order to save them:

[g] Targum Sheni in Esth. iii. 7.
[h] T. Hieros. Roshhashanah, fol. 56. 4. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 48. fol. 42. 4.
[i] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 15. 1.
[k] Demonstr. Evangel. prop. 4. p. 203.
[l] Vid. Reland. Jud. Antiqu. par. 4. c. 13. p. 261.
[m] הלילה hac nocte, Drusius.
[n] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 1. Pesikta Rabbati apud Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 85. 4.

his frequent appearances in a human form, before his incarnation, shew how willing and ready he was really to assume the human nature; and as soon as the time appointed for it was up, he tarried not; when the fulness of time was come, God sent him, and he came at once, and immediately; and as soon as possible he went about the business he came upon, took delight and pleasure in it, was constant at it till he had finished it; and even his sufferings and death, which were disagreeable to nature, considered in themselves, were wished and longed for, and cheerfully submitted to by him: and he is quick in all his motions to help his people in all their times of need; nor can any difficulties prevent him giving an early and speedy relief; he comes to them leaping on the mountains, and skipping on the hills; and at the last day he'll come quickly to put them into the possession of salvation he has wrought out for them; and will be a swift witness for them, and against wicked men that hate them, and oppose them: and he is upon a *red horse*, signifying either his incarnation, and his bloody sufferings and death; and his taking peace from the earth when on it, not intentionally, but eventually, through the wickedness of men; see Rev. vi. 4. or his indignation against his enemies, and his wrath and vengeance upon them, and the destruction of them; and may have a particular reference to those who opposed the building of the temple; see Isa. lxiii. 1, 2: *and he stood among the myrtle-trees which were in the bottom*: by the *myrtle-trees* may be meant the Israelites, as Kimchi interprets it; and that either as in Babylon, which he supposes is designed by *the bottom*; agreeably to the Targum, which paraphrases the words, *and he stood among the myrtle-trees which are in Babylon*; or rather, as now returned to their own land; and so may denote the low estate and condition in which they were when they began to rebuild the temple, being feeble, and opposed by their enemies, mightier than they; but yet, inasmuch as the Lord was in the midst of them, they had encouragement to go on in the work, as is suggested in Hagg. ii. 3, 4, 5, though the saints and people of God in general may be here meant by *the myrtle-trees*: and the ancient Jews [o] interpret them of the righteous, saying, there are no myrtle-trees but the righteous; and give this as a reason why Esther was called Hadassah, Esth. ii. 7. which signifies a myrtle-tree, because this is the name of the righteous [p]; and these may fitly be compared to such trees for their goodliness and beauty to look at, for their sweet and fragrant smell, for their verdure and greenness, and for their flourishing in valleys and watery places [q], signified here by *the bottom*; all which is true of the saints, who are pleasant plants, comely through Christ's comeliness; whose graces, when in exercise, send forth a sweet smell; whose prayers are odours, and whose good works are acceptable, being done in faith; whose leaves never wither, and who flourish much, being planted by the river of divine love; and in whom the grace of God ever remains, and they persevere in grace to the end: these may be said to be *in the bottom*; or in a low estate; not only before conversion, but after; when corruptions prevail, temptations are strong, grace is weak; God hides his face, Christ is absent, and the Spirit withdraws his influences; and so it is true of the church in general, when under persecution, or pestered with false teachers, and when the life and power of religion are almost gone; and yet even then Christ stands in the midst of them, to sympathize with them, and as ready to help and assist them, to deliver them out of their troubles, to protect them from their enemies, and to restore them to their former state and condition. A grove of myrtle-trees in a plain, in which they delight, being dark and shady, is thought by some to be an emblem of this world, in which there is a mixture of good and bad men; and of the care of Providence over human affairs, consulting the good of man, especially the raising up of the church of God out of a low estate by Christ, and his apostles, and other ministers of the word, performing their offices, according to the different abilities and gifts God has bestowed upon them [r]: *and behind him were there red horses, speckled and white*; that is, with riders on them. Some [s] Jewish writers interpret this vision of the four kingdoms; and understand by the red horse with the man upon it, in the former clause, the Babylonian monarchy, of which Nebuchadnezzar was the head; and, by these three sorts here, the Medes, Greeks, and Romans, by inverting the order of them; they interpreting the white horses with the riders on them of the Medes and Persians; who were kind to the Jews, and under whom they were dismissed from their captivity, and their temple rebuilt: the speckled, or those of different colours, the Macedonians or Grecians; some of which were friends, and kind and benevolent to the Jews; and others cruel persecutors of them; and the red, the Romans, who were bloody, and slew multitudes of them, and destroyed their city and temple: but others, as Jerom observes, who relates the above sense, keep the order of the text, and explain the particulars of it thus; the red horse on which the man rode, and the red horses behind him, of the Assyrians and Chaldeans, who were sanguine; the one carried away the ten tribes under Salmaneser; and the other the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, burning the city of Jerusalem, and laying waste the temple; the speckled, or those of various colours, the Medes and Persians; some of whom wese mild and gentle, as Cyrus, and Darius the son of Hystaspes, and Ahasuerus, whom the Greeks call Artaxerxes, under whom was the history of Esther; and others were cruel, as Cambyses, &c.: those who think that Alexander the great is meant on the red horse suppose that those that succeeded him are meant by the other horses of various colours; namely, the Lagidæ and the Seleucidæ, or the kings of Egypt and Syria, who were sometimes very fierce and furious, and sometimes very friendly to the Jews; at least different kings, and at different times: but it seems better to interpret them of saints, the godly and faithful followers of Christ; not only the godly among

[o] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 1.
[p] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 13. 1.
[q] ——— Et amantes littora myrtos. Virgil. Georgic. l. 4.
[r] Vid. Levin. Lemnii Herb. Bibl. Explicat. c. 29. p. 108.
[s] In Abendana, Not. in Miclol Yophi in loc.

the Jews, who were made as his goodly horse in the battle, ch. x. 3. but the church and people of God in general, who are compared to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariot, Cant. i. 9, for their strength, courage, serviceableness, and the value Christ has for them: thus, as he is elsewhere represented as riding on a white horse, under the Gospel dispensation, as the general of an army, and mighty conqueror; so the armies of heaven that follow him on white horses, and clothed in white, are the called, and faithful, and chosen, Rev. xvii. 14. and xix. 14. and some of these being described by red horses, with riders on them, may signify such who have been called to shed their blood, and lay down their lives, for Christ and his Gospel, and their profession of it, even the martyrs of Jesus; and others by speckled horses, or of various colours, may intend such professors of religion, who, though not called to die for Christ, yet suffer persecution in various ways, both by reproach and affliction; and whose lives may be a chequered work of comforts and troubles, of prosperity and adversity: and others by white horses may point at such who are not only clothed with fine linen, clean and white, the righteousness of the saints; and who are more than conquerors through Christ, who has loved them, which are characters common to all saints; but who enjoy a great deal of liberty, peace, and prosperity, all their days. Some [t] restrain this to the apostles of Christ, and succeeding ministers of the word; and observe, that as horses carry men and other things into the various parts of the world, so the ministers of the Gospel bear the name of Christ, and carry his Gospel into the whole world; and as horses don't go into any part of it of themselves, but as they are directed by their masters, so the Gospel ministers are sent under the direction of Christ, some here, and some there; and as horses going through towns and villages are mostly annoyed by the barking of dogs, which yet they regard not, so as to stop their speed; thus likewise faithful preachers are followed with the calumnies of wicked men, with their scoffs and jeers, reproaches and persecutions; but none of these things move them, or cause them to desist from their work; and as Christ the Son of God stood among these horses, so he is, and has promised to be, with his ministering servants unto the end of the world; and as they are like horses, docible and laborious, so the various colours of these may have respect to them; some of whom are called to resist even unto blood; and others to various trials; as well as they have different gifts, and are of different usefulness, and all of them at last victorious over their enemies; and are under Christ their Head, and are ready to do his will in whatsoever he directs them; though the more commonly received opinion is, that angels are designed, and as it seems from ver. 10, 11. compared with ch. vi. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. see also 2 Kings ii. 11. and vi. 17. signified by horses, for their strength, courage, swiftness, serviceableness, and disposition for war; and these different colours may represent the different state and condition of the nations with whom they were concerned, and to whom they were sent, as cruel or kind, to the people of God; and their different employments and services, both to help the saints, and render vengeance to their enemies; and the various offices they perform, with respect to Christ and his people, in things temporal and spiritual; and the place and situation of these horses being *behind* Christ may denote his superiority over them: he is superior to all monarchs and monarchies, kingdoms and states; he is King of kings, and Lord of lords; the kingdoms of this world are his, and he is the Governor among the nations; they are all behind and under him, and disposed of by him at his pleasure; and he can restrain them, when he thinks fit, from doing any hurt to his people: he is superior to all men, even the best and greatest; he is the Head of the church, and King of saints; and it is their business, and even their honour and privilege, to follow him whithersoever he goes; and he is superior to angels, has a more excellent name and nature than they, is the Creator and Maker of them, and is worshipped by them; and even, as Mediator, is in a greater office, and in a higher place, at the right hand of God, than they are; they are at his beck and command, and at hand to be sent forth on all occasions to do his business, to minister for him, and to his people; they are his servants, and devoted to his service, and are ready to do his pleasure.

Ver. 9. *Then said I, O my Lord, &c.*] These are the words of the Prophet Zechariah to the angel that shewed him this vision: *what are these?* what is the meaning of this vision? particularly who are meant by the horses, red, speckled, and white, and those upon them? *and the angel that talked with me;* who seems to be different from the Angel of the Lord, the man among the myrtle-trees, ver. 8, 10, 11. he was one of the ministering spirits; see Rev. xvii. 1. and xxi. 9: *said unto me, I will shew thee what these be;* that is, give an interpretation of the vision, and point out the persons intended by the horses.

Ver. 10. *And the man that stood among the myrtle-trees answered and said, &c.*] And so prevented the angel from giving the account he was about to give; and who was more capable of it, and which to do was great condescension in him, and was doing the prophet a singular honour: *these are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth;* which is a description of the angels, the ministering spirits sent forth by God to take their tour throughout the earth; not to do mischief, as Satan does; but to do good to kingdoms, nations, and men in general, and to the heirs of salvation in particular; for which they are commissioned and empowered of God; see Heb. i. 14.

Ver. 11. *And they answered the Angel of the Lord, that stood among the myrtle-trees, and said, &c.*] That is, the ministering angels, signified by the red horses, speckled, and white, replied to what the Angel of the Lord had said concerning them; or rather agreed to and confirmed his account of them; or else gave up the account of their tour through the earth, with their observations upon the state of it: *we have walked to and fro through the earth;* according to their mission and commission: *and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest;* was free from wars, as it was in the reign of Darius; though the people of the Jews were

[t] Vid. Frantzii Hist. Animal. Sacr. par. 1. c. 12. p. 130, 131.

infested with enemies, who gave them trouble, and hindered all they could the rebuilding of the temple; wherefore it follows:

Ver. 12. *Then the Angel of the Lord answered and said,* &c.] The same that was among the myrtle-trees in the bottom, ver. 8, 10, 11: *O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah;* which were fallen to ruin, and had lain waste for many years. These words are expressive of the intercession of Christ on the behalf of the people of the Jews, his professing people, both with respect to their temporal and spiritual good: *against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?* the time of the Babylonish captivity, which lasted such a term of time, and which was a token of the divine displeasure with them; but to be reckoned, not from Jeconiah's captivity, to the deliverance from it by Cyrus, as it is reckoned, Jer. xxv. 1, 11. Dan. ix. 2. but from the taking of Jerusalem, and the destruction of the temple under Zedekiah, to the rebuilding of the temple under Darius Hystaspis, in whose second year Zechariah now prophesied, ver. 17, which was a space of seventy years.

Ver. 13. *And the Lord answered the angel that talked with me,* &c.] See ver. 9. what was the effect of Christ's intercession for the people of the Jews, was communicated to a ministering angel, and by him to the Prophet Zechariah: *with good words, and comfortable words;* such as would be for the good and comfort of God's people, as follows; see Isa. xl. 1, 2.

Ver. 14. *So the angel that communed with me,* &c.] Having an order from the other Angel, or the Lord of hosts; *said unto me, cry thou;* proclaim, publish, declare in the hearing of the people, for their comfort and encouragement. The Targum renders it, *prophesy: saying, thus saith the Lord of hosts, I am jealous for Jerusalem, and for Zion, with a great jealousy;* which is expressive of his conjugal affection for his church and people, his zeal for their good, and his indignation at their enemies, and of the vengeance he would execute on them.

Ver. 15. *And I am very sore displeased with the Heathen that are at ease,* &c.] The Chaldeans and Persians, and other nations, enemies of the Jews, who were now free from war, and enjoyed great prosperity, when the state and condition of the Jews was very low and discouraging: *for I was but a little displeased:* that is, with his people the Jews, for their ingratitude, idolatry, and immorality; and which displeasure he shewed by suffering them to be carried into captivity; see Isa. liv. 8: *and they helped forward the affliction;* that is, the Heathens, among whom the Jews were carried captive; they added to their affliction; they oppressed them more than they ought to have done, and more than was agreeable to the will of God and right in his sight; and they insulted them in their misery, and rejoiced over them. The word עזר, in the Arabic language, signifies to *abound* *; and the meaning is, that they abounded in bringing evil upon the people of the Jews; they multiplied their afflictions and distresses.

Ver. 16. *Therefore thus saith the Lord, I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies,* &c.] Having returned the people of the Jews from their captivity to Jerusalem, in which he had shewn abundant mercy to them: *my house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts;* meaning the temple where he dwelt and was worshipped; the foundation of which had been laid two months before this prophecy was delivered, Hagg. ii. 18. and which should be raised up and finished, notwithstanding all the opposition of the enemy, and the discouragements of the people: *and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem;* to measure with it, and build by it, the wall, streets, and houses of Jerusalem. The meaning is, that not only the temple should be built, but the city likewise, and that in great order, and with great exactness and symmetry; see ch. ii. 1, 2, 3, 4. The Targum paraphrases it, *upon the building of the walls of Jerusalem.*

Ver. 17. *Cry yet, saying,* &c.] That is, *prophesy again,* as the Targum paraphrases it; publish and declare openly before all: *thus saith the Lord of hosts, my cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad;* or, according to the Targum, *the cities of my people shall be yet filled with good;* and so the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, *my cities shall yet flow with good things;* with all temporal prosperity and happiness; which was fulfilled in the times of Nehemiah, Zerubbabel, and the Maccabees; and especially in the times of the Messiah, when, in a spiritual sense, they were filled with good; with him who is goodness itself, and with all blessings of grace in him; and with the good news and glad tidings of the everlasting Gospel preached by him and his apostles; or, the meaning is, through the increase of men, and the affluence of all temporal mercies, not only the city of Jerusalem, but other cities of Judea, called the Lord's, because of his peculiar regard unto them, should be enlarged, and be spread here and there; or rather, abound with plenty of all good things, as the word in the Arabic * language signifies: *and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem;* for his habitation, building again the city and temple in it: according to Capellus, though the temple was finished in the sixth year of Darius, Ezra vi. 15. yet the rebuilding of Jerusalem was not till seventy years after; namely, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, in which Nehemiah was sent to rebuild it, Neh. ii. 1. for Darius reigned thirty-six years; Xerxes, who succeeded him, reigned twenty years; and in the twentieth of Artaxerxes the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt by Nehemiah; so that from the finishing of the temple are to be reckoned thirty years of the remainder of the reign of Darius, twenty years of Xerxes, and as many of Artaxerxes; and he observes that the seventieth number thrice occurs in the restoration of the Jews, not without mystery, as it should seem: from the Babylonish captivity under Jeconiah, to the putting an end to it by Cyrus, were seventy years; from the taking of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple under Zedekiah, to the rebuilding of it under Darius Hystaspis, were also seventy

* غزر abundavit, multiplicavit, Golius, col. 1705. Castel. col. 2721. עזר Jasar, cum ע punctato, exuberavit, abundavit, multus fuit, Schindler. Lex. Pentaglot. col. 1307.

* Vid. Schultens, Origines Hebr. l. 1. c. 4. sect. 4. p. 110.

years; then from the rebuilding of the temple to the rebuilding of Jerusalem under Artaxerxes Longimanus were likewise seventy years; so that the walls of Jerusalem lay in ruins twice seventy years, that is, one hundred and forty years; and it may be further observed, that from the decree granted to Nehemiah in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, seven weeks, or forty-nine years, are allowed in Daniel's prophecy for the finishing that event; namely, the building again the walls and streets of Jerusalem in troublesome times, Dan. ix. 25. which carries the completion of this affair so many years further; which, when effected, would be a comfort to Zion, the inhabitants of it, and all that wished well unto it; and be a proof and evidence of God's choice of it for his worship and service; and, especially, this was fulfilled by bringing into Jerusalem, and the temple there, the messenger of the covenant, the Messiah, the Consolation of Israel; and this may have a further reference to the latter day, when the people of the Jews shall be converted, and all Israel shall be saved; which will be the consolation of them, and shew that God has chosen them, and not cast them off.

Ver. 18. *Then I lifted up mine eyes,* &c.] To behold another vision which follows: *and saw, and behold four horns;* either iron ones, such as Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made to push the Syrians with, 1 Kings xxii. 11. or horns of beasts, as the horns of unicorns, to which the horns of Joseph are compared, Deut. xxxiii. 17. and signify kingdoms or kings, and these very powerful and mighty; and so the Targum interprets them of *four kingdoms;* and which Kimchi and Abarbinel understand of the four monarchies, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman; so ten horns, in Dan. vii. 24. and Rev. xvii. 12. design ten kings or kingdoms; unless rather, seeing these horns were such who had already distressed and scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem; and two of the above monarchies were not yet in being, the Grecian and Roman, when this vision was seen; and one of those that were, were friends to the Jews, as the Persians; they may in general signify all the enemies of the Jews that were round about them, on the four corners of them; as the Syrians, Assyrians, and Babylonians, on the north; the Ammonites and Moabites on the east; the Edomites and Egyptians on the south; and the Philistines on the west; as Junius thinks. Cocceius interprets them of four kings, Salmaneser, Nebuchadnezzar, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes the first, called Longimanus; and may be applied to the antichristian states, Pagan and Papal, in the several parts of the world, called horns, Dan. vii. 24. Rev. xii. 3. and xiii. 1.

Ver. 19. *And I said unto the angel that talked with me,* &c.] Ver. 9, 13, 14: *what be these?* that is, who do these horns signify? and what or whom do they represent? *and he answered me, these are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem;* which may design the distresses, vexations, and captivities of the people of Israel by their enemies, as by the Moabites, Ammonites, &c. in the times of the judges; and the captivity of the ten tribes of Israel by Salmaneser; and of the two tribes of Benjamin and Judah, and of the destruction of Jerusalem, by Nebuchadnezzar; when they were ventilated or fanned, as the word [x] signifies, and so scattered abroad; see Jer. iv. 11. and xv. 7. and also their troubles in the times of the Medes and Persians, under Cambyses, until this second year of Darius; and may likewise have reference prophetically to their after-troubles and captivity by the Romans; and to Rome Pagan, which persecuted and scattered the churches of Christ and people of God in the several parts of the world; and the antichristian states, the persecutors of the same.

Ver. 20. *And the Lord shewed me four carpenters.*] To saw and cut in pieces the four horns; or rather *four blacksmiths* [y]; these horns were horns of iron; so the word is rendered a *smith* in 1 Sam. xiii. 19. and indeed it signifies both a worker in wood and a worker in iron; and who are sometimes distinguished by what they work in, whether wood or iron; see Isa. xliv. 12, 13. The Jews say [z] these four carpenters are Messiah ben David, Messiah ben Ephraim, Elijah, and the priest of righteousness; or, as elsewhere [a], Elijah, the King Messiah, Melchizedek, and he that was anointed for war; though Kimchi much better interprets them of the kings, the princes above, who preside over kingdoms, that is, the angels; and so Jerom and Theodoret; who have been sometimes employed in the destruction of the enemies of God's people, or in preventing them doing the mischief they otherwise would; and even the several monarchies themselves have been the means of destroying each other; so the Babylonians were destroyed by the Medes and Persians; the Persians by the Grecians; the Grecians by the Romans; and the Romans by the Goths, Hunns, Vandals, &c. in the western part of the empire; and by the Saracens and Turks in the eastern part of it: and they may be applied to the apostles of Christ, who were chiefly mechanics, mean and illiterate persons, yet workmen in the Gospel, that need not to be ashamed; and who were sent by Christ into the four parts of the world, to spread his Gospel, set up his interest, and pull down the kingdom of Satan: and since the Jews make the Messiah himself one of these carpenters, they have no reason to upbraid or be offended at Jesus our Messiah being a carpenter, and a carpenter's son, as in Matt. xiii. 55. Mark vi. 3. and Kimchi owns that their ancient Rabbins explain this verse of the days of the Messiah.

Ver. 21. *Then said I, what come these to do?* &c.] That is, these four carpenters; for, being artificers or workmen, as the Targum renders the word, the prophet concluded there was some work for them to do: *and he spake, saying:* meaning the angel that talked with him, and interpreted the visions to him: *these are the horns which have scattered Judah;* not that the carpenters were the horns, for these two are distinct from, and opposite to, one another. The words should rather be rendered, *these horns which have scattered*

[x] אשר זרו quæ ventilarerunt, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius, Cocceius.

[y] חרשים fabros ferrarios, Pembellus, Sanctius, Burkius.

[z] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 2.

[a] Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 11. 4. Vid. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 14. fol. 111. 4.

Judah, as before said, ver. 19: *so that no man did lift up his head*; or, as the Targum paraphrases it, *did not suffer* (a man) *to go with an erect stature*: but, through oppression, sorrow, and misery, was obliged to stoop, and bow, and hang down his head: *but these are come to fray them*: these carpenters are come to fright the horns, to put terror into those kings and kingdoms: *to cast out the horns of the Gentiles*; to destroy their kingdoms, and take away their power from them: *which lifted up their horns over the land of Judah to scatter it*: who make use of their power, and do hurt to the people of Israel, and triumph and insult over them; see Psal. lxxv. 4, 5. all which may be applied to the ministers of the Gospel, who are workmen; and whose business it is to fray or terrify the horns, wicked men, even men in power, the enemies of Christ's church and people; by their preaching, which has made a Felix to tremble; by their prayers, which they have been more afraid of than an army of men, as Mary queen of Scots said of the prayers of John Knox; and by their good lives and conversations, which made Herod stand in fear of John the Baptist; nay, even they have been a terror to the devil himself, and have been the means of casting him, and his principalities and powers, out of the Gentile world, and out of both the bodies and souls of men; and of casting down the strong holds of sin, and of breaking in pieces the kingdom and interest of Satan, and of building up the churches of Christ; the work of these spiritual carpenters is to cut down men, comparable to strong, sturdy, and lofty trees, for the pride and haughtiness of their hearts, the stiffness and stubbornness of their wills, and for their shew of goodliness and beauty: this is done by the ministry of the word, the cutting doctrines of it, accompanied with the spirit and power of God; as it is said, *I have hewed them by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of my mouth*, Hos. vi. 5. whereas, when before, they grew up and stood on their own bottom, their morality, civility, and works of righteousness; now they are cut down, and die to all these things, as to any hope of salvation by them; and then, as the carpenter smooths and planes a timber he has hewed, and fitly frames it together, and joints it in, and lays it on a good foundation; so do Gospel ministers, as instruments in the hands of God, after hewing and cutting work through the ministration of the law, the killing letter, and which works wrath; speak comfortably to such souls, by directing them to the blood and righteousness of Christ for pardon of sin and justification of life; and ministerially lay them in the spiritual building, the church; or advise and exhort them to submit to the ordinances of Christ, and join themselves to Gospel churches; and, above all things, instruct them to build on Christ, the sure foundation in Zion; and ministerially lay him as the alone foundation to build upon for life and salvation, and not upon any works of righteousness done by them; and put them upon walking according to the line and rule of the divine word, in matters of worship, discipline, and conversation: and as there were in the first times of the Gospel many such builders, and have been more or less since; so there will be many more in the latter day, who will be very successfully employed in building, repairing, and beautifying the church of God; see Isa. lviii. 12. and lx. 10. and lxi. 4. Zech. vi. 15. Some by the four carpenters understand Zerubbabel, Joshua, Ezra, and Nehemiah; and so, by the four horns, those that opposed them in building the city and temple, as Rehum, Shimshai, Sanballat, and Tobiah; but these seem too inferior governors to be signified by horns; nor did they do what is here ascribed to them; rather their nations, Samaritans, Arabians, Ammonites, and Philistines, are meant.

CHAP. II.

THIS chapter contains a prophecy of the church under the Gospel dispensation; of the largeness and numbers of it; and of its protection and glory, through the presence of God in it. In this vision a man is seen with a measuring-line in his hand, to measure Jerusalem with, ver. 1, 2. upon which an angel bids the angel that talked with the prophet to declare to him the largeness, populousness, and safety of Jerusalem, ver. 3, 4, 5. then follows an exhortation to the people of God to come out of Babylon, ver. 6, 7. and then a promise of the calling of the Gentiles, and of God's gracious inhabitation in his church, which would be matter of joy to Zion; and of his inheriting Judah, and choosing Jerusalem, ver. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. and the chapter is concluded with an address to all mankind, to be silent before the Lord, since he was raised up out of his habitation, ver. 13.

Ver. 1. *I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked*, &c.] And saw a third vision; which, as Kimchi owns, refers to the times of the Messiah; though it might be of use to the Jews then present, to encourage them to expect the rebuilding of Jerusalem, in a literal sense: *and behold a man with a measuring-line in his hand*: by whom is meant, not Nehemiah, nor Zerubbabel; see ch. iv. 10. who were concerned in the building of Jerusalem; nor any mere man, nor even a created angel; for, though he may be the same with the other angel, that did not talk with the prophet, ver. 3. as Kimchi observes; seeing he seems to be superior to him that did; yet not a ministering spirit, but the Messiah, who in this book is often spoken of as a man; see the note on ch. i. 8. and by *the measuring-line in his hand* may be meant eternal predestination, the Lamb's book of life, which is in his keeping; and is the measure and rule by which he proceeds in the vocation, justification, and glorification of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven; or the Scriptures of truth, the measure and rule of doctrine, discipline, worship, and conversation; and according to which Christ forms, constitutes, and regulates Gospel churches; see Ezek. xl. 3. Rev. xi. 1.

Ver. 2. *Then said I, whither goest thou?* &c.] As it shewed great freedom and boldness in the prophet to put such a question to the man with the measuring-

reed, it was great condescension in him to return him an answer, as follows: *and he said unto me, to measure Jerusalem*: not literally understood, which was not yet thoroughly built; but the Gospel church, often so called; see Heb. xii. 22. and this measuring of it denotes the conformity of it to the rule of God's word; a profession of the true doctrines of it, and an observance of the ordinances of it, as delivered in it; and an agreement of the walk, life, and conversation of its members with it: *to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof*: the length of the New Jerusalem is as large as the breadth: its length, breadth, and height, are equal, Rev. xxi. 16.

Ver. 3. *And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth*, &c.] See ch. i. 9, 13, 14, 19. and he *went forth* from the place where the prophet was, with whom he had been conversing: *and another angel went out to meet him*: the same that was seen among the myrtle-trees, ch. i. 8. and here, with a measuring-line in his hand, ver. 1.

Ver. 4. *And said unto him*, &c.] That is, the other angel said to the angel that had been talking with the prophet, *run, speak to this young man*: meaning Zechariah, who was either young in years, as Samuel and Jeremiah were when they prophesied; or he was a servant of a prophet older than he, and therefore so called, as Joshua, Moses's minister, was, Numb. xi. 28. as Kimchi observes: *saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls*: this shews that this is not to be understood of Jerusalem in a literal sense, for that was not inhabited as a town without a wall; its wall was built in Nehemiah's time, and remained until the city was destroyed by Vespasian; yea, it had a treble wall, as Josephus says[b]; but of the church of Christ in Gospel times; and denotes both the safety and security of it; see Ezek. xxxviii. 11. and the populousness of it; and especially as it will be in the latter day, when both Jews and Gentiles are called, and brought into it; which sense is confirmed by what follows: *for the multitude of men and cattle therein*: the Jews being meant by *men*: see Ezek. xxxiv. 31. and the Gentiles by *cattle*, to which they used to be compared by the former: this will be fulfilled when the nation of the Jews will be born at once, and all Israel will be saved, and the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in; for the number of the spiritual Israel, the sons of the living God, both Jews and Gentiles, shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured, Hos. i. 10. Rom. ix. 26. and when there will be such a large increase of converts, and such flockings to Zion, to the spiritual Jerusalem, the church of God, that the place will be too strait for them, Isa. xlix. 19, 20. whereas, when Jerusalem in a literal sense was rebuilt, after the Babylonish captivity, there was a want of persons to inhabit it, and lots were cast for one out of ten to dwell in it; and they were glad of others that offered themselves willingly to be inhabitants of it, Neh. xi. 1, 2. for there was but a small number that returned from Babylon to repeople the city of Jerusalem, and the whole country of Judea; no more came from thence but forty-two thousand, three hundred, and threescore, besides men and maid servants, which amounted to seven or eight thousand more, Ezra ii. 64, 65. Neh. vii. 66, 67. which were but a few to fill such a country, and so many cities and towns that were in it, besides Jerusalem; and yet Josephus[c] affirms, that the number of those of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, that came up from thence, and were above twelve years of age, were four millions, six hundred, and twenty-eight thousand; in which he is followed by Zonaras[d], and it is admitted and approved of by Sanctius on the place; which is not only contrary to the accounts of Ezra and Nehemiah, but is incredible; that such a number that went into captivity, which was not very large, should, under all the distresses and oppressions they laboured, in seventy years time so multiply, and that two tribes only, as to be almost eight times more than all the twelve tribes were at their coming out of Egypt; a number large enough to have overrun the Babylonian monarchy; and too many to be supported in so small a country as the land of Canaan: wherefore, upon the whole, it must be best to interpret this of spiritual and mystical Jerusalem, and of the populousness of the church of Christ in the latter day.

Ver. 5. *For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about*, &c.] So that she needs no other wall to secure her, the power of God encompassing her about as the mountains did Jerusalem, Psal. cxxv. 2. and he being as a wall of fire to terrify and destroy her enemies; for our God is a consuming fire, Heb. xii. 29. Drusius thinks it is a metaphor taken from travellers in some countries, who kindle fires about their tents, to keep off lions, and other beasts of prey; and observes of lions particularly, that they are exceedingly terrified by fire; for which he refers to John Leo in his description of Africa; and Pliny makes[e] mention of several things that are terrifying to them, but especially fires, he says; and so Dr. Shaw[f], of late, speaking of the lions in Barbary, remarks, fire is what they are the most afraid of; yet, notwithstanding all the precautions of the Arabs in this respect, with others he takes notice of, it frequently happens that these ravenous beasts, outbraving all those terrors, will leap into the midst of an enclosure or fold, and drag from thence a sheep, or a goat; and Tavernier[g] tells a story, by which he thinks it appears to be a vulgar error that lions will not come near the fire; though the relation itself shews it to be not only a received opinion, but a common custom to light fires in the night, to preserve from lions: his story is, "a party "of Dutch soldiers, under the command of a serjeant, "far advanced in the country (about the Cape of Good "Hope), and night coming on, they made a great "fire, as well to keep themselves from the lions, as to "warm themselves, and so lay down to sleep round "about it; being asleep, a lion seized one of the soldier's arms, which with difficulty was got out, after "the lion was shot;" but this seems to be the case, when these creatures are dreadfully hunger-bitten;

[b] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 4. sect. 2.
[c] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 2. sect. 10.
[d] Apud Hudson in ib.
[e] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 16.

[f] Travels, tom. 1. par. 3. c. 2. p. 172.
[g] Travels through India, in Harris's Voyages and Travels, vol. 1. p. 848.

however, be it as it will, God is the sure and safe protection of his people; who went before the people of Israel in a pillar of a cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night, when they passed through a terrible wilderness, in which were beasts of prey; and surrounded Elisha with horses and chariots of fire, when the king of Syria sent a large host to take him; so that he could say, to encourage his servant, *they that be for us are more than they that be with them*, 2 Kings vi. 15, 16, 17. who seem to be angels; and the Jews[h] here interpret it of the family of God, his angels, made a wall to Jerusalem to preserve it; the cherubim and a flaming sword, set to keep the garden of Eden, were, according to Lactantius[i], a wall of fire about it; for (he says), when God cast man out of paradise, he walled it about with fire: but that was that man might not enter in; but here he himself is a wall of fire, that his people may be safe; hence they have no reason to fear the wrath of their enemies, the most fierce and furious, savage and cruel, comparable to lions, bears, &c. for, if God is for them, on their side, and on all sides of them, who can be against them to any purpose? The Targum paraphrases it "my Word shall be unto her, saith the "Lord, as a wall of fire encompassing her round about:" *and will be the glory in the midst of her*: appear glorious in her, be glorified in her, and by her, and be her glory, and make her glorious; as the Lord does by granting his gracious presence with his church and people, in his word and ordinances; see Isa. iv. and lx. 13.

Ver. 6. *Ho, ho*, &c.] This word expresses a call and proclamation; and is doubled, as Kimchi observes, to confirm it; and so the Targum paraphrases it, "pro- "claim to the dispersed:" *come forth, and flee from the land of the north, saith the Lord*; that is, from Babylon, which lay north of Judea: see Jer. i. 13, 14. and iii. 12. and vi. 22. and xvi. 15. where many of the Jews continued, and did not return with the rest when they came up out of the captivity; and are therefore called to come forth from thence in haste; and figuratively designs, either the people of God that are among the men of the world, and are called to separate from them, and have no fellowship with them; or such as will be in mystical Babylon, a little before its destruction; and will be called out of it, lest they partake of her plagues; see Rev. xviii. 4: *for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the Lord*: meaning either the dispersion of the Jews in Babylon, and other countries; or of the people of God, being scattered up and down in the jurisdiction of Rome Papal; or the sense is, that it was his will and purpose, when they were come out of Babylon, that they should be spread in the several parts of the world, to support the cause of Christ, and strengthen his interest.

Ver. 7. *Deliver thyself, O Zion*, &c.] Or make thy escape, you that belong to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, and ought to have your abode there, and not in Babylon: flee from thence, *that dwelleth with the daughter of Babylon*; in any of the antichristian states, who are the daughters of Babylon, the mother of harlots, Rev. xvii. 5. so it may be rendered, *that inhabits the daughter of Babylon*[k]; dwells in any of the cities, towns, and villages, belonging to it.

Ver. 8. *For thus saith the Lord of hosts*, &c.] Christ, who is the true Jehovah, and Lord of armies, as appears from his being sent in the next clause: *after the glory*: which is promised, ver. 5. so the Targum and Kimchi; or, *afterwards* shall be *the glory*[l]; or a glorious time and state; that is, after God's people are brought out of mystical Babylon, when the Jews shall be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, then will be the latter-day glory; and at the same time will be the fall and destruction of antichrist, and of the antichristian states, as follows: *hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you*: the Chaldeans and Babylonians, who spoiled and carried captive the Jews; or the antichristian nations, which persecuted and wasted the people of God, the followers of the Lamb; but now Christ will be sent, and will come in a spiritual manner, and take vengeance on them; he will destroy antichrist with the breath of his mouth, and with the brightness of his coming; with the sharp sword going out of his mouth, Rev. xix. 15: *for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye*: either his own eye, he hurts himself; or the eye of the Lord of hosts; *of mine eye*, as some read it[m], as the Vulgate Latin version; which shews how near and dear the Lord's people are to him. The pupil or apple of the eye is a litttle aperture or perforation in the middle of the tunic or coat of the eye, called the uvea and iris, about which the iris forms a ring; and through this little opening the rays of light pass to the crystalline humour, to be formed on the retina or net, at the bottom of the eye. It is a very weak and tender part, and easily hurt with the least thing; and fitly describes the feeble state of Christ's people; and how soon and easily they may be disturbed, distressed, and hurt by their enemies: and as this is a principal part of the eye, and a part of a man's self, dear and valuable to him; so are the Lord's people parts, as it were, of himself; they are members of his body, closely united to him; and whatever injury is done to them he reckons as done to himself: *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Acts ix. 5. and being highly esteemed by him, and having the strongest affection for them, he resents every affront given them, and will punish all that hurt them; and exceeding careful is he of them, to keep and preserve them from being hurt: *he kept him as the apple of his eye*, Deut. xxxii. 10. which, being such an useful and tender part as it is, it is wonderfully provided for by nature against all events; besides the orbit in which it is placed; and the eyebrows, which prevent many nuisances; and the eyelids, which cover and defend it in sleep; and the fringes of hair on them, which break the too-violent impressions of light, and keep off motes and flies; there are no less than six tunics or coats about it[n], as so many preservatives of it: now, as the God of nature has taken so much care of this useful member of the human body, how much more careful and tender must

[h] Psikta Rabbati apud Yalkut in loc.
[i] Institut. Divin. l. 2. c. 13.
[k] יושבת בת בבל, οἱ κατοικοῦντες θυγατέρα Βαβυλῶνος, Sept.; habitatrix filiæ Babel, Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius; *vel* inhabitans filiam Babel, De Dieu.

[l] אחר כבוד tandem *erit* gloria, aut postea *erit* gloria, De Dieu.
[m] So in Siphre apud Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. Ver. l. 1. c. 8.
[n] Vid. Chambers's Dictionary, in the word *Eye*.

we suppose the God of grace, and our merciful Redeemer and High-priest, to be over his dear people, parts of himself, redeemed by his blood, and designed and prepared for eternal glory and happiness; and how daring must such be who offer the least violence unto them; nor must they expect to escape his wrath and vengeance, that seek their hurt, and give them disturbance; see Psal. xvii. 8. and as this may respect the Jews called out of Babylon in the two preceding verses, it may be concluded that they were obedient to the divine call, though it is not recorded; it being not likely that God, who had so great a regard for them, would suffer them to continue there to their destruction; for it was about two years after this prophecy, in the fourth year of Darius, or the beginning of the fifth, that Babylon revolted from him, and was besieged twenty months by him, before he took it; and which he did at last by the stratagem of Zopyrus, one of his generals, when he beat down its walls and gates, and put to death three thousand of the inhabitants that were most guilty *; but, before this, it is reasonable to suppose that the people of God, so dear unto him as is expressed, were called out from hence; as those of his people, equally dear to him, will be called out of mystical Babylon before its destruction; see Rev. xviii. 4.

Ver. 9. *For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon them,* &c.] The nations; either the Babylonian, or the antichristian states; meaning, that he would exert his power, and inflict punishment on them, and utterly destroy them; which would be done by the bare shaking of his hand: *and they shall be a spoil to their servants;* as the Babylonians were to the Persians; not through Cyrus, which had been done; but through Darius, who took Babylon, after a siege of twenty months, and put great numbers to death; and all became a spoil to the Persians, who had been their servants: or the ten kings, that gave their kingdoms to the beast, and were subject to him; but now shall hate the whore, and eat her flesh; and all her riches and revenues shall be a spoil unto them, and be divided among them, Rev. xvii. 12, 16: *and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me:* either the Prophet Zechariah, that he was a true prophet, and had his mission from the Lord of hosts, as will appear by the accomplishment of these prophecies; or rather Christ, sent by God the Father; and who will be known and owned by the Jews, as well as by the Gentiles, to be the sent of God, when they shall be converted, and antichrist shall be destroyed. Kimchi refers this, and the following verse, to the times of the Messiah.

Ver. 10. *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion,* &c.] Or, *congregation of Zion,* as the Targum paraphrases it; the Jewish church, great numbers of that people being converted, and in a church-state; or the whole Christian church at this time, consisting of Jews and Gentiles, who are called upon to rejoice and sing at the destruction of antichrist; see Rev. xviii. 20. and xix. 1, 2. and because of the presence of God in the midst of them, as follows: *for, lo, I come;* not in the flesh: this is not to be understood of the incarnation of Christ; or of his coming in human nature to dwell in the land of Judea; but of his spiritual coming in the latter day, to set up his kingdom in the world, in a more visible and glorious manner: *and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord;* the presence of Christ in his churches, and with his people, in attendance on his word and ordinances, will be very manifest and constant in the latter day.

Ver. 11. *And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day,* &c.] The Gospel will be preached in all nations, and multitudes will be converted, and embrace and profess the Christian religion, and join themselves to the churches of Christ, which, in the New Testament, is expressed by being joined to the Lord, Acts v. 13, 14. see Jer. l. 5. and Isa. lvi. 3, 6: *and shall be my people;* shall appear to be so, who before were not the people of God; did not profess themselves, and were not known to be, the people of God, though they secretly were in the counsel and covenant of God; but now, being called by grace, they become openly and manifestatively his people, 1 Pet. ii. 10: *and I will dwell in the midst of thee;* in the church, consisting of people of many nations, as well as of Jews: *and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee;* to the Jews, as well as to the Gentiles; see the note on ver. 9.

Ver. 12. *And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land,* &c.] The Lord's people is his portion, and the lot of his inheritance; whom he has chosen, and calls as such, whether they be Jews or Gentiles; but here it seems to mean the believing Jews; who, it is very likely, upon their conversion, will be returned to their own land, here called *the holy land;* because formerly here the Lord's holy people dwelt, his holy sanctuary was, and his holy worship and ordinances were attended on; and where now he will possess and enjoy his people, and favour them with communion with himself: *and shall choose Jerusalem again;* after long trodden down of the Gentiles; as it formerly was a place of divine worship, so it shall be again; and which will be performed in it in a more spiritual and evangelical manner than ever; or it may respect the people of the Jews, who, being called by grace, this will be a kind of a renovation of their election, and an evidence of it; see Rom. xi. 26, 27, 28.

Ver. 13. *Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord,* &c.] Be filled with fear, awe, and astonishment, at the wonderful work of God; the destruction of antichrist; the conversion of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles: let them not open their mouths, or dare to say one word against it. The Targum interprets the words of the wicked, and paraphrases them thus, "let all the "wicked be consumed before the Lord;" see Psal. civ. 35. and it seems to design the rest of the people, who will not be converted; called *flesh,* being not only frail and mortal, but corrupt and sinful; and so not able to contend with God, who is mighty in strength, and glorious in holiness, and a God doing wonders. A like phrase is in Hab. ii. 20: *for he is raised up out of his holy habitation;* which is heaven, Isa. lxiii. 15. where he seemed to have been as it were asleep for many hundreds of years, even during the reign of antichrist;

* Vid. Prideaux's Connexion, par. 1. B. 3. p. 188, 189.

but now he will be as a man awaked out of his sleep, and will arise to take vengeance on his and his church's enemies, and to help them, and make them happy and glorious.

CHAP. III.

IN this chapter, under the type of Joshua the high-priest, is shewed the state and condition of the priesthood, and of the church of God, in his times; and in it are several promises concerning the true High-priest, Christ, and of the efficacy and permanency of his priesthood. The vision of Joshua is in the form of a judicial process: Joshua is the person accused, and is described by his situation, standing before the Angel of the Lord; and by the filthy garments he had on, which were the ground of the charge against him, ver. 1, 3. The accuser of him is Satan, who stood at his right hand; and his Judge is the Angel of the Lord, before whom he was, ver. 1. The sentence given against his accuser is by way of rebuke, enforced by the Lord's choice of Jerusalem, and merciful deliverance of this person; and, as given in his favour, is an order to take his filthy garments from him, and clothe him with change of raiment, and to put a fair mitre on his head; which were accordingly done, ver. 2, 4, 5. and a promise is made him, by way of protestation, that if he would walk in his ways, and keep his charge, he should judge his house, and keep his courts, and should have a walking-place among those that stood by, ver. 6, 7. and next Joshua, and those that were with him, are addressed as men wondered at; and are called upon to hearken to a promise of the Messiah, under the character of the Branch, ver. 8. and under that of a stone with seven eyes on it, and engravings in it, by whom the iniquity of God's people is removed, ver. 9. and the chapter is closed with an account of the prosperity, peace, and safety of the saints under the Gospel dispensation, ver. 10.

Ver. 1. *And he shewed me Joshua the high-priest, &c.*] Who was one that came up out of the captivity, and was principally concerned in building the temple, and had many enemies to obstruct him in it; and who falling into sin, or his sons, in marrying strange wives, Ezra x. 18, which he might connive at, Satan was ready to catch it up, and accuse him before God; though rather Joshua is to be considered, not personally, but typically, representing the state and condition of the priesthood, in which office he was; and which was very low, mean, and abject, under the second temple; or the church of God, which the priests, especially the high-priest, were representatives of: and indeed this vision may be accommodated to the case of any single believer, fallen into sin, and accused by Satan, and whose advocate Christ is: *standing before the Angel of the Lord*: not any created angel, but Christ the Angel of God's presence, who is called Jehovah, ver. 2. is the rebuker of Satan, and the advocate of his people; and who takes away their sins, and clothes them with his righteousness: and *standing before* him does not mean barely being in his sight and presence, but as ministering to him; this being the posture both of angels and men, the servants of the Lord, Dan. vii. 10. Psal. cxxxiv. 1. and cxxxv. 1, 2. either he was offering sacrifice for the people, or asking counsel of God for them; or rather giving thanks for his and their deliverance from captivity, being as brands taken out of the fire; and praying to be stripped of his filthy garments, and to be clothed with others more decent, and becoming his office; and for help and assistance in the building of the temple, and against those that obstructed him: also he was brought and placed here as a guilty person, charged with sin, and to be tried before him, *Satan standing at his right hand to resist him*; either to hinder him in his work of building the temple, by stirring up Sanballat, and other enemies; or rather to accuse him of sin, and bring a charge against him, and get sentence passed upon him; so the accuser used to stand at the right hand of the accused. The Targum paraphrases it, "and sin standing at his right hand to resist him:" when the people of God fall into sin, Satan the accuser of the brethren, their avowed enemy, observes it, and accuses them before the Lord, and seeks their condemnation. Maimonides [z] understands this of his standing at the right hand of the angel; but it was not usual for the prosecutor, accuser, or pleader, whether for or against a person arraigned, to stand at the right hand of the judge: indeed, in the Jewish sanhedrim, or grand court of judicature, there were two scribes stood before the judges; the one on the right hand, the other on the left; who took down in writing the pleadings in court, and the sentences of those that were acquitted, and of those that were condemned; he on the right hand the former, and the other on the left hand the latter [a]. The prince or chief judge of the court sat in the middle; and his deputy, called *Ab Beth Din*, or father of the court, sat at his right hand; and a wise man, a principal one, at his left [b]; but it was usual for the pleader, who was called בעל ריב, *Baal Rib*, to stand on the right hand of the party cited into the court, whether he pleaded for or against him [c]: and to this custom is the allusion here, and in Psal. cix. 6, 31. where Satan, who is the accuser of men, and pleads against them, is placed at the right hand, as here; and God, who pleads the cause of his poor people, is also represented as standing on their right hand. The business of Satan here was to accuse, to bring charges, to plead for condemnation, and endeavour to get the sentence of it passed against Joshua; for he was at his right hand, to be an *adversary* to him, as his name *(Satan)* signifies, which he has from the word here used; being an enemy to mankind

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[z] Moreh Nevochim, par. 3. c. 22. p. 393.
[a] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. sect. 3. Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 9. Mosis Kotsensis Mitzvot Torah, Pr. Affirm. 97.
[b] Maimon. ib. sect. 3. Vid. Cocceium in Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. sect. 2.
[c] Godwin's Moses and Aaron, l. 5. c. 3.

in general, and especially to the people of God, and more especially to persons in sacred public offices; to whom he is *ἀντίδικος, a court-adversary*, as the Apostle Peter calls him, 1 Pet. v. 8. who appears in open court against them, and charges them in a most spiteful and malicious manner; and is a most implacable, obstinate, and impudent one, as his name signifies, and the word from whence it is derived [t]; though Maimonides [u] thinks the name is derived from שטה, which signifies to decline, or go back from any thing; since he, without doubt, makes men to decline from the way of truth to the way of falsehood and error.

Ver. 2. *And the Lord said unto Satan*, &c.] The same with the Angel of the Lord, ver. 1. having heard the charge brought by him against Joshua, here called Jehovah, being the Son of God, and properly God: *the Lord rebuke thee, O Satan;* these words may be considered, either as the intercession of Jehovah the Son with Jehovah the Father, for Joshua and his church, and against Satan; that he would reprove him for his malice and wickedness; stop his mouth, and silence him, that he might not go on to accuse; that he would confound his schemes, and restrain him from doing mischief; tread him down, and bruise him under the feet of his people, and pour out his wrath upon him: or as a declaration of what should be done to him, or what he himself would do; for it may be rendered, *the Lord will rebuke thee* [w]; as the following clause is by some, who take this to be a wish, and the following a positive declaration, that Jehovah the Father would certainly rebuke Satan; as might be concluded from the reasons and arguments used by the angel, taken from God's choice of Jerusalem; the building of which Satan endeavoured to hinder, though God had chosen it for his habitation and worship; and from the deliverance of Joshua out of the fire for that purpose: and this reproof of him on the behalf of his people is founded on their election of God: *even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee;* which act is eternal; springs from the love and grace of God towards them; antecedes all works, good or bad, done by them; stands firm, sure, and unalterable; such who are interested in it are called, justified, and shall be glorified; nor has Satan any thing to do with them; nor will any charge of his be of any avail against them, Rom. viii. 33: *is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?* which is to be understood of Joshua; not of his being delivered out of that fire, into which the Jews [z] say he was cast, along with Ahab and Zedekiah, whom the king of Babylon roasted in it, Jer. xxix. 22. when he marvellously escaped; others say [y] 8,000 young priests fled to the temple, and were burnt in it, and only Joshua was preserved; but of his deliverance out of the Babylonish captivity, and also of the priesthood, which, during the captivity, when the temple was destroyed, and temple-service ceased, was like a brand in the fire; and though Joshua the high-priest was returned, and the priesthood in some measure restored, yet not to its former glory, the temple not being yet built; and therefore was but like a smoking firebrand; likewise the people of God may be meant; see Amos iv. 11. who are by nature like a branch cut off, a dry stick cast into the fire, and half-burnt; they are in a state of separation from God, Father, Son, and Spirit; and they are unprofitable and unfruitful, and in danger in themselves of being consumed in the fire of divine wrath, of which they are as deserving as others, and are under the sentence of it; and, when convinced, have dreadful apprehensions of being consumed by it; but, through the grace, mercy, love, and power of God, they are plucked out of this state in effectual vocation, and are secured from everlasting destruction; wherefore Satan is rebuked for attempting to bring any who are instances of such grace and goodness into condemnation; it being wicked and malicious, bold and daring, vain and fruitless; since such are secured by the grace and power of God, and are preserved for everlasting glory and happiness.

Ver. 3. *Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments*, &c.] Having fallen into sin. The Jewish writers [x] interpret this of the sin of his children in marrying strange wives, Ezra x. 18. or he had married one himself, as Jerom from the Jews, on the place; or a whore, as Justin Martyr [a] suggests; or had been slothful and sluggish in rebuilding the temple; and, be it what it will, Satan had aggravated it, and represented him as a most filthy creature, covered with sin, and as it were clothed with it: sins may well be called filthy garments, since righteousnesses are as filthy rags, Isa. lxiv. 6. It may also denote the imperfection of the Levitical priesthood, and the pollutions in it, at least in those who officiated therein, and especially under the second temple; as well as may represent the defilements of the Lord's people by sins they fall into: *and stood before the angel;* as an accused person, charged with sin, and waiting the issue of the process against him: he stood under an humble sense of his iniquities, looking to the blood and righteousness of Christ for pardon and justification; praying and entreating that these filthy garments might be took away from him, and he be clothed with fine linen, suitable to his character as a priest. Such a sordid dress was the habit of persons arraigned for crimes. It was usual, especially among the Romans, when a man was accused of, and charged with, capital crimes, and during his arraignment, to let down his hair, suffer his beard to grow long, to wear filthy ragged garments, and appear in a very dirty and sordid habit; hence such were called *sordidati* [b]: nay, it was not only customary for the accused person, when he was brought into court before the people to be tried, to be in such a filthy dress; but even his near relations, friends, and acquaintance, before the court went to voting, used to appear in like manner, with their hair dishevelled, and clothed with garments foul and out of fashion, weeping and crying, and deprecating punishment; thinking, by such a filthy and deformed habit, to move the pity of the people [c]. It is said of the ambassadors of the Rhodians at Rome, upon a certain victory obtained,

[t] Vid. Schultens in Job i. 6.
[u] Moreh Nevochim, ut supra.
[w] יגער increpabit, Burkius.
[x] Jarchi & Kimchi in loc.
[y] T. Hieros. Taaniot, fol. 69. 2.

[z] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 1.
[a] Dialog. cum Trypho, p. 344.
[b] Salmuth. in Pancirol. Memorab. par. 1. tit. 44. p. 187.
[c] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 3. c. 5.

that they appeared at first in white garments, suitable to a congratulation; but when they were told that the Rhodians had not so well deserved to be reckoned among the friends and allies of the Romans, they immediately put on sordid garments, and went about to the houses of the principal men, with prayers and tears entreating that cognizance might first be taken of their cause, before they were condemned[d]: though, on the contrary, some, when arraigned, as defying their accusers, and as a token of their innocence, and to shew the fortitude of their minds, and even, if they could, to terrify the court itself, would dress out in the most splendid manner; or, however, would not follow the above custom. It is reported of Scipio Africanus, that when he was arraigned in court, he would not omit shaving his beard, nor put off his white garments, nor appear in the common dress of arraigned persons[e]: and when Manlius Capitolinus was arraigned in court, none of his relations would change their clothes; and Appius Claudius, when he was tried by the tribunes of the common people, behaved with such spirit, and put on such a bold countenance, as thinking that by his ferocity he might strike terror into the tribunes; and so Herod, when he was accused before Hyrcanus, went into the court clothed in purple, and attended with a guard of armed men[f]: whether the above custom obtained in Judea, and so early as the times of this prophet, is not so evident; though Josephus ben Gorion says it was a custom for a guilty person to stand before the judges clothed in black, and his head covered with dust[g]; however, it is certain that with the Jews a distinction was made in the dress of priests, who, by the sanhedrim, were found faulty or not: such as were, were clothed and veiled in *black;* and such as were not, but were found right and perfect, were clothed in *white;* and went in, and ministered with their brethren the priests[h].

Ver. 4. *And he answered, and spake,* &c.] That is, the Angel of the Lord, before whom Joshua stood, answered to the accusations of Satan, and the entreaties of Joshua: and spake *unto those that stood before him:* not the fellows that sat before Joshua, ver. 8. for the priests, who were Joshua's fellows, could not take away sin; nor indeed can ministers of the Gospel, only ministerially or declaratively, as instruments, in bringing the good news of pardon to the comfort of distressed minds; whom the ministering angels may here represent, that stood before Christ the Archangel, the Head of all principalities and powers, and who are ministering spirits to him; and so the Targum paraphrases it, "and he said to them who ministered "before him;" who, though they can't expiate sin, or make atonement for it, may bring the tidings of pardon to a poor fallen believer: *saying, take away the filthy garments from him;* it may be observed, that the garments of the priests were to be new and fair, according to the Jewish canon[i]; and if they became filthy, they did not whiten them, nor wash them, but left them for threads (or wicks of candles), and put on new; and so orders are here given not to wash the filthy garments of Joshua, but to take them away: it is not, take him, Satan, the address is not to him; nor angels, who are spoken to, take away this filthy creature from me, I can't bear the sight of him; but take away his sins, not the being, power, or sense of them; nor does it signify making atonement for them, or removing them out of the sight of justice; but a taking them away out of Joshua's sight, and giving him a sense of pardon, a comfortable view of it, in which angels and ministers of the word may be assisting; see Isa. vi. 6, 7. and xl. 2. and is effectually done, when Christ, who has power to forgive sin, makes an application of forgiving grace himself, as follows: *and unto him he said:* that is, the Angel of the Lord said to Joshua: *behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee;* which shews that he had sinned, and interprets the filthy garments he was clothed with: Christ took his iniquity upon himself, bore and made satisfaction for it, and removed it as far from him as the east from the west; and now caused the guilt of it to pass from his conscience, and gave him a comfortable view of the free and full pardon of it. The word *behold* is prefixed to this declaration of pardon, to ascertain the truth of it, to fix his attention to it, and raise his admiration at it: *and I will clothe thee with change of raiment:* garments to put on and off; for, in those hot countries, they used to shift their garments often; and these do not design priestly garments, such as the high-priest put on on the day of atonement, when he put off his common garments, and, having done his work, shifted again, Lev. xvi. 23, 24. such change of garments the high-priest, indeed, had; and so had the common priests; for they did not wear the same garments, when out of service, as when in it; see Ezek. xlii. 14. and xliv. 19. and the notes there; but priestly garments seem rather to be intended in the following verses, which were put on along with the mitre: change of raiment here rather signify such as used to be wore on festivals and holy days, rich, valuable, precious garments; such as men wore when they went abroad, and appeared in company, and upon return home put off again; and especially clean neat garments, as some render the word[k], in opposition to filthy ones Joshua was clothed with: when arraigned persons put on sordid garments, they were said, *mutare vestem,* to change their apparel; but here clean, instead of filthy garments, are called change of raiment with great propriety; and a happy exchange is this indeed! The word is in the plural number, and may point at more garments than one, different suits of apparel, with which changes might be frequently made, both for delight and refreshment; and may have regard to the several garments of believers in Christ, of all good men, partakers of the grace of God: they have the garment of an outward holy conversation, which they are to watch and keep,

[d] Liv. Hist. l. 45. c. 20.
[e] A. Gell. Noct. Attic. l. 3. c. 4.
[f] Alex. ab Alex. ut supra.
[g] Hist. Heb. c. 44. apud Drusium in Amos ii. 7.
[h] Misn. Middot, c. 5. sect. 3. T. Bab. Yoma fol. 19. 1. Maimon. Biath Hamikdash, c. 6. sect. 11.
[i] Maimon. Cele Hamikdash, c. 8. sect. 4, 5.
[k] מחלצות vestibus albis, i. e. puris, Munster; mundas & pretiosas, Vatablus; vestes elegantiores & cultiores, Drusius; vestibus mutatoriis, Grotius; vestibus mundis, Burkius; significat in genere vestes decoras & pretiosas, ib.

lest they walk naked; and which, as it is often spotted with sin, they wash and make white in the blood of the Lamb: and there is the integrity and faithfulness of the saints in the performance of their duty, in their several stations of life; and especially of those in public office, in the discharge of that; who, as Job, put on righteousness, and it clothes them, and judgment is as a robe and diadem to them, ch. xxix. 14. and there is the garment of internal holiness, the new man, consisting of the several graces of the spirit, which is put on as a garment, and makes believers all glorious within; as well as their clothing is of wrought gold, the righteousness of Christ; the principal garment, called the robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation; the best robe, and wedding-garment, fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness or righteousnesses of the saints, Rev. xix. 8. and so the Targum renders the word here, *with righteousnesses*, though, as one change of raiment, or suit of apparel, may be meant, so one sort of righteousness only may be pointed at, even the one obedience of Christ, or his justifying righteousness; which may be so called, to denote the excellency and fulness of it, being sufficient to clothe and justify all the elect of God; like raiment, this is not in the saints, but put upon them, and covers them, and keeps them warm; protects from injuries, and beautifies and adorns: this robe of righteousness Christ has wrought out for his people, and he clothes them with it; it is his gift unto them, and they receive it from him; by which they are freed from all sin and condemnation, and their persons and services are accepted with God.

Ver. 5. *And I said, let them set a fair mitre upon his head*, &c.] These are either the words of Jehovah the Father, who has all the angels at his command, and can order them to do what he pleases; always regards the intercession of Christ; is ever well-pleased with his righteousness, and with his people, as clothed with it; and, where he gives grace, he gives more grace: a man clothed with Christ's righteousness is upon rising ground; he is in the way to great honour and glory: or, as some think, they are the words of the Angel of the Lord, the Messiah, continued, who willed, ordered, and commanded his ministering servants to do this, that Joshua might appear agreeably to the dignity of his office, and look great, as well as clean and neat: or rather they are the words of Zechariah the prophet; and design either the inward thoughts and secret wishes of his mind; or were an humble request of his, and was regarded; who, seeing something wanting to make Joshua a complete high-priest, intercedes for it: so one saint rejoices in the restoration of another; and is so far from envying the gifts and graces of the greatest, that he wishes him more: *so they set a fair mitre upon his head*: such as the high-priest wore; on which was a plate of gold, and on it written *Holiness to the Lord*: and was an emblem of Christ being made sanctification to his people; see Exod. xxviii. 4, 36. The mitre was a garment of the high-priest, a sort of covering for the head, a cap or turbant; it was made of linen, and is called the linen mitre, Lev. xvi. 4. and that which Joshua might have wore before, being stained and foul, it is requested that a *fair* or *clean*[l] one might be set upon his head. It consisted, as the Jewish writers say[m], of sixteen cubits or ells, which were rolled up in the form of a Turkish turbant; and has its name in Hebrew from its being thus rolled up. The account Josephus[n] gives of it is, that it was "a "cap or bonnet wore on the head, not rising up in a "point, nor encompassing the whole head, but put "on little more than the middle of it; and is called "*masnaempthes* (it should be *mitznephet*); and is "formed in such a manner, as to look like a crown, "made of a linen web, like a swath or roller; for it "is many times rolled about and sewed;" and with which Jerom's account of it agrees; who says[o], "the "fourth sort of garment is a round cap or bonnet, "such as we see painted on Ulysses, like a globe, "circle, or sphere, divided in the middle, and one "part set on the head: this we and the Greeks call "a *tiara*; the Hebrews, *mitznephet*: it has no point "at top, nor does it cover the whole head to the hair, "but leaves a third part of the forehead uncovered; "and so bound with a lace at the back of the head, "that it cannot easily fall from it: it is made of fine "linen; and is so well covered with a linen cloth, "(and which also Josephus takes notice of in the "above place), that no traces of the needle appear "without." It hid the seams, and the deformity of them: both the high-priest and the common priests wore mitres, as appears from Exod. xxviii. 4, 37, 39, 40. and the difference between them, according to the Jewish writers[p], seems chiefly to lie in the manner of rolling and wrapping them: the mitre of the high-priest was wrapped about his head, as you roll a broken limb, roll upon roll, and did not rise up to a point, but was flat on his head; but that of the common priests consisted of various folds and rolls, which gradually rose up to a point, as a nightcap, or high-crowned hat. Josephus[q], contrary to all other writers, makes the high-priest to have two mitres; for he says, he had a cap like to the former, such as all the rest of the priests had, upon which another was sewed, variegated with blue, or a violet colour; which Braunius[r] thinks is a mistake of his, arising from the blue lace, with which the plate of gold, that had engraven on it Holiness to the Lord, was fastened to the mitre; or else that the place is corrupted, or has been interpolated by some other hand; since this would make the high-priest to have nine garments, and not eight only; but Fortunatus Scacchus[s] takes the passage to be genuine, and argues from it for another mitre or cap, more worthy of the high-priest; and which was peculiar to him, and was very curiously wrought, and on which the celestial globe was figured; and so Je-

[l] צניף טהור κίδαριν καθαρὰν, Sept.; cidarim mundam, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus, Montanus, &c. [illegible], Targum.
[m] Maimon. Cele Hamikdash, c. 8. sect. 19.
[n] Antiqu. l. 3. c. 7. sect. 3.
[o] De Vestitu Sacerdotum ad Fabiolam, fol. 19. I.
[p] Maimon. Cele Hamikdash, c. 8. sect. 2. Aben Ezra in Exod. xxviii. 36.
[q] Ut supra, sect. 6.
[r] De Vestitu Sacerdot. Hebr. l. 2. c. 21. p. 795.
[s] Sacr. Elaeochrism. Myroth. l. 3. c. 39. p. 995. Vid. Solerium de Pileo, sect. 12. p. 257.

sephus says[t], that the cap being made of blue or hyacinth, seemed to signify heaven; for otherwise the name of God would not have been put upon it. The son of Sirach, Eccl. xlv. 12. speaks very highly of this covering of the high-priest's head, calling it "a "crown of gold upon the mitre, wherein was en-"graved Holiness, an ornament of honour, a costly "work, the desires of the eyes, goodly and beautiful:" as here a fair mitre: *and clothed him with garments*; priestly ones, suitable to his office, which were in all eight; which were the linen breeches; the coat of linen; an embroidered girdle; a robe of blue; an ephod of gold; a breastplate curiously wrought, in which were the Urim and Thummim; a mitre of fine linen, and a plate of pure gold on it, Lev. viii. 7, 8, 9. and on the day of atonement he wore the four following extraordinary garments, breeches, coat, girdle, and mitre all of linen, Lev. xvi. 4[u]; all which were typical of the clothing of believers by Christ, by whom they are made priests unto God: *and clothed him with garments*: priestly robes, suitable to his office: *and the Angel of the Lord stood by*; to see all done according to his order; and not as a mere spectator, for he was concerned in clothing him himself; and he still stood to denote his constant care of Joshua, and his regard to him, and as having something more to say to him, as follows:

Ver. 6. *And the Angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying.*] He not only gave his word, but annexed his oath; he called as it were heaven and earth to witness; and this he did to confirm the faith of Joshua in the promises he was about to make, as well as in the blessings of grace bestowed upon him; as the pardon of his sins, the justification of his person, and acceptance with God.

Ver. 7. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, &c.*] For this Angel was no other than the Lord of armies in heaven and in earth: *if thou wilt walk in my ways*; prescribed in the word of God, moral, ceremonial, and evangelical; in Christ the grand way, and indeed the only way of salvation; and in the paths of faith, truth, righteousness, and holiness; in the ways of God's commandments, which are pleasant, and attended with peace; such a walk and conversation, and such obedience, the grace of God teaches, and obliges to: *and if thou wilt keep my charge*; the things he gave in charge, all his commands and ordinances, particularly such as belonged to the priestly office and Levitical service; see Numb. iii. 7, 8. all which might be expected after so many favours granted: *then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts*: preside in the temple, be governor in it, and have the care of all the courts belonging to the people and the priests, and the advantages arising from thence. The meaning is, that whereas the office of the priesthood was in disuse through the captivity, and was become contemptible through the sins of the priests, it should now be restored to its former honour and glory: to have a place in the house of God, the church, is a great honour, and still more to be a governor and ruler in it: *and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by*: either among fellow-priests, or fellow-saints; or rather among the angels that stood before the Angel of the Lord, and ministered to him; signifying that he should enjoy their company, be like unto them, and join in service with them in heaven, in a future state: and *walking-places* among them denote the pleasures of the heavenly state, as well as the safety and glory of it; see Isa. lvii. 2. Rev. iii. 4. and xxi. 21. The Targum very agreeably paraphrases the words thus, "and "in the resurrection or quickening of the dead, I will "raise or quicken thee; and I will give thee feet "walking among these seraphim." The allusion is to those walks that were in the temple, such as Christ walked in, John x. 23. and the pavement in Ezekiel's temple, ch. xl. 17, 18.

Ver. 8. *Hear now, O Joshua the high-priest, &c.*] What he was about to say further concerning the bringing forth of the Messiah, the antitype of him, and of all the priests; *thou and thy fellows, that sit before thee*: the Jews interpret[w] these of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, for whom wonders were wrought in delivering them from the fiery furnace; but rather they design the priests and the prophets, and chief men, that came up with Joshua out of the captivity; and especially the young priests that sat before him as his disciples, to be instructed by him in things belonging to the priestly office: *for they are men wondered at*; or, *men of a sign*[x], or *wonder*; typical of Christ, the great High-priest; they were *men wondered at*, as all the people of God are: they are wondered at by themselves, that God should have any love to them, any thoughts concerning them; make a covenant with them in his son; send him to die for them; call them by his grace; make them sons and heirs of his, and at last bring them to glory: and they are wondered at by the men of the world; that they should make such a choice as they have; that they should bear afflictions with so much cheerfulness and patience; that they should be so supported under them, and even thrive and flourish amidst them. The life of a believer is all a mystery, and wonderful: and they are wondered at by the angels, as they are the chosen of God, the redeemed of the Lamb, and called from among men; and they shall be the spectators of wonderful things themselves, which they will be swallowed up in the admiration of to all eternity. The Targum paraphrases the words thus, "for they are men "worthy to have miracles wrought for them;" and indeed, though they are not worthy, yet miracles of grace are wrought for them, and one follows: *for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the* BRANCH; not Zorobabel, as some interpret it; but the Messiah, as the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it; and which is the sense of some other Jewish writers. Kimchi, though he interprets the Branch of Zerubbabel, yet observes there are some of their interpreters who explain it of the Messiah; and it is as if it were said, though I bring you this salvation, yet I will bring you a greater salvation than this, at the time I shall bring

[t] Ut supra, sect. 7.
[u] Maimon Cele Hamikdash, c. 8. sect. 1, 2, 3.
[w] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 1. & Jarchi in loc.
[x] אנשי מופת viri portenti, Montanus, Calvin, Drusius, Cocceius; viri prodigiorum, Vatablus; viri prodigii, Burkius.

forth my servant the Branch: and again they interpret it of him, because the name of the Messiah is Menachem, *i. e.* the Comforter; and which is numerically the same with *Tzemach*, the Branch; and Aben Ezra, who first explains it the same way as Kimchi, yet adds, but many interpreters say this Branch is the Messiah: and he is called Zerubbabel, because he is of his seed, even as he is called David; and David my servant shall be their Prince for ever, Ezek. xxxvii. 25. likewise another Jewish writer, R. Abraham Seba[y], understands it of the Messiah. The Heathens used to call their heroes the branches of the gods; the branch of Jupiter, and the branch of Mars, *&c.* are frequently met with in the poets[z], and perhaps taken from this name of the Messiah; who is the servant of God as Mediator, and became so by being made of a woman, and made under the law; and is a servant of God's choosing, sending, and rewarding; the chief of whose service lay in the redemption of his people; and who was an obedient, diligent, prudent, and faithful servant. The name of *the Branch* is given him elsewhere, Isa. iv. 2. Jer. xxiii. 5. and designs his descent as man, and the meanness of it; and yet his fruitfulness in himself, and to his people: the *bringing* him *forth* intends his incarnation; and shews that he existed before, and was with God, and is brought forth by him as an instance of his grace and love to men; and because this was a matter of great moment, and very wonderful, and would certainly be done, and deserved attention, the word *behold* is prefixed to it. The Septugint render this word by ἀνατολὴν, the rising sun, or that part of the heavens where the sun rises, the east; and the Vulgate Latin version has *orientem*, the east: hence another Zechariah calls the Messiah *the Day-spring from on high*, Luke i. 78. and one of his titles is *the Sun of righteousness*, Mal. iv. 2. The eastern part of the heavens was attributed by the Heathens to their gods, and reckoned their seat and abode[a]; and from hence the Messiah came, that man from heaven; he was born in the eastern part of the world. Some render the words, in Mic. v. 2, *his goings forth are out of the east*[b]; and it was from the mount of Olives, which was to the east of Jerusalem, that he went up to heaven; and from the same point of the heavens will he come again, since his feet will stand on that mountain, Acts i. 11, 12. Zech. xiv. 4. he is the Angel said to ascend from the east, Rev. vii. 2. and perhaps it is owing to this version of the word here, and elsewhere, when used of the Messiah, that he came to be known among the Gentiles by this name; to which it is thought Tacitus[c] has respect, when he says, "many were persuaded that in "the ancient books of the priests were contained a *pro-* "*phecy*, that at that time *Oriens*, or the east, should "prevail;" that is, such an one should exist, or rule in the world, whose name is *Oriens*, or the rising sun.

Ver. 9. *For, behold, the stone that I have laid before Joshua, &c.*] Not the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel; nor the first and foundation stone of the temple laid by him in the presence of Joshua; but Christ the Stone of Israel, whom the builders refused, the foundation and corner-stone of the spiritual building the church: and this was laid before Joshua to build his faith upon, to view his safety and security on it, and to take comfort from it for himself; and to lay it before others, and instruct them in the nature and use of it, for their comfort also. It was prophetically laid before him in the prophecies of Christ, that went before; and typically, when the foundation of the temple was laid, Ezra iii. 9, 10. the temple being a type of the church, and the foundation of it a type of Christ: and this being done by Jehovah, shews that he is the chief builder; that this stone must be an excellent one, that is of his laying; that that building must stand, which this is the foundation of; and that under-builders have great encouragement to work; see Isa. xxviii. 16. Vitringa, on the place referred to, interprets Joshua of Isaiah, who prophesied of this stone in the said place, and before whom it was laid by a spirit of prophecy; Isaiah and Joshua being words of the same signification and formation: but Isaiah was no high-priest; for there is no room to think that Joshua, in this verse, is another and distinct from Joshua the high-priest, in the former: *upon one stone shall be seven eyes;* meaning either the eyes of Christ himself, which he has, and are in him; for Christ is not only a living stone, but a seeing one, even all-seeing; he is all eye. This may be an allusion to such stones that have the resemblance of eyes upon them: such a stone is that which Scheuchzer[d] speaks of, and calls *siliculus ommatias*, being found in the river Sila; which represents the fore part of the bulb of the eye, and the black pupil of the eye in a snowy white; and, after a small interstice, as surrounded with another black circle; with which may be compared the *achates*, in the middle of which is an onyx, resembling an eye, and is therefore named by Velschius[e], *achates ommatias*, and *onych-ophthalmos*. Some stones have on them the figures of the eyes of animals, and have their names from them; as the *ægophthalmos*, which is very much like the eye of a goat; and *lycophthalmos*, in the middle of which the black is surrounded with white, as the eyes of wolves, and in all respects like unto them; and *hyophthalmos*, which bears the likeness of the eyes of swine: and some resemble human eyes; there is one called *triophthalmos*, which is bred with the onyx, and represents three eyes of a man together; all which are made mention of by Pliny[f]: but here is a stone with seven eyes in it, denoting perfection of sight in him as a divine Person, special oversight of his people, and fulness of grace in him as Mediator; for the fulness of the gifts and graces of the spirit in him, for the use of his people, is signified by seven eyes, Rev. v. 6. they may design the omniscience of Christ in general, which reaches to all persons and things, and greatly qualifies him to be the Head of the church, and Judge of the world; and likewise his special knowledge, care, and watchfulness of his own people, from everlasting, in time, at, and before, and after conversion, under all

[y] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 114. 2. 3.
[z] Vid. Huet. Demonstr. Evangel. prop. 9. c. 30. p. 520.
[a] Porphyry & Varro in Festus, apud Gregory's Notes and Observations, c. 18. p. 72.
[b] Gregory, ib. p. 92.
[c] Hist. l. 5. c. 13.
[d] Specimen. Lithograph. Helvet. Curios. fig. 37. p. 27.
[e] Hecatost. 1. Obs. 22. apud ib.
[f] Nat. Hist. l. 37. c. 11.

their trials and exercises: or they design the eyes which are looking to him, and are intent on him; and the sense is, that all eyes are upon him: the eyes of God the Father were upon him in the council and covenant of peace, and under the Old Testament, as the surety of his people, to make satisfaction for them; and, when the fulness of time was come, to send him forth; and during his infancy, and throughout his life, to preserve him; and in the whole of his humiliation, sufferings, and death, his eye was on him with pleasure and satisfaction; and when in the grave to raise him up; and now in heaven, for the acceptance of his people: the eyes of the Holy Spirit are on him, to take of his things, and shew them to his people: the eyes of angels are upon him, in point of dependence, service, and worship; their eyes were upon him when here on earth, as he ascended to heaven, and now he is there; the eyes of all the saints, under the Old Testament, were upon him, expecting him, and looking to his person, and to his blood and sacrifice, that were to be offered; the eyes of all believers, under the New Testament, in all times and places, are to him for pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation; and the eyes of all, good and bad, will be fastened on him, when he comes a second time, in the clouds of heaven; and the eyes of all the glorified ones will be upon him to all eternity, beholding his glory; to this sense agrees the Targum, which renders the words, *upon one stone, seven eyes look to it.* R. Joseph Kimchi interprets these eyes of seven men, Joshua, Ezra, Zorobabel, Nehemiah, and the three prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi: *behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts;* either with the names of his elect, which are not only written in the book of the Lamb; but their persons are put into his hands, and engraven there; and are bore upon his shoulders, he having the care and government of them; and are upon his breastplate, and on his heart, he being their representative, and presenting them for a memorial before the Lord; as the names of the tribes of Israel were on the stones, on the shoulders, and on the breastplate of the high-priest; in all which Jehovah is concerned: or else with the gifts and graces of the spirit, like a carved or polished stone; his human body was prepared and formed by him, and his human soul was filled with him; and he, as Mediator, was full of grace and truth; which is one branch of his glory, and draws the eyes of believers to him: or these engravings may intend the sufferings of Christ; the wounds and marks in his flesh; or, the *openings* [g], in his feet, hands, and side, as it may be rendered; the incisions and cuts made there by the nails and spear; which were according to the determination, will, and pleasure of God; according to his purposing and commanding will, which Christ was obedient to; and are pleasing to God, as being the accomplishment of his counsel and covenant; satisfactory to his law and justice; what procured the salvation of his people, and brought glory to him: unless this is rather to be understood of the exaltation and glorification of his human nature in heaven; of his being beautified, adorned, and crowned with glory and honour there, and made the head-stone of the corner; and indeed all these things may be included. The allusion seems to be to engraving of stones, either by nature, or by art; some have forms and figures on them, which are not engraven by art, or man's device, but are of God, and by nature; such as those stones before mentioned, that have the resemblance of eyes upon them; and the *achates*, which was wore in the ring of Pyrrhus king of Epirus, in which were seen the nine Muses, and Apollo holding a harp; and which were not engraven by art, as Pliny [h] observes; but the spots of nature's own accord were so placed, as that to each Muse its proper ensign was given: others are engraven by the art of men, as the onyx-stones, which had the names of the children of Israel on them, wore on the shoulders of the high-priest; by which instance it appears, that the art of engraving on precious stones is very antique, and in which the ancients are said to excel; their engravings on agates, cornelians, and onyx, surpass any thing of that kind produced by the moderns. Pyrgoteles, in the times of Alexander, and Dioscorides, under the first Roman emperors, were the most eminent engravers we read of. This art, with other polite arts, was buried under the ruins of the Roman empire, until it was retrieved in Italy at the beginning of the 15th century, by two Italians; and from that time has been common enough in Europe [i]: but since this stone here was for building, rather the allusion is to the engraving and polishing of corner-stones and frontispieces in edifices; and particularly to those costly, curious, and carved stones used and laid in the temple; see Mark xiii. 1. Luke xxi. 5. or to the first stone laid in the foundation, in which little orbs were engraven, and medals of gold or silver put in them, bearing the name, country, and descent of the builder, and the day, year, and reign in which the structure was begun; which little orbs are thought to be called eyes, because of the orbicular form of the eye [k]; so Grotius thinks the engraving of the seven eyes on the stone is here referred to; which stone he takes to be the plummet in the hand of Zorobabel, when the foundation of the temple was laid, ch. iv. 10. at which time these seven eyes were caused suddenly to appear on it, and is the wonder spoken of, ver. 8: *and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day;* not Judea, nor Chaldea, but Immanuel's land, the church and people of God, Isa. viii. 8. even all the elect and covenant ones, for whom Christ suffered and died, and who are laid upon this stone; their sins Jehovah removed from them to Christ their surety; and Christ, by bearing them, and the punishment of them, took them away; and God removed them, both from him and them, upon his becoming a sacrifice for them; and that wholly out of sight, so as that he never will impute them to them, nor condemn them for them; and this was all done *in one day.* Jarchi, upon the text, says, "I know not what day this is;" but we Christians know it was the day on which Christ suffered and died, and offered himself a sacrifice for sin; by which one offering of himself, once for all, he put

[g] מפתח פתחה aperiens apertionem ejus, Montanus; aperio, Munster.

[h] Nat. Hist. l. 37. c. 1.

[i] Chambers's Dictionary, in the word *Engraving*.

[k] Capellus in loc.

away sin for ever: it was all done in one day, Heb. vii. 27. and ix. 26, 28. and x. 10, 12, 14. on the day he suffered, when he, expiring on the cross, said, *it is finished*: namely, sin, and complete salvation from it.

Ver. 10. *In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, &c.*] The Gospel dispensation, which began with the incarnation, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ, and still continues; called sometimes the day of salvation, the acceptable time, and year of the redeemed: *shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine, and under the fig-tree*: which may be expressive of the desire of gracious souls after the conversion of others; they would have them come under the means of grace; and are desirous that the means might be blessed to them; that they might know Christ, and be partakers of the same grace with them; which arises from a sense they have of the blessings they share in; from a love to immortal souls, and a desire to promote the glory of God; also of the fruitfulness and plenty of the Gospel dispensation; Christ is the true vine, laden with precious fruits; from him saints have all their fruitfulness; they sit under his shadow with delight, and his fruit is sweet unto them; the provisions of his house are very excellent and precious, to which others are invited to partake of: likewise of the fellowship and communion which saints have with each other; they converse in private, join in public worship, and feast together at the Lord's table; and encourage one another so to do; all which is crowned with the presence of God, and fellowship with him: moreover, the words may suggest that peace and tranquillity enjoyed by believers under the Gospel dispensation, and that safety and security which they have in and through Christ; see the note on Mic. iv. 4.

CHAP. IV.

IN this chapter are contained the vision of a golden candlestick, and of two olive-trees by it, and the explanation thereof. The preparation to this vision, which is the awaking of the prophet, as of a man out of sleep, is in ver. 1. The vision of the candlestick, and olive-trees, is in ver. 2, 3. The candlestick is described by the matter of it, gold; and by the parts of it, its bowl, lamps, and pipes; and the olive-trees by their situation; the explanation of which is at the request of the prophet, he not knowing what they meant, ver. 4, 5. when it is observed to him, that this represents, under the type of Zerubbabel building the temple, the building of the Gospel church by Christ; and which is done and finished, not by might or power of man, but by the spirit, notwithstanding all opposition, and contempt of it, to the great joy of many, who observe the grace of God, and his providential care and goodness, in it, ver. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. and upon the prophet's inquiring the meaning of the two olive-trees, which he was ignorant of, he is told that these are the two anointed ones that stood by the Lord of the whole earth, ver. 11, 12, 13, 14.

Ver. 1. *And the angel that talked with me, &c.*] See ch. i. 9, 13: *came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep*: into which he fell, after he had had the former vision; see Dan. viii. 8.

Ver. 2. *And said unto me, what seest thou? &c.*] That is, after he was awake, and had looked about him: *and I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold*: such an one as was in the tabernacle of Moses, only with this difference: that had no bowl on the top, nor seven pipes to it, nor two olive-trees on each side of it, with two pipes to them, Exod. xxv. 31—37. such a candlestick was never in being, only in vision; and is an emblem of the church of Christ, into which the light of the Gospel is put by Christ, and held forth by it, and especially by its ministers; see Rev. i. 12, 13, 20. for the light put into this candlestick, the church, is not the light of nature or reason, which is *the candle of the Lord searching into the inward parts* of man; by which he may discern somewhat of the being and perfections of God in his works, and of moral good and evil; but it is too dim to direct and guide him in the affair of salvation: nor the law of Moses, said to be a light, and a lamp; by which men might come to the knowledge of sin, but not of a Saviour from it: but the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, which was like a candle lighted up in the evening of the Jewish dispensation, and placed in the Christian church; and gave light, not only to the saints in Judea, but in all parts of the world, whither it has been carried; for this candlestick is portable, and has been removed from place to place; and wherever it is set, it gives light, and removes the darkness of error, infidelity, and immorality; and is useful to direct the saints in their walk and conversation, and render them more capable of working with delight and pleasure; and will blaze out more brightly in the end of the world, when it is about to be no more; and by the light of it lost sinners, like the lost piece of silver, are looked up, strayed ones are brought back, and backsliders restored; hypocrites and formalists, heretics and false teachers, and their doctrines, are discovered and detected; and saints are enlightened, comforted, and directed: and this candlestick being *all of gold* may denote the value of it; the true church of Christ, and the real members of it, are highly esteemed by Christ; the precious sons of Zion are comparable to fine gold, jewels, and precious stones; they are the excellent in the earth, in whom is his delight: and likewise its brightness and purity, splendour and glory; its members being possessed of the gifts and graces of the spirit, of the pure and glorious doctrines of the Gospel, and exercising holy discipline, and living holy lives and conversations: and also the duration of it, which will be to the end of the world, the gates of hell not being able to prevail against it; and which is continued, not by might or power of man, but by the spirit of the Lord, and his grace, which is sufficient for it, and with which it is supplied; not by any natural or artificial means, but by a wonderful and uncommon manner; signified by oil not pressed from the olive by the help of man, but flowing from two olive-trees, on both sides the candlestick, of itself, freely, and con-

stantly. This candlestick may primarily respect, and may be an emblem of, the then present state of the Jewish church, when this vision was seen; and point at how it was raised up, restored, and preserved; but has a further view to the church of God, under the Gospel dispensation, unto the end of the world: *with a bowl upon the top of it*; an oil-vessel, or cruet, round, and large enough to hold the oil, which supplied it, and its several lamps, whereby its light was maintained and continued: and this may intend, either the fulness of grace in Christ, which is as *a fountain*, as the word [l] here used signifies, Josh. xv. 19. to supply his church and people; and from whence they have the oil of grace in measure, which is in him without measure, whereby their lamps are filled, and their lights are kept burning; and who is fitly placed as the Head of the church for this purpose, as this bowl was upon the top of the candlestick: or rather, since this *bowl* is but a measure, though it may be a large one it may signify that large portion of gifts and grace which is communicated to the church in all ages, and abides in it, and is severally divided to the ministers and members of it, for its profit and edification; to one one gift, to another another; to some greater, and others less; and all for mutual good; and which are given forth from Christ and his Spirit; who, as Capellus thinks, may be meant by the two olive-trees, who of themselves, without pressing, having all fulness of grace in them without measure, freely and liberally impart it; and keep filling the bowl, so that there is constantly a supply of the spirit, and grace for the church and people of Christ in all ages; according to Isa. lix. 21. *my spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth, and for ever*. Cocceius thinks the merit of Christ is meant by this bowl or cup, by which he obtained the promise of the spirit: *and his seven lamps thereon*; on the candlestick; such a number of lamps were on the candlestick in the tabernacle, Exod. xxv. 37. and may design the many members of the church bearing the lamps of profession; or rather the ministers of the Gospel, who are the lights of the world, and bright and burning ones, that hold forth the word of life both in doctrine and conversation; unless the gifts and graces of the spirit, qualifying them for such work, should be meant; see Rev. iv. 5. but rather ministers themselves are designed, who are called lights and lamps, Matt. v. 14. John v. 35. and the number seven, being a number of perfection, may denote a fulness and sufficiency of Gospel ministers, which Christ furnishes his church with, and will do unto the end of the world; he having a perfection of gifts in his hands for them, to fit them for his service; just as these are called the *seven pillars* of Wisdom's house, Prov. ix. 1. Cocceius thinks by these seven lamps are intended the seven churches, or the seven states of the church under several periods in the Gospel dispensation; the same with the seven churches of Asia, and the seven golden candlesticks, in the midst of which Christ was seen by John, Rev. i. 4, 11, 12: *and seven pipes to the seven lamps which were upon the top thereof*; these pipes, infusories or funnels, were at the bottom of the bowl, in which were so many holes, that let out the oil into them, by which it was carried to the lamps; a pipe to every lamp. In the Hebrew text it is, *seven and seven pipes* [m]; that is, fourteen, two to every lamp; which Fortunatus Scacchus [n] thinks, they being joined to one another, the one put in the neck of the other, were for the better cleansing and purifying of the oil from any dregs that might be in it. Jarchi is of opinion there were seven to every lamp, in all forty-nine, but without any foundation: by these are meant, not the seven sacraments, as say the Papists; but either the various gifts of the spirit, fitting ministers for their service; or the various means they make use of to learn the mind of Christ in the Scriptures, to know the Gospel, and more of it, that they may hold it forth to others; such as reading, meditation, and prayer.

Ver. 3. *And the two olive-trees by it, &c.*] Which are explained, ver. 14. see the note there: *one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof*: in ver. 11 they are said to be on the right and left sides of the bowl or candlestick, which is the same; for the situation of them was alike, with respect to the one and the other: according to Fortunatus Scacchus, these two olive-trees did not arise out of the earth, and reach the top of the candlestick; but out of the base of the candlestick, one on the right hand of the bowl, which hung in the middle of the candlestick; and the other on the left [o], of which he has given the figure.

Ver. 4. *So I answered, and spake to the angel that talked with me, &c.*] The same that awoke him out of sleep, and asked him what he saw: *saying, what are these, my lord?* that is, what do they signify? what do they represent? or what are they emblems of? for he knew what they were; that they were a candlestick, and two olive-trees; but he was desirous of knowing what the meaning of them were.

Ver. 5. *Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, &c.*] Either to upbraid him with his ignorance and stupidity; or rather to quicken his attention, and that of others, to the interpretation of it he was about to give him: *knowest thou not what these be?* art thou ignorant of the design of them? or knowest thou not what is meant by them? *and I said, no, my lord*; he made an ingenuous confession of his ignorance, joined with great respect unto, and veneration of, the angel that conversed with him.

Ver. 6. *Then he answered, and spake unto me, saying, &c.*] In great condescension, in order to instruct him into the true meaning of the vision: *this is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel*; this signifies what was said by the Lord to Zerubbabel, by some one of the prophets sent unto him: *saying, not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts*: that is, that as the candlestick was supplied with oil, from the two olive-trees by the side of it, without the help of any man,

[l] גלת fons, Pembelius; scaturigo, Sanctius.
[m] שבעה ושבעה septem & septem, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Piscator.

[n] Sacror. Elaeochrism. Myrothec. l. 1. c. 10. p. 50.
[o] Ibid. c. 12. p. 62.

to pour in the oil, and trim the lamps; so the temple should be built by Zerubbabel, not through the multitude and strength of men, but through the spirit of God, animating, exciting, encouraging, and strengthening them to go through the work. The temple was a type of the church, and Zerubbabel a type of Christ; he was so in the high esteem he was had in by the Lord; he was chosen by him; made as a signet, and was precious to him, Hagg. ii. 23. in his titles and characters, a servant of the Lord, and governor of Judah, Hagg. i. 1. and ii. 23. and in his work, in bringing the Jews out of captivity, and in rebuilding the temple: so Christ is the chosen of God, and exceeding dear and precious to him; is his righteous servant, and Governor of the church, or King of saints; and who has redeemed and delivered his people from the captivity of sin, and Satan, and the law; and is the builder of his church; who has laid the foundation of it, and will bring in the head-stone; and which church is built up in all generations through the conversion of sinners; and that is done, not by external force, by carnal weapons, or moral suasion; but by the sword of the Spirit, the word of God; and not by the power of man's free will, but by the efficacious grace of the divine Spirit: it is indeed done by power and might, but not of the creature: man, whatever power he has to do things natural, civil, outwardly religious, and materially moral, or however in appearance, has no power to do any thing spiritually good; not to think a good thought, nor do a good action, in a spiritual manner; much less to work such a work as the work of regeneration, conversion, and sanctification; since he is dead in sin, and can't quicken himself; his understanding is darkened, yea, darkness itself, and he can't command light into it; his will is stubborn and obstinate, and he can't bend it, and subdue it; his heart is hard as a nether millstone, and he can't soften it, and repent of his sins, in a truly spiritual, gracious, and evangelic manner; his affections are inordinate; and he is a lover of sinful pleasures, and not of God, nor of any thing divine, to which his carnal mind is enmity; he can't believe in Christ of himself; faith is not of himself, it is the gift of God, and so is repentance, and every other grace. The work of grace on the soul is expressed by a regeneration, a resurrection from the dead, a creation, and the new man, or a transformation of a man into another man; all which require almighty power to effect: regeneration is not of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God, of Jehovah the Spirit: sanctification is called the sanctification of the Spirit, and every grace of it is a fruit of his; it is he who is the Spirit of life from Christ, that quickens men when dead in trespasses and sins, and enlightens their dark minds with spiritual light, in divine things; it is he that produces evangelical repentance in them, and faith in Christ is of his operation; it is he that begins the work of grace on the heart, and carries it on, and causes to abound in the exercise of every grace, and performs the work of faith with power. The Targum, instead of *by my Spirit*, renders it *by my Word*.

Ver. 7. *Who art thou, O great mountain?* &c.] This is said in reference to those who opposed the building of the temple, as Sanballat, and others; or the Persian monarchy, and Babylon the capital of it; a mountain being a symbol of a kingdom, or capital city; so Babylon is called, Jer. li. 25. hence the Targum paraphrases the words thus, "how art thou accounted a foolish "kingdom before Zerubbabel!" and may denote the opposition made to Christ, and to the building of his church, both by Rome Pagan and Rome Papal; Rome is signified by a burning mountain cast into the sea, Rev. viii. 8. and may include all the enemies of the church and people of God, as sin, Satan, and the world; who, though they may look like high and great mountains, and make much opposition, and throw many difficulties in their way, yet in the issue will be of no avail; see Isa. xlix. 11. and the note there. Some Jewish writers[r], by *the great mountain*, understand the Messiah, but very wrongly; for he is designed by Zerubbabel in the next clause; but not by the *head-stone*, as the Targum interprets it: *before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain*; as all opposition and difficulties were surmounted by Zerubbabel in building the temple; so all vanish and disappear before Christ, the antitype of Zerubbabel, in the building up of his church, through the conversion of sinners, and in the protection and preservation of it: *and he shall bring forth the head-stone thereof*; that is, he, Zerubbabel, shall finish the building of the temple, as in ver. 9. the head-stone being the last and uppermost stone in the building, which is last laid, and completes the whole; and in the spiritual sense designs, not Christ the head-stone of the corner, for 'tis he that is Zerubbabel's antitype, who brings it in; but the last man that will be converted, when the number of God's elect will be completed in regeneration: they are all in Christ's hands, and under his care; before conversion they are secretly his, his hidden ones; in conversion he brings them forth, and makes them to appear what they are; and, when the last of this number is born again, the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, will be wholly built, and nothing wanting in it; and the work of grace will have the last hand put to it, and be perfect in all. Christ is indeed sometimes called the head-stone of the corner, and the chief corner-stone, Psal. cxviii. 22. Ephes. ii. 20. and he is the principal one in the spiritual building the church; he is the foundation-stone, on which the whole is laid; and he is the corner-stone, that joins, knits, and keeps all together; he is both the stability, safety, and ornament of the building; Christ is the first, but not the last stone laid, which this must be: rather the perfection of grace is designed, or the bringing of the work of God to perfection; which may be signified hereby, in allusion to an edifice, which, when the last or top-stone is laid, is then completed; and, if taken in this sense, must be understood, not of justifying grace, which is complete at once; Christ's righteousness being a perfect justifying righteousness, and every believer complete in it; but of sanctifying grace, which, though, as to the principle of it, is all wrought together, yet is not at once perfected; it is gradually brought to perfection; there is a perfection of parts, but not of de-

[r] Tanchuma in Yalkut Simeoni in loc.

grees: no man is perfectly holy in himself, only as he is in Christ: but holiness in the saint will be perfected, for without it no man can see the Lord; and this is done at death in every individual believer; and then follows a state of sinless perfection; and the last measure of grace given, which perfects the work, may be called the head-stone, the crowning, finishing part: and this will be brought in by Christ, the author and finisher of faith; who is a rock, and his work is perfect; he is able to do it; and who so fit, as he who is full of grace? and who so proper, as the master-builder, and Head of the church? this grace, which perfects all, is in Christ; he brings it out from himself, in whom it has pleased the Father all fulness should dwell: but it is best of all to interpret the head-stone of the last of the elect of God, and redeemed of the Lamb, that will be called by grace; who has this name, not from any superior excellency in him to any of the other lively stones, laid in the spiritual building; but because he is the last that is put there; and which shews, that not one of those God has chosen, and Christ has redeemed, shall be lost; it is the will of God, and it is the care of Christ, that none should perish, but all should come to repentance, to the glory of his rich grace; or otherwise the building would not be complete, nor the church the fulness of him that filleth all in all. The Targum indeed paraphrases the words of Christ, "and he shall reveal his Christ, whose name "is said from eternity, and he shall rule over all king-"doms: and mention being made of a capital and principal stone, in this vision of the candlestick, may put one in mind of the stone the Jews[t] speak of, which was before the candlestick in the temple, which had three steps, and on which the priest stood, and trimmed the lamps: and this will be attended *with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it;* as the people of the Jews shouted, when the first stone was laid in the foundation of the temple, Ezra iii. 11, 12, 13. so it is here intimated that their acclamations would be very great when the last stone would be brought in, and the building finished; which they would ascribe to the grace, favour, and good will of God to them: so likewise, as the work of conversion is wholly owing to the grace of God, an abundance of which is displayed in it; when it is finished in the hearts of all the Lord's people, and the last man designed to be called by it is converted, and so the spiritual building of the church finished; this will be attended with the shouts of angels, who rejoice at the conversion of every sinner, and much more when all the elect are gathered in; and the acclamations of all the saints, for the marriage of the Lamb, will now be come, and the church be ready, as a bride prepared for her husband; see Rev. xix. 6, 7, 8. and xxi. 2, 3. The repetition of the phrase, *grace, grace,* denotes that the work of conversion in all the saints, from the first to the last, is only owing to the grace of God, and not to any merit, motive, and condition in man; that they are saved and called, not according to their works, but according to the purpose and grace of God, his abundant mercy, free favour, and great love; and that this grace is exceeding abundant, which is displayed in the conversion of a single individual; and how large and copious must it be, which is given forth to them all. It is also expressive of the vehemency of those that use the phrase; and shews that they have a deep sense of it on their hearts; and are warmed, and glow with it; and can't sufficiently express their admiration of it; and strive to magnify it to the uttermost of their power, being sensible of their obligations to God for it, and what gratitude is due to him on account of it: and this will be the cry of every saint in glory, throughout the endless ages of eternity; nor will the least sound be heard that is jarring, or contrary to it; all will be of one mind, and in one tone, and strive to outdo each other in exalting the free grace of God in the highest strains, with the greatest fervency of soul, and with the loudest acclamations, and those continually repeated.

Ver. 8. *Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] As follows; which is a confirmation of the angel's interpretation of the vision.

Ver. 9. *The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house,* &c.] The temple at Jerusalem, which was laid, or however renewed, after it had been long neglected, even the four-and-twentieth day of the ninth month, two months before this vision and prophecy, Hagg. ii. 18. compared with Zech. i. 7: *his hands shall also finish it;* signified by bringing in the head or top stone, ver. 7. and so Christ our great Zerubbabel has laid the foundation of his church, which is no other than himself; and is a foundation firm and strong, sure and certain, immovable and everlasting; and his hands will finish the building of it, by bringing and laying every elect soul upon this foundation; which may be concluded from his hands being those which have laid the foundations of the heavens and the earth; uphold all things in being, and hold the reins of government; and who, as Mediator, has all the persons of his people in his hands, and all grace and glory for them: his hands also have laid the foundation of grace in the hearts of his people, and he will finish it; he, who is the author, will be the finisher of faith: *and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you;* this clause is not an address to Zerubbabel, as Aben Ezra and others think; but to the people of the Jews, as appears from the plural word used, at the end of it; nor are the words spoken by the prophet of himself; though the Targum paraphrases them to this sense, "and ye shall know that "the Lord of hosts hath sent me to prophesy unto "you;" that is, when they should see his prophecies accomplished, and the temple built, then they would know and acknowledge that he was a true prophet, sent of God unto them; nor is the angel designed, so often mentioned, that talked with the prophet; for he was sent, not to the Jews, but to him; but they are spoken by the Messiah, called *the Word of the Lord;* ver. 8. who, when he shall have finished the work of grace on every man's heart by his spirit, and shall have completed the whole Gospel building, the church, by gathering in every one of the elect; then it shall be known and owned by all, both the converted Jews and Gentiles, that he is the true Messiah, the sent of God to the forefathers of the Jews, who came to preach

[t] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 98. 1. & Tamid, fol. 30. 2. Maimon. Beth Habechira, c. 3. sect. 11.

the Gospel to them, work miracles among them, and obtain eternal redemption for men.

Ver. 10. *For who hath despised the day of small things?* &c.] This literally refers to the building of the second temple, which was contemptible to the enemies of Judah, Sanballat, and others; and little in the eyes of many of the Jews themselves, who had seen the former temple; yet not in the eyes of the Lord of hosts, Ezra iii. 12. Hagg. ii. 3, 6, 7, 8, 9. and so the Targum paraphrases the words, "for who is he that "despiseth this day, because the building is small?" but in the spiritual sense, to the building up of the church by conversion: the first work of conversion may be called a day *of small things* to men; it may be called a *day*, because a time of light into themselves, their sin and danger, and the way from it; the day of Christ's power upon the soul, in making it willing to quit all, and be saved by him; a season in which there is a display of the love, grace, and mercy of God unto it; and is the day of its espousals to Christ; and the day of salvation, of the knowledge and application of it; and of good tidings, of peace, pardon, and life, by Christ; and yet a day of *small things*: not that what is done or made known are small things in themselves; but the light and knowledge which young converts have of themselves, of Christ, and of the doctrines of the Gospel, is but small; and so is their faith in Christ, but a mere venture on him, or a peradventure there may be salvation in him for them also; and their spiritual strength to exercise grace, do their duty, comfort from Christ, and in the promises and experience of the everlasting love of God, are but small at first; yet this day of small things is not to be *despised*: it is not by Jehovah the Father, who regards their prayers, and does not despise them, though like the chatterings of a crane or swallow; he takes them by the hand, leads them, and teaches them to walk by faith, and proportions their duty to their strength, and their strength to their day: nor by Jesus Christ, who delights in their applications to him, and never rejects them; regards his buds in his vineyards, the beginnings of grace; the lambs in his flock, the weak and feeble: and the bruised reed, and smoking flax, who have but little light and grace: nor by the Holy Spirit, who helps their infirmities, makes intercession for them with groans unutterable; carries on the good work in them, and performs it till the day of Christ: nor should it be despised by men of greater light, faith, and experience; though it is no wonder they should be despised by carnal men; but even for them to despise one of the little ones that believe in him is resented by him. The interest of Christ in general is sometimes *a day of small things*: it was so among the Jews at the time of Christ's ascension; and among the Gentiles, at the first preaching of the Gospel to them; and so it was at the time of the Reformation, and is so now: Jacob is small, but there is a day coming, called the great day of Jezreel, Hos. i. 11. *For they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven*: which may literally respect the building of the second temple; and that was expressed not only at the laying of the foundation, Ezra iii. 11, 12, 13. but at the carrying of it on, and especially at the finishing of it, Ezra vi. 14, 15, 16. when they saw the building rise under the direction and encouragement of *Zerubbabel*, who is represented here as a master-builder, with a *plummet* in his hand; which is an instrument used by masons and carpenters, to draw perpendicular lines with, in order to judge whether the building is upright; and is so called from a piece of lead fastened at the end of a cord or thread. In the Hebrew text it is called *a stone of tin**; it may be, in those times, they used a stone for this purpose, cased with tin or lead. And *those seven* with him may mean seven principal persons that joined with him, and assisted him in this work; though some interpret them of the seven lamps, and the seven pipes to them, in the candlestick; and the Targum explains them of *seven rows of stone*, measured by the plummet: but rather they are to be understood of the eyes of the Lord, after mentioned, which were upon the Jews, in favour of the building, that it might not be caused to cease by their enemies, Ezra v. 5. though Cocceius chooses to render the words thus, *and those seven shall rejoice, and see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel*; and applies them to the seven churches of Asia, representatives of the whole church of Christ, in successive periods, rejoicing at the growing interest of Christ; and doubtless the mystical and spiritual sense of the words is, that it is matter of rejoicing to gracious souls when the spiritual building goes forward, under the direction and encouragement of Christ. The carrying on of the work of grace in particular believers affords joy and pleasure. This work is in the hands and under the care of Christ; it is curiously wrought and framed by line and rule, and goes on to perfection; which being observed by others, though it is the nature of grace to desire more, yet it does not envy the gifts and graces of others, but rejoices at them. The carrying on of the work of God in the church in general is an occasion of great joy to the saints; they rejoice that it is in such hands; not in the hands of ministers or magistrates, or even angels, but in the hands of Christ; who is so great, and has condescended to engage in it; has so much wisdom to manage and conduct it; is so faithful in every thing he is concerned, and is so able to go through with it: they rejoice that it is carried on with so much exactness; that the whole building is so fitly framed and compacted together; every thing in the church being done according to the plummet of God's everlasting love and eternal purposes, which plummet is with Christ, Rom. viii. 39. Ephes. iii. 11. according to which persons are called by grace; the blessings of grace are bestowed on them; and they are put in such an office or place in the church: and as this building goes on by an increase of persons, or an addition of such as shall be saved; and by an increase of grace, gifts, and spiritual knowledge in them; it is matter of joy to angels and men, and especially to the ministers of the Gospel. *They are the eyes of the Lord*, or *the eyes of the Lord are they**, *which run to and fro through the whole earth*; these design not the angels, who walk to and fro

* האבן הבדיל lapidem stanni, Montanus, Drusius, Cocceius; lapidem stanneum, V. L. Vatablus, Calvin; lapidem stannum, i. e. cum stanno, so Burkius.

* עיני יהוה המה oculi Jehovæ sunt illi.

through the earth, ch. vi. 7. nor the various gifts and graces of the Spirit, Rev. v. 6. but rather the infinite providence of God, signified by an *eye*; it being intuitive, omniscient, approbative of that which is good, and vindictive of that which is evil; loving to, and careful of, the saints, making them prosperous and successful: and by *seven eyes*, to denote the perfection and fulness of it; and these being said to run to and fro throughout the earth, expresses the large compass of persons and things it reaches to: and it may be observed, that the carrying on of the work of God, both in particular persons, and in the church of God in general, is attended with and owing to his special providence, as well as grace.

Ver. 11. *Then answered I, and said unto him*, &c.] To the angel that talked with him, ver. 1, 4, 5: *what are these two olive-trees upon the right side of the candlestick, and upon the left side thereof?* in ver. 2 they are said to be on each side of the bowl. The mystery of the candlestick being explained to Zechariah by the angel, the prophet desires to know the meaning of the two olive-trees that were on the right and left of it, one on one side, and the other on the other side.

Ver. 12. *And I answered again, and said unto him*, &c.] Before he could have an answer to the former question, he puts the following, as being of the same import: *what be these two olive-branches;* which grew upon the olive-trees, and were nearest to the candlestick, and the pipes that were to the lamps: these, in ver. 14, are interpreted of the two anointed ones, or sons of oil, and may design the ministers of the word, if, by the *golden oil* after mentioned, is meant the Gospel; even a set of evangelical preachers in Gospel times, in the several periods of the church; Christ's faithful witnesses, who stand on each side of the bowl, and receive out of Christ's fulness gifts and grace to fit them for their work; and on each side of the candlestick, the church, to impart the oil of the Gospel to it. These may be compared to *olive-trees* for their beauty and comeliness in the eyes of saints, to whom they bring the good news of salvation by Christ, Hos. xiv. 6. and for their greenness and flourishing condition, being filled with the gifts and graces of the Spirit, Psal. lii. 8. and for their fruitfulness; for, as the olive-tree produces an oil used both for light and food, so they bring the Gospel with them, which is the means of spiritual light, and contains in it refreshing and delightful food, Deut. viii. 8. and for their fatness, with which they honour God and men, Judg. ix. 9. so ministers of the Gospel honour Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, by ascribing the contrivance, impetration, and application of salvation severally to them; and they honour men, by acquainting them what honour all the saints have through Christ, being made kings and priests by him; and by shewing them what honour they shall have hereafter. And they may be compared to *olive-branches*, with respect to Christ the good olive-tree, in whom they are as branches; are bore by him, and subsist in him; receive all they have from him, and do all they do in his strength: and also for their tenderness and weakness in themselves, and for their fruitfulness from him. *Which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?* if by the *two* olive-trees and branches, or anointed ones, ministers of the Gospel are intended; then, by the *golden oil*, is meant, not the Spirit and his grace, which is sometimes compared to oil; nor inward spiritual joy and peace, the oil of gladness, for ministers can't communicate either of these to others; but the Gospel, and the precious truths of it, compared to *oil*, because of a healing, cheering, and refreshing nature; and because beautifying, feeding, and fattening; and because of a searching and penetrating nature, and being pure, unmixed, and good for light: and to *golden* oil, or oil, that, being poured out, is like liquid gold, for colour, value, splendour, purity, and duration: and this they *empty out;* which phrase denotes the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel they come with; their free and ready delivery of it; their faithfulness in giving out all, and keeping back nothing that may be profitable; and their ease and satisfaction of mind in so doing: and this they do, not out of the corrupt fountains of moral philosophy; nor from the writings of others; nor out of their own heads, or from mere notional knowledge; but out of their hearts, and from their inward experience of Gospel truths; and which is not to be understood exclusive of Christ, or of the Scriptures of truth, from whence they fetch all truth; nor have they this knowledge and experience of or from themselves. The means by which they communicate the golden oil of the Gospel are *the two golden pipes*, the ministry of the word, and administration of ordinances; which are like *pipes* or canals, through which Gospel grace is conveyed; and are *golden*, are valuable, to be kept pure, and are durable; they are but *pipes*, or means, and not to be depended on, yet they are *golden*, and not to be despised. But if by the two olive-trees, or anointed ones, are meant two divine Persons, of which see ver. 14. then by the *golden oil* may be intended the grace of God, often compared to *oil* in Scripture, in allusion to oil in common, or to the anointing oil, which was made of precious spices; or rather, as here, to the lamp-oil for the candlestick in the tabernacle, which was pure oil-olive: grace, like oil, is of a cheering and refreshing nature, hence called *oil of gladness;* very beautifying and adorning; like oil, it makes the face to shine; and by it the church, and all believers, become *all-glorious within:* it is of a searching nature; like oil, it penetrates into the heart, and has its seat there; and as oil will not mix with any other liquid, so neither will grace with sin and corruption: but chiefly, as here, may it be compared to oil-olive, because it burns and gives light, as that does in the lamp. The lamp of a profession, without the oil of grace, is a dark and useless thing. Grace is a light in the inward parts, and causes the light of an outward conversation to shine in good works before men; and this may be truly called *golden*, being exceeding valuable, yea, much more precious than gold that perisheth; it being as durable, nay, much more durable than that, for it will last for ever, and can never be lost; see 1 Pet. i. 7. Rev. iii. 18. and of this the word and ordinances are the means, and so may be designed by the pipes, through which it is conveyed to the souls of men; for *faith*, and other graces of the Spirit, *come by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*, Rom. x. 17. hence says the apostle to the Galatians, ch. iii. 2, *received ye the spirit;* that is, the special

gifts and graces of the Spirit, comparable to the best oil and purest gold; *by the works of the law*, or through the preaching of that, through the doctrine of justification by the works of it, *or by the hearing of faith?* by the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ, or by the Gospel preached and heard: this is the usual way in which the Spirit and his grace are communicated to men; hence the Gospel is called the *Spirit*, and *the ministration of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. iii. 6, 8. and this seems to be a further confirmation of this sense of the words, since this golden oil is distinct from the pipes through which it flows; as grace is from the Gospel, through which it is received; whereas, in the other sense, they seem to coincide.

Ver. 13. *And he answered me, and said*, &c.] That is, the angel answered to the prophet's questions: *knowest thou not what these be? and I said, no, my lord*: see the note on ver. 5.

Ver. 14. *Then said he, these are the two anointed ones*, &c.] Or *sons of oil*[t]. Some think the gifts and graces of the Spirit are meant, which come from the God of all grace, remain with Christ, are given freely by him to the sons of God, and are always for the service of the church, and sufficient for it; others, Christ the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit. Christ is the anointed One, or son of oil, being anointed with the Holy Ghost to the office of Prophet, Priest, and King; and with which oil he has supplied his candlestick, the church, in all ages. The Holy Spirit is the oil of gladness, and that anointing which teacheth all things. And this is the sense of Capellus, as has been observed on ver. 2. And the learned and judicious Pemble makes a *query* of it, whether Christ and the Comforter; or Christ in his two natures; or Christ in his two offices of King and Priest of his church; or how else the words are to be understood: and this was the sense of Origen long ago, though censured by Jerom; it may be the rather, because he interprets the candlestick of the Father. But these epithets, *anointed ones*, and *sons of oil*, are very suitable to them; the one being called the Messiah, or anointed; and the other the unction, and the oil of gladness: and indeed, if by the golden oil emptied out of them is meant the grace of God, as it frequently signifies in Scripture, no other can be meant; since they are the inexhaustible fountain of all grace and gifts to the church in all ages, whereby it is supplied and supported; and may be said to *stand before the Lord of the whole earth*, God the Father; who does not immediately by himself administer to the church, but by Christ the Head of it; and Christ communicates by his Spirit, whom he sends from himself, and from the Father: and the rather they may be thought to be meant, since the ministers of the word seem to be designed by the seven lamps which receive the oil, or gifts and graces of the Spirit, fitting them for their work, from the bowl on the top of the candlestick, which is suppled with it from these two olive-trees; and therefore must be distinct from them, or otherwise they will be said to be supplied from themselves: though, whereas both Christ and the Spirit communicate by the word and the ordinances, administered by the faithful dispensers of the word; hence those witnesses of Christ, in all ages, may with propriety enough be called two anointed ones, and *the two olive-trees*, as they are in Rev. xi. 4. where there is a plain allusion to this passage. The Targum renders the words, *these are the two sons of princes*, or *great men*. Some Jewish writers interpret them of their two Messiahs, Messiah ben Joseph, and Messiah ben David[u]. Some interpreters understand by them Enoch and Elias; others Peter and Paul; others, better, with Kimchi and Ben Melech, Joshua and Zerubbabel, the one anointed for the priesthood, and the other for the kingdom; of which two offices Jarchi interprets them; and others the two churches, Jewish and Christian. *That stand by the Lord of the whole earth*; the Creator and Governor of the universe: ministers of the word are on his side, abide by his truths and ordinances, and are faithful to his cause and interest: or, *before the Lord of the whole earth*[w]; they are his ministers, and serve him; they *stand*, as it becomes them, which shews their work is not done; and that it is the Lord's work they are engaged in; and that they continue and persevere in it: likewise it shews that they are under his eye, notice, dispose, care, and protection; that they are in his favour, and enjoy his presence. How this may be applied to the two divine Persons standing by or before God the Father has been before observed, and to be understood of them as in their office-capacity.

CHAP. V.

THIS chapter treats of the judgments of God upon the wicked Jews for their sins and impieties, the measure of which was filled up, and of the execution of them, which are represented in two visions: the first is of a flying roll, which signifies the curse of God, and is described by its measure, the length being twenty cubits, and the breadth ten; and by the extent of it, it reaching to the whole earth, and particularly to thieves and false swearers, who shall be cut off by it; and by the certainty of its coming into the houses of such, and the utter desolation it should there make, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. and the other is the vision of an ephah, and a woman sitting in it, and a talent of lead cast upon the mouth of it, which signified wickedness, ver. 5, 6, 7, 8. this *ephah* is seen to be lifted up between earth and heaven by two women, who are said to have wings like the wings of storks, and the wind to be in them; and who are said by the angel to carry the *ephah* into the land of Shinar, to build it a house, that it might be established and settled upon its own base, ver. 9, 10, 11.

Ver. 1. *Then I turned, and lift up mine eyes, and looked*,

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[t] בני היצהר filii olei, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Tigurine version, Vatablus, Cocceius, Burkius.

[u] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 114. 3.

[w] על אדון super Dominum, Montanus.

&c.] The prophet turned himself from looking upon the candlestick and olive-branches, having had a full and clear understanding of them, and looked another way, and saw another vision: *and behold a flying roll*, a volume or book flying in the air; it being usual for books, which were written on parchment, to be rolled up in the form of a cylinder; whence they were called rolls or volumes.

Ver. 2. *And he said unto me*, &c.] That is, the angel: *what seest thou? and I answered, I see a flying roll, the length whereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits*; so that it was a very large one, a volume of a very uncommon size, especially it may so seem to us; but in other nations they have very long rolls or volumes, even longer than this: the Russians write their acts, processes, and other court-matters, on long rolls of paper, some twenty ells, some thirty, and some sixty, and more[x]: and this being the length and breadth of the porch before the temple, 1 Kings vi. 3. hence the Jewish writers conclude that this flying roll came from thence: it may design either the roll or book in which the sins of men are written, which is very large, and will quickly be brought into judgment, when it will be opened, and men will be judged according to it; which shews the notice God takes of the sins of men; the exact knowledge he has of them; his strict remembrance of them; and the certain account men must give of them another day: or, the book of God's judgments upon sinners, such as was Ezekiel's roll, Ezek. ii. 10, 11. which are many and great; are rolled up, and not at present to be searched into; but are flying, coming on, and will be speedily executed: or rather the book of the law, called a roll or volume, Psal. xl. 7. Luke iv. 17, 20. and which will be a swift witness against the breakers of it, as more fully appears from the explanation of it in the next verse. It is a mere fancy and conceit of some that the Talmud is meant by this roll, the body of the Jewish traditions, which make void the commands of God, take away the blessing, and leave a curse in the land, as they did in the land of Judea.

Ver. 3. *Then said he unto me, this is the curse*, &c.] So the law of Moses is called, because it has curses written in it, Deut. xxvii. 15—26. and xxviii. 15—68. and xxix. 19, 20. and xxx. 19. which curse is not causeless, but is according to law and justice; it is from the Lord, and is no other than the wrath of the Almighty; and, wherever it lights, it will remain and continue for ever. Vitringa, on Isa. xxiv. 6. says, this is the curse which Isaiah there prophesies of, which had its accomplishment in the times of Antiochus; but there the prophet is speaking, not of the land of Judea, but of the antichristian states. *That goeth forth over the face of the whole earth*: over the whole land of Judea, and the inhabitants of it, for their breach of the law, contempt of the Gospel, and the rejection of the Messiah; and which had its accomplishment when wrath came upon them to the uttermost, in the destruction of their nation, city, and temple; and is the curse God threatened to smite their land with, Mal. iv. 6. and this curse also reaches to the whole world, and the inhabitants of it, who lie in wickedness; and to all sorts of sinners, particularly those next mentioned: *for every one that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side, according to it*; as it is written and declared on one side of the roll: *and every one that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side according to it*; as is written and declared on the other side of the roll; which two sins of theft and false swearing, the one being against the second, and the other the first table of the law, shew that the curse of the law reaches to all sorts of sins and sinners; to all who do not keep it in every respect; and, indeed, to all but those who are redeemed from it by the blood of Christ; and that it is proportioned according to a man's sins: and those two are particularly mentioned, because they are sins which prevailed among the Jews at the time Christ was on earth. Theft did, both in a literal and figurative sense, Matt. xxiii. 14. Rom. ii. 21. Luke xi. 52. John x. 8, 10. and so did vain swearing, Matt. v. 33—36. and xxiii. 16—22.

Ver. 4. *I will bring it forth, saith the Lord of hosts*, &c.] The roll was come forth, and was flying abroad; but the curse and wrath of God, signified by it, is what God would bring forth out of his treasures, according to his purposes and declarations, and execute upon sinners; which shews the certainty of it, and that there is no escaping it: *and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name; and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof*; when wrath is gone forth from the Lord, there's no stopping it; and where it takes place it will remain, there's no getting rid of it; it makes an utter desolation of goods and estates, and entirely destroys both body and soul in hell: there seems to be an allusion to the plague of the leprosy, Lev. xiv. 45. So the son of Sirach says, "a man that "sweareth much shall be full of iniquity, and the plague "shall not depart from his house:" and again, "if a man "swears in vain, he shall not be innocent or justified, "for his house shall be full of calamities[y]." So the oracle in Herodotus[z], which Grotius has observed, makes an utter destruction of a man's house and family to be the punishment of the sin of perjury. Moreover, by the house of the thief and swearer may be meant the temple, as in the times of Christ, which was become a den of thieves and perjurers, and for their sins became desolate, Matt. xxi. 13. and xxiii. 38.

Ver. 5. *Then the angel that talked with me went forth*, &c.] From the place where he was, and had been interpreting the vision of the flying roll, unto another more convenient for shewing and explaining the following one; and, as it should seem, took the prophet along with him: *and said unto me, lift up now thine eyes, and see what it is that goeth forth*: either out of the temple or out of heaven, into some open place, where it might be seen.

Ver. 6. *And I said, what is it?* &c.] After he had lifted up his eyes and seen it, he desires to know both what it was, and what was the meaning of it: *and he said, this is an ephah that goeth forth*; which was a measure much in use with the Jews, Exod. xvi. 36. Lev. xix. 36. Ruth ii. 17. it is the same with the *bath*,

[x] Fokeche apud Burkium in loc.
[y] Ecclesiasticus xxiii. 11.
[z] Erato, sive l. 6. c. 86.

and held above seven wine-gallons. The Targum interprets this of such who dealt in false measures, whose sin is exposed, and their punishment set forth; but rather it designs the measure of iniquity filling up, either in Judea, particularly in the times of Christ, Matt. xxiii. 32. or in the whole world, and especially in the antichristian states, Rev. xviii. 5. 6: *and he said moreover, this is their resemblance in all the earth*; or *this is their eye*[z]; what they are looking at, and intent upon, namely, this ephah; that is, to fill up the measure of their iniquity: or, as Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it, this ephah, which thou seest, shews that there is an eye upon them which sees their works; and this is the eye of the Lord, which sees and takes notice of all the evil actions of men, not as approving them, but as observing them, and avenging them. Cocceius, by the *ephah*, understands an abundance of temporal good things bestowed upon the Christian church in Constantine's time and following, on which the eyes of carnal men were looking.

Ver. 7. *And, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead*, &c.] By the angel; since he is afterwards said to cast it upon the mouth of the *ephah*. A cicar, or talent of silver, with the Jews, was equal to three thousand shekels, as may be gathered from Exod. xxxviii. 24, 25, 26. and weighed a hundred and twenty-five pounds[a]; or, as others, a hundred and twenty[b], and, according to the more exact account of Dr. Arbuthnot, a hundred and thirteen pounds, ten ounces, one pennyweight, and 10 $\frac{2}{7}$ grains of our Troy weight. A Babylonish talent, according to Ælianus[c], weighed seventy-two Attic pounds; and an Attic mina, or pound, weighed a hundred drachms; so that it was of the weight of seven thousand two hundred such drachms. An Alexandrian talent was equal to twelve thousand Attic drachms; and these the same with a hundred and twenty-five Roman libras or pounds; which talent is supposed to be the same with that of Moses. The Roman talent contained seventy-two Italic minas, which were the same with the Roman libras[d]. But since the Hebrew word *cicar* signifies any thing plain, and what is extended like a cake, as Arias Montanus observes[e], it may here intend a plate of lead, which was laid over the mouth of the *ephah*, as a lid unto it; though indeed it is afterwards called אבן עפרת, *a stone of lead*, and so seems to design a weight. *And this is a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah*: who, in ver. 8, is called *wickedness*: and here represented by a *woman*, because, say some, the woman was first in the transgression; or rather because sin is flattering and deceitful, and draws into the commission of it, and so to ruin: and this woman, wickedness, intends wicked men; all the wicked among the Jews, and even all the wicked of the world; who sit in the *ephah*, very active and busy in filling up the measure of their sins, and where they sit with great pleasure and delight; very openly and visibly declare their sin, as Sodom, and hide it not; in a very proud and haughty manner, with great boldness and impudence, and in great security, without any concern about a future state, promising themselves impunity here and hereafter. This woman is a very lively emblem of the whore of Rome, sitting as a queen upon many waters; ruling over kings and princes; living deliciously, and in great ease and pleasure filling up the measure of her sins. Kimchi interprets this woman of the ten tribes, who wickedly departed from God, and were as one kingdom.

Ver. 8. *And he said, this is wickedness*, &c.] A representation of wicked men, who are wickedness itself, as their inward part is, Psal. v. 9. and particularly of the wicked one, the man of sin and son of perdition, the Roman antichrist and apocalyptic beast; who, though he is called by this title, *his Holiness*, his true and proper name is *wickedness*; ὁ ἄνομος, that wicked lawless one, 2 Thess. ii. 8. yea, wickedness itself, being extremely wicked, a sink of sin and of all abominations, Rev. xvii. 5. and xviii. 2. *And he cast it into the midst of the ephah*; that is, wickedness; that it might be kept within bounds, and not exceed its measure to be filled up: this seems to denote some restraint on sinners, that they may'nt be able to go all the lengths they would; and some rebuke upon them, that they might not lift up their heads with impunity; and some check upon them, and their furious rage towards the people of God; and also the putting of an utter end to sin and sinners, and particularly the followers of antichrist; see Psal. civ. 35. *And he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof*: either upon the mouth of the woman, or of the ephah; and, be it which it will, it was done to keep the woman within the ephah, and press her down there; and intends the judgments of God upon sinners; and shews that there is no escaping divine vengeance; that it falls heavy where it lights, and sinks to the lowest hell; and that it will continue, being laid on by the firm, unchangeable, and irrevocable decree of God. Cocceius understands this of the Saracens and Turks, and the barbarous nations, being cast into the Roman empire, to restrain the antichristian tyranny; but it seems better to apply it to the utter destruction of antichrist, signified by a millstone cast into the sea and sunk there, never to rise more; see Rev. xviii. 21. and with it compare Exod. xv. 10.

Ver. 9. *Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked*, &c.] This is not a new vision, but a continuation of the former, as appears from the *ephah* seen in it: *and, behold, there came out two women*; out of the same place the *ephah* did. The Targum explains these *two women* by two provinces; and Kimchi interprets them of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who had been carried captive into Babylon; and others of the two kings, Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, who were the cause of the captivity; but Jarchi understands by them the Babylonians and Chaldeans, two nations as one, joined in Nebuchadnezzar's armies, which carried them captive: others think the two reformers, Ezra and Nehemiah, are meant, who were instruments of purging the Jews, returned from captivity, though but weak ones, and therefore are compared to *women*; yet what they did they did swiftly, and therefore are said

[z] זאת עינם hæc est oculus eorum, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius, Cocceius.
[a] Epiphanius de Mensuris & Ponderibus.
[b] Hebræi apud Buxtorf. Lex. Heb. in rad. ככר.
[c] Var. Hist. l. 1. c. 22.
[d] See Prideaux's Preface to Connexion, &c. vol. 1. p. 18, 19, &c.
[e] Ephron, sive de Siclo, prope finem.

to have *wings*, and under the influence of the spirit of God; hence the *wind*, or *spirit*[f], is said to be in their wings; and they acted from a tender regard to the glory of God and the good of their country; and therefore their wings were like the *wings of a stork*; a bird of passage, as appears from Jer. viii. 7. and so a fit emblem to be used in the transportation of the *ephah*; of whom Pliny[g] says, from whence they come, and whither they betake themselves, is yet unknown; and adds, there is no doubt that they come from afar; as it is plain they must, if that relation be true, which seems to have good authority, that one of these creatures, upon its return to Germany, brought a green root of ginger with it; which must come from the eastern part of the world; from Arabia, or Ethiopia, or the East Indies, where it grows[h]: and as it is a bird that takes such long flights, it must have wings fitted for such a purpose; and which are taken notice of in Job xxxix. 13. to which the wings and feather of the ostrich are compared; for so Bochart[i] there renders the word, *the wing of the ostriches rejoices, truly the wing as of a stork, and the feather*; or, as others, *who gave wings to the stork and ostrich?* both remarkable for their wings: and Vatablus renders the word here an *ostrich*; which, according to Pliny[k], is the largest of birds, and almost as big as a beast. In Ethiopia and Africa they are taller than a horse and his rider, and exceed the horse in swiftness; and their wings seem to be given them to help them in running; but which are not sufficient to lift them much above the earth, and so can't be meant here; but rather the stork, whose wings are black and white; and when they fly, they stretch out their necks forwards, and their feet backwards, and with these direct their course; when a tempest rises, standing on both feet, they spread their wings, lay their bill upon their breast, and turn their face that way the storm comes[l]. The Targum renders it an eagle, which is the swiftest of birds, and whose wings are very strong to bear any thing upon them, as they do their young, to which the allusion is, Deut. xxxii. 11. and so, if meant here, to lift up and bear away the ephah between the earth and the heaven; but the word is never used of that bird. The Harpies or Furies, with the Heathens, are represented as women having wings[m], as these women are said to have; but these are very different women from them. Though some think the Romans, under Vespasian and Titus, are intended; but it may be that the two perfections of God, his power and justice, in punishing men for their sins, are meant, particularly in the last times, and at the day of judgment. The power of God will be seen in raising the dead; in bringing all to judgment; in separating the wicked from the righteous, and in the execution of the sentence denounced on them: and the justice of God will be very conspicuous in the judgment and destruction of them. *And the wind was in their wings*; they had wings, as denoting swiftness, as angels are said to have; hence Maimonides, as Kimchi observes, thought that angels are here meant; but this denotes, that though God is long-suffering, and may seem to defer judgment, which is sometimes a stumbling to the righteous, and a hardening to the wicked; yet, as this is only for the salvation of his elect, so when once the time is up, and the commission given forth, power and justice will speedily execute the sentence: and the *wind* being in their wings shews the greater swiftness and speed in the dispatch of business, and the great strength and force with which they performed it: *for they had wings like the wings of a stork*; which, being a creature kind and tender, shew that there is no cruelty in the displays of the power and justice of God in punishing sinners: *and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven*; which denotes the visibility of the whole measure of the sins of wicked men; they will all be made manifest, and brought into judgment: and also the visibility of their punishment; they'll go into everlasting punishment, in the sight of angels and men; and which will be the case of the antichristian beast, Rev. xvii. 8.

Ver. 10. *Then said I to the angel that talked with me*, &c.] This the prophet said after he had seen the *ephah* come forth; the woman, wickedness, cast into it, and the talent of lead upon her; and the two women lifting up the ephah between heaven and earth: *whither do these bear the ephah?* he neither asks what the ephah signified, nor who were the women that bore it, but only whither they bore it.

Ver. 11. *And he said unto me, to build it an house in the land of Shinar*, &c.] That is, in the province of Babylon, as the Targum paraphrases it; for Babel, or Babylon, was in the land of Shinar, Gen. x. 10. and xi. 2. whither the Jews were carried captive, Dan. i. 2. Isa. xi. 11. and the bearing of the *ephah* thither may denote the cause of their captivity, the measure of sins filled up by them: though this some understand of the like injuries, oppressions, and vexations, brought upon the Chaldeans in the land of Shinar, which they before exercised towards and upon the Jews; and others of the rejection of wicked men from among the Jews, by Ezra and Nehemiah, transporting them as it were back to Babylon again: others of the dispersion of the Jews by the Romans, who chiefly settled after that in the eastern parts of the world; though indeed the whole world was a land of Shinar, or *shaking out*[n], unto them; they being shook out of their own land, and scattered about everywhere; which dispersion has been long and lasting, notorious and conspicuous; and they are now settled upon their own base, established upon their former principles of legality and self-righteousness, and rejection of the true Messiah; or rather this may be understood of the transfer of the ephah, or whole measure of iniquity, into mystical Babylon. The antichristian church of Rome is called Babylon; she is represented as a sink of sin, a mystery of iniquity, Rev. xvii. 5. and a house being built for this man of sin, antichrist, denotes the continuance of him; and being established on its own base, shews

[f] רוח spiritus, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Burkius.
[g] Nat. Hist. l. 10. c. 23.
[h] Vid. Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 2. c. 29. col. 328, 332.
[i] Ibid. c. 16. col. 247, 249.
[k] Nat. Hist. l. 10. c. 1.
[l] Schotti Physica Curiosa, par. 2. l. 9. c. 26. p. 1102.
[m] Harpyiæ & magnis quatiunt clangoribus alas. Virgil. Æneid. l. 3. ver. 226.
[n] ארץ שנער terra excussionis, Menach. lus.

the false foundation on which the church of Rome is built, and her carnal security. So Cocceius, by the *two women*, understands the two kingdoms or powers of antichrist, the civil and ecclesiastical powers; which support the man of sin, lift him up, and give him the highest place in the church, and fix his seat where idolatry and persecution reign, as formerly did in Babylon, in the land of Shinar. Though the whole may very well be applied to the last and everlasting punishment of sin and sinners, when the whole measure is filled up. The end of sin and sinners is death and everlasting destruction. The ephah, and the woman in it, are carried, not upwards to heaven, nor to the New Jerusalem, but to the land of Shinar, the land of shaking; to hell, where are utter darkness, weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth; where a house is built for them, which denotes their continuance there; and which, being established on its own base, shews their punishment shall for ever remain; their worm never dies; their fire is not quenched; the smoke of it ascends for ever and ever; their destruction is an everlasting destruction.

CHAP. VI.

THIS chapter contains a vision of four chariots, and the explanation of it; and an order to make crowns of gold and silver for certain uses mentioned; and a famous prophecy concerning the Messiah as the builder of the temple, the church. The chariots are described by their number, four; by the place, the mountains, from whence they came out; and by the different colour of the horses in each of them, ver. 1, 2, 3. upon the prophet's inquiry what these were, an explanation is given of them; and they are said to be the four spirits of the heavens; and are described by their situation, standing before the Lord of the whole earth; by their mission from him; by the several places to which they were sent; and by their success, or by the good effects produced, at least by some of them, ver. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. then follows the order to make the crowns; and it is declared what they should be made of, gold and silver; from whom they were to be had, and who were to be concerned herein; and what was to be done with them; they were to be put upon the head of Joshua the high-priest, ver. 9, 10, 11. who, being an eminent type of Christ, a prophecy concerning him is ordered to be delivered to him; who is described by his name, the man, the Branch; by the place he should grow up from; by the work he should do, building the temple of the Lord; by the glory he should have on account of it; and by the offices of King, Priest, and Prophet, he should execute, ver. 12, 13. and after this was done, then the crowns were to be laid up in the temple of the Lord for a memorial, by the four men above mentioned, ver. 14. and though the Messiah is the chief builder of the temple, the church, yet it is suggested that others, and even Gentiles, should come and build in it; and which when done, it would be evident that the prophet had his mission to the Jews of the Lord; and the chapter is closed with a promise of the accomplishment of all this, should they diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord, ver. 15.

Ver. 1. *And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked*, &c.] When he saw another vision, as follows: *and, behold, there came four chariots*; by which are meant, not the four Gospels; rather the apostles of Christ, who had their commission from Christ; were sent into all the world by him, and carried his name and Gospel thither; were the instruments Christ made use of in bringing many souls to him, and into his church, and for the defence of his Gospel, and of his interest; and were military chariots, who fought the good fight of faith; and triumphal ones, who were made to triumph in Christ, being more than conquerors through him; though others think angels are here meant, the chariots of the Lord, Psal. lxviii. 17. since they are called the four spirits of the heavens; and are said to go forth from standing before the Lord of the earth, and are sent by him into the several parts of it, ver. 5, 7. and are represented by horses of various colours, as in ch. i. 8. these may be signified by chariots, for their glory, strength, and swiftness, in which Jehovah rides about the world, and executes his will; and are made use of for the destruction of the church's enemies, and for its protection and defence. The Jewish writers, after the Targum, generally interpret them of the four monarchies, the Persian, Grecian, and Roman, by whom were severally done the will of God in the world; and seem to be greatly the design of the vision: these came *out from between two mountains: and the mountains* were *mountains of brass*; such in which this metal is found, as in Chalcis, where it is said to be first found [*]; and from thence it has its name in the Greek tongue; or in the island of Cyprus, from whence it may be is the name of copper; and such mountains were in Judea, Idumea, and Arabia, formerly; as Carmel, according to Hesychius [p]; and Phinon in Idumea; and some mountains in Arabia, about eleven miles from Horeb, which, Jerom says [q], formerly abounded with veins of gold and brass: these may intend the decrees and purposes of God, which, like *mountains*, are very ancient, earlier than the everlasting hills, high and deep, not to be reached and searched into; are dark, obscure, and hidden to men, till made known; and are firm, solid, and immovable, and are lasting and durable; and, like mountains of *brass*, are never to be broken in pieces, revoked, made null and void; for they stand upon the unalterable will of God, upon the basis of infallible wisdom; are supported by uncontrollable power, and can't be disannulled by all the men on earth, and devils in hell: and, according to

* Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 4. c. 12. Vid. l. 7. c. 56. & l. 34. c. 2.
p Apud Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 6. c. 16. col. 886.
q De locis Hebraicis, fol. 90. A.

these fixed and immutable decrees, the said monarchies in succession have took place in the world; unless rather it should be thought, that by these mountains of brass are designed the power and providence of God, by which the several people that first founded those empires were restrained for a while from going forth to make war upon others, and subdue their kingdoms; until the time was come, it was the will of God they should. The allusion may be to race-horses in chariots, formerly used for such exercises, which were held within the circus or bars, till the sign was given when they should start: in like manner these nations were kept within bounds for a while, just as the four angels were bound by the providence of God at the river Euphrates, until they were loosed; which signify the Saracens, and their numerous army of horsemen under their four leaders, who were restrained from overrunning the *eastern* empire of the Romans, until it was the pleasure of God to loose them, and give them liberty, Rev. ix. 14, 15, 16. Grotius understands this literally of the straits of Cilicia, and the fastnesses of the mountains there, through which the Babylonians and Persians, Alexander and his generals, used to pass into Syria, Judea, and Egypt; but rather these visionary chariots seemed to steer their course through a valley, which lay between two mountains, whereby they escaped the difficulties that lay in their way by the mountains; and may denote the low estate of these monarchies in their original, and the difficulties they grappled with, and got over, before they rose to the grandeur they did. Some interpret the two mountains of brass of the kingdom of Israel, after the Babylonish captivity, and the kingdom of the Messiah; and the four chariots, of the four kingdoms, in this order; the Persian, the Grecian, that of the Lagidæ and Seleucidæ, and the Roman, which is in course last; but was seen first by the prophet, because utter destruction was brought upon Israel by it [r]: according to this interpretation, the red horses are the Romans; and the other, the above mentioned. So Cocceius is of opinion that the two mountains are two powerful and unshaken kingdoms, set up by God; or rather two manifestations of the same kingdom; the one the kingdom of the house of David; the other the kingdom of Christ, which is spiritual, but as to the effect earthly, in the subjection of all nations to it, Dan. vii. 22, 27. the kingdom of the house of David, as to the external form, is abolished, but notwithstanding remains in the root, until it appears in another mountain; and between these two, or in the middle space of time, four kingdoms with their armies would possess the promised land; and he observes, that in Dan. ii. 35, 45, mention is made of two mountains, and that these chariots in part agree with the several parts of the image there.

Ver. 2. *In the first chariot were red horses, &c.*] If these are to be understood of the apostles of Christ, and ministers of the Gospel, they may be compared to *horses*, for bearing the name of Christ, and drawing the chariot of the Gospel; for their strength to labour in the word and doctrine; for their courage in the cause of Christ; and for their swiftness in doing his work; and to *red* ones, for their flaming zeal for the honour of the Redeemer, and their bloody sufferings for his sake: and if of angels, they may be compared to *horses*, because strong and swift to do the will of God; and to *red* ones, because they are the executioners of his wrath and vengeance on wicked men: but if by *the chariots* are meant the monarchies, then by these *red horses* must be designed the Babylonians and Chaldeans, so called because their soldiers were clothed in red, and their chariots were like flaming torches; and they were sanguinary, cruel, and bloody in their tempers, and in their actions to the Jews; and were signified by Nebuchadnezzar's head of gold in his image; see Nah. ii. 3, 4. Hab. i. 6, 7, 8: *and in the second chariot black horses;* which, applied to the apostles and ministers of the Gospel, may denote their mean and abject appearance outwardly, and their knowledge in the mysteries of grace, which are dark and obscure to others; and, if understood of angels, is applicable to them, when messengers of ill tidings, or executioners of judgment: but if the monarchies are meant, which seems best, the Medes and Persians are intended; and their *black* colour is expressive of the sorrowful estate of the Jews under them, especially in the time of Haman, as Jarchi and Kimchi observe: black horses were reckoned strong, well made, and fit for labour; and the Ethiopians and Moors chose to have their horses they used in war all of this colour, to strike the greater horror and terror into their enemies; and to see black horses in a dream was accounted a bad omen [s]. The Medes and Persians were a strong and warlike people, and were very terrible to their enemies, under Cyrus; and very troublesome and distressing to the Jews, under Cambyses and Ahasuerus.

Ver. 3. *And in the third chariot white horses, &c.*] Which, as referring to Gospel preachers, may denote the purity of their lives and doctrines, and their conquests and victories over the souls of men by the ministry of the word; and, as applicable to angels, may express the purity of their nature and actions, the joyful messages they bring to the heirs of salvation, and their victories over the evil angels; but, as respecting the monarchies, point at the Grecians, and the conquests of Alexander, and his mildness and gentleness to the Jews: white horses were used in triumphs, in token of victory [t]; see Rev. vi. 2. and xix. 14. and they have been reckoned the swiftest in running; and by the *oneirocritics*, to see them in a dream or vision is a good omen [u]; and so it was accounted with the Jews [w]; all which suits very well with Alexander, who was famous for his victories over many nations; and who, with great velocity, overran them, and as soon conquered them, and was kind and beneficent to the Jewish nation: *and in the fourth chariot grisled and bay horses;* signifying either the diversity of gifts in the ministers of the Gospel; or the different employment and services of angels; or rather the Romans are meant, who were collected out of various nations, and consisted of different people, and had divers forms of

[r] Vid. Gurtler. Vor. Typ. Prophet. Explic. p. 34, 177.
[s] Vid. Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 7. col. 106, 107.
[t] Aurel. Victor. de Viris Illustrib. c. 23. in Furio Camillo, & Plutarchus in Camillo.

[u] Bochart, ut supra, col. 105, 106.
[w] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 92. 1.

government, and emperors of different dispositions to the Jews; and particularly as two colours are assigned to these, it may respect the division of their kingdom into Pagan and Papal, as is predicted in Dan. ii. 41, 42. Kimchi thinks the *bay horses* design the kingdom of the Ishmaelites, or Turks, a strong and powerful people; as some think the word used signifies [x]; rather the Goths and Vandals; see ver. 7. The word for *grisled* is by the Targum rendered *spotted* or *speckled*; and comes from one which signifies *hail*; and so denotes such coloured horses as are spotted with white spots, like hailstones [y], upon another colour, as black or red; and is by the Septuagint, and others, rendered *various* [z], of divers colours: and the other word for *bay* is rendered by them *starling-coloured*; the colour of the starling, which is a black bird, with white spots; and so were a fit emblem of the Goths, Hunns, &c. who were of various nations, and had various laws, customs, and usages; though some think by these two are meant the successors of Alexander, the Lagidæ and the Seleucidæ, put together, because of their intermarriages with one another, as well as succeeding Alexander: the former by the *grisled*, who went and settled in the south country in Egypt, ver. 6. whose first king was Ptolemy Lagus, from whence is the name, and who is the king of the south in Dan. xi. 5. and the latter by the *bay* or *ash-coloured*, as the Targum; the kings of Syria hiding deep their counsels, as under ashes, particularly Antiochus, as Grotius observes; and sometimes making war on one nation, and sometimes on another; and both of them in their turns falling upon the Jews suddenly, and with great violence, like hailstones, and making sad devastations among them, reducing them to ashes; but then this sense shuts out the Romans, the fourth monarchy, from having any place in this vision, which cannot be admitted; since these four chariots answer to the four sorts of metal in Nebuchadnezzar's image, and to the four beasts in Daniel's vision. So the Jewish writers [a] say, the red horses are the kingdom of Babylon, which shed much blood in Israel; this is the head of gold: the black horses, the kingdom of the Persians and Medes, like to a bear, who made black the faces of Israel, by the decrees of Haman: the white horses, the kingdom of Grecia, who made white the faces of Israel by reproaches: the horses grisled and bay the fourth kingdom, which decreed various decrees, different from one another: and these four chariots went out from between two mountains, from between the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, which dwell between two countries, that beyond Jordan, and the land of Israel; and they went out between them, and carried them captive; and these kingdoms are called mountains of brass, because strong as brass, and hearkened not to the words of the prophets.

Ver. 4. *Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me,* &c.] After he had seen the chariots come out, and had observed the different colours of the horses in them: *what are these, my lord?* that is, what do they signify? what is the meaning of this vision?

Ver. 5. *And the angel answered and said unto me,* &c.] In order to grant him his request, and explain the vision of the chariots: *these are the four spirits of the heavens*; or, *the four winds of the heavens*; the apostles and ministers of the Gospel may be compared to *the winds*, because their ministry is the ministration of the spirit, which is like wind that blows invisibly, powerfully, and where it listeth; and because in and by it the spirit breathes life and comfort into the souls of men; and because of the powerful efficacy and penetrating nature of the word preached by them, and their swiftness and readiness to do the will of God: angels are called *spirits* or *winds*, Psal. civ. 3, 4. they are created spirits, and so differ from God; are incorporeal ones, and so differ from men; and are immaterial and immortal, and so die not: they are spiritual subsistences, and spirits of the heavens, or heavenly spirits; heaven being the place of their abode and residence; and they may be compared to *winds*, for their invisibility, wonderful penetration into places and things, their very great swiftness, and prodigious power and strength. The Targum paraphrases the words thus, " these are the four kingdoms, which are " as the winds of heaven;" and so the same are signified by the four winds in Dan. vii. 2. to which they may be compared for their swift and forcible carrying all before them, and for their fickleness and changeableness; and to which the several parts of the world, into which they went, agree: *which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth*; so the apostles of Christ, and ministers of the Gospel, stood before him in his eternal purposes and decrees from everlasting; and went forth, having their commission from him in time; and were sent by him into the several parts of the world he is the Lord of; and by whom they were filled with gifts, grace, and courage, fitting them for their work. Angels also stand before him, ministering unto him; always behold him; are in his presence, and enjoy his favour; and go forth from him, being sent forth by him on various accounts into all the parts of the world; which Jehovah is the Creator, Upholder, and Governor of: moreover, this is applicable to the four monarchies; these stood before the Lord in his vast and infinite mind; in the secret decrees of it, before the world was; and the sending and going forth of them from him shew that they were powers ordained of God, who has the government of the whole world in his hands.

Ver. 6. *The black horses which are therein,* &c.] Which were in the second chariot: no further mention is made of the red horses in the first chariot, because the kingdom of the Chaldeans was now extinct: these design the Medes and Persians: *go forth into the north country*; into the country of Babylon or Chaldea, which lay north of Judea; see Jer. i. 13, 14, 15. and iii. 12. and vi. 22. and other places; these went to Babylon, took that, and seized on the empire, and delivered the Jews, who were captives there: *and the white go forth after them*; the Grecians under Alexander, who went after the Medes and Persians into the

[x] אמוצים fortes, Vulg. Lat. Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius; robusti, Piscator, Tarnovius, Gussetius, Stockius, p. 74; validi, Burkius; so Kimchi; and the Jews in Pesikta apud Yalkut in loc.

[y] ברדים grandinati, Montanus, Cocceius, Burkius; grandine guttati, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius, De Dieu, Pembellus

[z] Ποικιλοι, Sept.; varii, Pagninus.

[a] In Pesikta Rabbati apud Yalkut in loc.

same country, and fought Darius the Persian, and conquered him: *and the grisled go forth toward the south country;* the Romans under Julius Cæsar, Augustus, and others before them, who went into Egypt, which lay south of Judea, Dan. xi. 5. and conquered that, and other nations, and set up the fourth kingdom or monarchy.

Ver. 7. *And the bay went forth, and sought to go,* &c.] Without leave: these design either the Romans; or, since distinct from the grisled, the Huns, Goths, and Vandals; who sought to go out of their own places into other countries: and were desirous *that they might walk to and fro through the earth:* without control; overrunning as they did the Roman empire, and set up ten kingdoms in it; unless this is to be understood of the land of Judea only, through which the Romans walked to and fro at pleasure, and subdued it: *and he said:* that is, the Lord of the whole earth, before whom they stood: *get ye hence, walk to and fro through the earth:* as being filled with indignation at them, and yet suffered them to have their will; and so Kimchi interprets the phrase, "he gave them power "to go and subdue lands;" and to the same purpose Jarchi, "he gave them power to rule with great au-"thority; and this is the kingdom of Edom or "Rome:" *so they walked to and fro through the earth:* either the land of Judea, as the Romans did, and made it a Roman province; and these may represent Rome Papal, set up and supported by the above people, even the beast of Rome, which has reigned over the kings of the earth, to whom the ten kings gave their kingdom and power.

Ver. 8. *Then cried he upon me, and spake unto me, saying,* &c.] That is, the Lord of the whole earth spoke to the prophet with a loud voice, and uttered the following words: *behold, these that go toward the north country:* meaning the Medes and Persians, which went towards Babylon: *have quieted my spirit in the north country;* by executing the judgments of God upon the Chaldeans, and by helping, favouring, and delivering the people of the Jews; which were very agreeable to the will of God, and well-pleasing in his sight, signified by the quieting or refreshing his spirit.

Ver. 9. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] Either *the word of prophecy from the Lord,* as the Targum paraphrases it; the visions being ended, the prophetical part of the book begins; and many excellent prophecies concerning the Messiah, and his kingdom, are contained in this and the following chapters: or an order from the Lord, which is expressed in the next verses.

Ver. 10. *Take of them of the captivity,* &c.] That is, some of them that were returned from the captivity of Babylon, and who are mentioned by name: *even of Heldai, of Tobijah, and Jedaiah, which are come from Babylon:* either with Zerubbabel and Joshua, when they came from thence; or who were now just come from those that remained there: *and come thou the same day:* this very day in which they were come from thence: *and go into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah;* where the above persons were; or where they were to go along with him: this Josiah might be either a goldsmith, and therefore the prophet is sent to him to make the crowns aftermentioned; or else he might be a treasurer belonging to the temple, who had gold and silver in his hands, which had been put there for the use of it.

Ver. 11. *Then take silver and gold,* &c. Which the Jewish writers suppose were brought by the above men from their brethren in Babylon, as a free-will offering towards the building of the temple: *and make crowns;* two at least, one of silver, and another of gold; the one to be put upon the head of Joshua the high-priest; the other upon the head of Zerubbabel, as Kimchi conjectures; though, according to the text, they seem to be both, or all of them, be they as many as they will, to be put upon the head of Joshua; and may signify the different states of the priesthood in the present time, and when in its pristine glory; or that both the crown of the priesthood and the crown of the kingdom should meet in his antitype Christ, who is said to have on his head many crowns, Rev. xix. 12. The Targum renders it, *thou shalt make a great crown;* as if only one crown was to be made of gold and silver mixed together; and so the Arabic version renders it; but more are certainly meant, for it follows: *and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech the high-priest;* on whose head a fair mitre was set; see ch. iii. 5. and with the mitre was wore by the high-priest the holy crown, made of pure gold; and which was no other than the plate or *flower* of gold, on which was engraved *Holiness to the Lord,* Exod. xxviii. 36. and xxix. 6. and xxxix. 30. and this, according to the Jewish writers[b], was a plate of gold two fingers broad, and reached from ear to ear; though Josephus[c] seems to give a different account of it; he says, "the golden crown surrounds (either the mitre, "or perhaps rather the forehead or temples); and on "it were three rows of cups or flowers, like those of "the herb we call *saccharus;* and the Grecian bo-"tanists *hyosciamus;*" or henbane; and after describing the herb, and the figure of the buds, cups, or flowers of it, he adds, "like to these is made a crown "reaching from the hinder part of the head unto both "temples; for the flowers do not encompass the fore-"head; but there is a golden plate, which has the "name of God engraved in sacred letters;" which seems to disagree with the accounts of other Jewish writers; unless, as Braunius[d] observes, they may be thus reconciled, that the crown was nothing else but the plate that was two fingers broad, and was in length from ear to ear; so that about the temples it was ornamented with three rows of henbane-flowers on each side: and these three rows may give occasion for the use of the word in the plural number; and some have called it a triple crown[e]; and Popish writers fail not to improve it in favour of the crown their pontiff wears; and Lyra[f] speaks of little crowns or coronets, even in the mitres of the common priests; which (he says) were circles in the lower part of them so called;

[b] Maimon. Cele Hamikdash, c. 9. sect. 1. Jarchi in Exod. xxviii. 36.
[c] Antiqu. l. 3. c. 7. sect. 7.
[d] De Vestitu Sacerdot. Hebr. l. 2. c. 22. sect. 18. p. 807.
[e] Fortunatus Scacchus in Myrothec. l. 3. c. 40. p. 1000. Solerius de Pileo, sect. 12. p. 266.
[f] In Exod. xxxix. 27.

wherefore the rows of flowers in the high-priest's crown, from whence it might be called ציץ, a flower, might with more propriety bear that name. Philo the Jew [g], speaking of the golden plate, says it was like a crown engraven with four letters of the name (Jehovah); and further observes, that "the mitre under "it kept the plate from touching the head, on which "the *cidaris* or diadem was put; for it was like the "cidaris which the eastern kings used for a diadem:" and indeed this crown, and the three rows of flowers in it, were a hieroglyphic or emblem of the threefold office of Christ, whom the high-priest represented, kingly, priestly, and prophetic; and so may be fitly signified here by crowns in the plural number; and it is usual with the Jewish writers to speak of three crowns, the crown of the law, the crown of the kingdom, and the crown of the priesthood [h]; and very probably from the high-priest among the Jews wearing crowns it was that the priests among the Heathens had the same ornaments on their heads; and to be crowned was with them the same as to exercise the office of priesthood [i], and who was an eminent type of the Messiah, and in this of having crowns put upon his head, as the following words shew.

Ver. 12. *And speak unto him, saying*, &c.] That is, to Joshua the high-priest, having the crowns on his head: *thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, behold the man whose name is the* BRANCH; which is not to be understood of Zerubbabel, as some Jewish writers interpret it: for he was not *the Branch*, by way of eminency, much less that righteous Branch of David, called the Lord our righteousness, Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. the same that is here meant; besides, he was already grown up out of his place; nor did he build a temple, from which he had great glory; nor was he either king or priest, only governor of Judah; and, however, not both, as this person is represented to be; and who is no other than the Messiah; and so the Targum paraphrases the words, "behold the man Messiah is his "name;" and Jarchi owns that some of their Rabbins interpret the words of the King Messiah. The *Branch* is a name by which the Messiah goes in the Talmud [k], and in other Jewish writings. It is asked [l], what is the name of the King Messiah? it is answered, among others, his name is the *Branch*; as it is said, *behold the man whose name is the Branch: he shall grow up out of his place:* elsewhere [m] they speak of five letters doubled, which are the foundation of deliverance to certain persons, or point thereat. The first four, they observe, were accomplished in the deliverance of Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees, of Isaac from the Philistines, of Jacob from Esau, and of the Israelites from Egypt; and the fifth, which is the letter צ, the first letter of *Tzemach*, the Branch, by it they say the holy blessed God will redeem Israel at the end of the four monarchies; as it is said, *behold the man whose name is the Branch*, &c.: Philo the Jew [n] interprets this passage of a divine Person, the son of God, by whom no other than the Messiah is meant, "we have heard (says he) "one of the friends of Moses, *i. e.* Zechariah, saying "thus, behold the man *whose name is the east*, or "rising sun (so the Greek version renders the words); "a new appellation, if you can think it said of one "consisting of soul and body; but if of that incorporeal one, bearing the divine image, you will own "that the name is fitly given him, the ancient Sun, the "Father of beings will cause to arise; whom otherwise he names the first-begotten, and who, being begotten, imitates the ways of his Father; and looking "at his archetypal exemplars, forms the same. Abendana [o], a modern Jew, observes, that "it is right that "the Targum interprets it of the Messiah, for of him "it is spoken; therefore it is written, *and he shall* "*grow up out of his place;* for he shall go forth from "him, and shall be of the seed of Zerubbabel,—and "the King Messiah shall bear the glory of the kingdom, and he shall rule upon the throne of his kingdom;" and when he is called a man, the meaning is not that he is a mere man, nor was he really man before his incarnation; but as he was to be man, and his incarnation was drawing near, he is so called: of his name the *Branch*, see Isa. iv. 2. and xi. 1. Jer. xxiii. 5. and Zech. 3. 8. and Joshua, he is directed to look upon himself, with the crowns on his head, as a type of him; and so were the prophet, and those that were with him; and he is to be beheld, as before in type, so now in truth, by faith, with love and affection, with diligent attention, and great admiration: *and he shall grow up out of his place*; or, *from under him* [p]; which may regard his natural descent as man, and the persons or person from whom he sprung; as from Abraham, Jacob, Judah, Jesse, and particularly from David, from the royal seed, as Jarchi interprets it: or else the place from whence this Branch arose, the land of Judea, the tribe of Judah, the city of Beth-lehem, where he was born; or Galilee, and particularly Nazareth, where he was brought up, and grew, and increased in the stature of his body, and in the wisdom of his mind: or it may be rendered, *from his inferior place* [q]; his superior place, as the son of God, is heaven; his inferior place, as the son of man, is the earth; from whence he may be said to be, being born of a woman; and so this Branch is called *the fruit of the earth*, and said to spring out of it, Isa. iv. 2. Psal. lxxxv. 11. or it is the same as מאליו, from himself, as Aben Ezra observes; and so Calvin: for this Branch did not grow up through any sowing and planting of man, but without any hand or concern of his in it: Christ was born of a virgin, through the power of the Highest, and through his own power, as God: *and he shall build the temple of the Lord:* not a material temple, but the spiritual temple, the church; called so in allusion to the temple of Jerusalem, built by Solomon; which was typical of the church, in the builder of it, Solomon, the church being built by Christ the antitypical Solomon, the true Peace, and

[g] De Vita Mosis, l. 3. p. 670, 671.
[h] Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 13.
[i] Paschalius de Coronis, l. 4. c. 13.
[k] T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 5. 1.
[l] Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 7.
[m] Pirke Eliezer, c. 48. fol. 58. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 14. fol. 223. 2.

[n] De Confus. Ling. p. 329.
[o] Not. in Miclol Yophi in loc.
[p] מתחתיו subter eum, V. L. Pagninus; *ad verbum*, de sub se, Calvin, Drusius; de subter se, Cocceius; ex sub eo, Burkius.
[q] Ex inferiore loco, Vitringa in Jesaiam, c. iv. 2. E loco suo humili, Hiller. Onomastic. Sacr. p. 47.

Peacemaker; in the situation of it on a mount, which denotes the safety, visibility, and exalted state of the church; in the matter of it, being made of choice stones, and excellent timber, to which believers in Christ, who as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, are fitly compared; in the magnificence and stateliness of it, especially as the church will be in the latter day, when the glorious things spoken of it will be fulfilled; and in its strength and firmness, as well as in its holiness: and it is called *the temple of the Lord*, because it is of his building, where he dwells, and where he is worshipped; and in the building of it Christ has a great concern; he is not only the foundation and corner-stone of it, but he is the chief, the master-builder of it; he builds it on himself, and builds it up by his spirit, his ministers, his word and ordinances, making thereby continually an increase of it, and additions to it; see Matt. xvi. 18.

Ver. 13. *Even he shall build the temple of the Lord*, &c.] Which is repeated, as Kimchi observes, for confirmation-sake: *and he shall bear the glory*: that is, of building the temple; and the phrase denotes that the glory of it shall be upon him, shall be hung upon him, as in Isa. xxii. 24. and so shall be visible; that it would be weighty and heavy, he having many crowns on his head, put there by all the saints, who every one of them ascribe glory to him; that it would continue, and not pass away like the glory of this world; and that he, and he alone, should bear it; not Joshua, nor Zerubbabel, nor the ministers of the word, nor members of churches, nor any other, but himself; he, and he alone, shall be exalted: *and shall sit and rule upon his throne*; in heaven, having done his work on earth, where he is at ease and rest, and exercises power and authority; he rules over the whole world, and the kings of it in general, and in particular over his saints, by his spirit, word, and ordinances, feeding, protecting, and defending them: *and he shall be a Prince upon his throne*; he is both Priest and King, and exercises both offices at one and the same time, and even now in heaven; having offered himself as a sacrifice on earth, by which he has put away sin for ever, and perfected his people; he is set down upon his throne, as a King crowned with glory and honour; and ever lives as a Priest on the throne, to make intercession for them; by appearing in the presence of God for them; by presenting his blood, sacrifice, and righteousness, to his divine Father; by offering up the prayers and praises of his people; by declaring it as his will that such and such blessings be bestowed upon them; and by applying the benefits of his death unto them: *and the counsel of peace shall be between them both*; not between Joshua and Zerubbabel, who should agree together, as they did, in the administration of government belonging to their distinct offices; rather between the priestly and kingly offices of Christ; nor the council of peace between the Father and the Son, concerning the salvation of the elect; for that was past in eternity; but better the Gospel of peace, called the whole counsel of God, which, in consequence of Christ being a Priest on his throne, was preached to both Jews and Gentiles; which brought the glad tidings of peace and salvation by Christ to both, and was the means of making peace between them both.

Ver. 14. *And the crowns shall be to Helem*, &c.] The same with Heldai, ver. 10: *and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah*; the same with Josiah, ver. 10: *for a memorial in the temple of the Lord*; the crowns, after they had been put upon the head of Joshua, were taken off, and laid up in some part of the temple, of which the Jews make mention in their Misna*; and say there were golden chains fixed to the beams of the porch (of the temple), by which the young priests went up, and saw the crowns; as it is said, Zech. vi. 14. *and the crowns shall be to Helem*, &c.; these were laid up for a memorial of the liberality and generosity of those men, as Jarchi interprets it, who had so freely and largely offered towards the building of the temple; or rather, as Alshec†, another Jewish commentator, observes, they were for a memorial of something future, even of the Messiah, who was typified by Joshua, when he had those crowns upon him; for those crowns respected the glory of Christ's government in future times; and being made both of silver and gold, and put upon the head of the high-priest Joshua, denoted the union of the kingly and priestly offices in the Messiah.

Ver. 15. *And they that are afar off shall come*, &c.] Into the temple; not the material temple; nor is this a prophecy which was fulfilled in Herod, a stranger, repairing that, as Kimchi suggests; but into the spiritual temple, the church; and is a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, who are said to be *afar off*, Ephes. ii. 12, 13, from God; from having his image on them; from subjection to his law; from the knowledge and fear of him; and from communion with him: from Christ; from the knowledge of his person, righteousness, and salvation by him; from love to him, faith in him, and fellowship with him; from the Spirit of God, and from the people of God, and from any solid hope of eternal life: now these being called by grace, and brought to Christ under the drawings of the Father's love, shall come to his church, and join themselves to his people: *and build in the temple of the Lord*; upon the foundation Christ; and be useful in building up others, either by private conversation, or by public preaching the word; it is not said, they shall *build the temple of the Lord*; that is Christ's work; but *build in it*: *and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you*: that is, the Prophet Zechariah, who was sent to the Jews to declare these things to them; or, as the Targum adds, *to prophesy unto you*; which they would fully know, and be assured of, when these things should have their accomplishment: *and this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God*: not that the fulfilment of the above predictions depended upon their obedience; but when they should in the latter day obey the Gospel of Christ, or *the word of the Lord their God*, as the Targum paraphrases it; then this would come to pass, that they should know that the prophet had his mission from the Lord.

* Massech. Middot, c. 3. sect. 8.

† Apud L'Empereur, Not. in ib.

CHAP. VII.

THIS chapter treats concerning the nature and use of certain fasts kept by the Jews, on account of the destruction of the temple, and other things; and concerning the message of the former prophets to them, and the effects of it. The occasion of the former was an embassy sent by the Jews to the priests and prophets, to know whether they should continue the fast of the fifth month; upon which the prophet was sent by the Lord unto them. The time of the prophecy is noted, ver. 1. An account of the embassy is given, of the persons that were sent, and to whom, and upon what account, ver. 2, 3. The answer of the Lord to it by the prophet, shewing the usefulness of fasts to him, and putting them upon hearkening to his voice by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was in great prosperity, ver. 4, 5, 6, 7. and then they are exhorted by him, in the ministry of the present prophet, to acts of righteousness, several species of which are mentioned; and which were the same they had been exhorted to by the former prophets, but had neglected, and hardened their hearts against all exhortations and instructions, ver. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. and were the reason of their captivity and desolation, ver. 13, 14.

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass, in the fourth year of King Darius, &c.*] Near two years after the foundation of the temple was laid, Hagg. ii. 10, 18. and near two years before it was finished, Ezra vi. 15. when the work was going forward, and there was a great deal of reason to believe it would be completed: *that the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, in the fourth day of the ninth month, even in Chisleu;* which answers to part of our October, and part of November.

Ver. 2. *When they had sent unto the house of God, &c.*] It is, in the Hebrew text, *when he sent Beth-el:* which some, as Kimchi observes, take to be the name of a man that was sent along with those after mentioned; but the Targum and the Septuagint render it, *when*, or *after he had sent unto Beth-el;* not the place so called in Jacob's time; but Jerusalem, where the temple or house of God was now building; and it may be observed, that the words are expressed in the singular number, *when he had sent*[t]; and not, as we render them, *when they had sent;* and agreeably, in ver. 3, it is said, *should I weep, &c.* as if these messengers were sent by a single person, and yet a body of people is meant; and not the captives that remained in Babylon, as most interpreters understand it; but the Jews that were returned from thence, and were in Judea, as Junius and Tremellius observe; for to them the answer is returned, and to them does the Lord by the prophet direct his speech throughout the whole chapter. The persons sent were *Sherezer and Regemmelech, and their men;* who these persons were is not known; they were, no doubt, principal men of the people, by whom they were sent, and the chief of the embassy, and had others with them inferior to them: part of their business at Beth-el, or the house of God, was, *to pray before the Lord;* that they might be directed aright, and have a proper answer returned to the question they came with. The temple at Jerusalem was the place where men used to go up to pray; see Luke xviii. 10.

Ver. 3. *And to speak unto the priests which were in the house of the Lord of hosts, &c.*] That ministered in the sanctuary, as the Targum explains it, who offered sacrifices, &c. and who were to be consulted in matters of religion, Mal. ii. 7: *and to the prophets;* who were then in being, as Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi: *saying, should I weep in the fifth month;* which is the month Ab, and answers to July: now on the seventh day of this month, according to 2 Kings xxv. 8, 9, the temple was burnt by the Chaldeans; and, according to Jer. lii. 12, 13, it was on the tenth of this month, which day was kept by the Jews as a day of fasting and humiliation, in commemoration of it; and by the Misnic doctors[u] afterwards was removed, and kept on the ninth day of the said month; but, seeing the temple was in great forwardness of being rebuilt, the question with those Jews was, whether they should continue any longer mourning and fasting on that account: *separating myself:* that is, from eating and drinking, and not taking the lawful pleasures and recreations of life: *as I have done these so many years?* for the space of seventy years, as in ver. 5.

Ver. 4. *Then came the word of the Lord of hosts unto me, saying.*] Upon the sending of this embassy, and upon putting this question.

Ver. 5. *Speak unto all the people of the land, &c.*] Of Judea, who had sent these men on this errand, and whom they personated, and in whose name they spake: *and to the priests:* who were consulted on this occasion: *saying, when ye fasted and mourned in the fifth;* on the seventh or tenth day of the fifth month Ab, on account of the temple being burnt by Nebuchadnezzar: *and seventh* month; the month Tisri, which answers to September; on the third day of this month a fast was kept on account of the murder of Gedaliah, Jer. xli. 1. though Kimchi says he was slain on the first day of the month; but, because that was a feast-day, keeping a day for a fast on this occasion was fixed on the day following: *even those seventy years;* of their captivity, during which they kept the above fasts. The Jews say[w] there was no fast of the congregation, or public fast, kept in Babylon, but on the ninth of Ab, or the fifth month only; and if so, other fasts here, and in ch. viii. 19, must be private ones. These seventy years are to be reckoned from the nineteenth of Nebuchadnezzar, when the city was destroyed, to the second or fourth of Darius: *did ye at all*

[t] וישלח cum misisset, *sub.* populus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Tarnovius; & misit, Paginus, Montanus; miserat autem, *sub.* Israel, Vatablus; & miserat, Cocceius; & misit Bethelum, i. e. urbem, Burkius.

[u] Misn. Taanith, c. 4. sect. 7, 8. T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 29. 1.

[w] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 54. 2.

fast unto me, even unto me? the fast they kept was not according to the command of God, but an appointment of theirs; nor was it directed to his glory; nor was it any profit or advantage to him; and therefore it was nothing to him whether they fasted or not; see Isa. lviii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

Ver. 6. *And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink,* &c.] Either at common meals, or at their festivals: *did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?* merely and only for their own refreshment and pleasure, and not for the glory of God; though that ought to be the principal end in eating and drinking, 1 Cor. x. 31.

Ver. 7. *Should ye not hear the words which the Lord hath cried by the former prophets,* &c.] As Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others; suggesting that it would have been much better for them to have regarded the exhortations and instructions which the Lord sent them by his servants, which would have prevented their captivity; and so would have had no occasion of fasting and mourning: for those prophecies were delivered out *when Jerusalem was inhabited, and in prosperity, and the cities thereof round about her;* when Jerusalem, and the cities about it, were full of people, and enjoyed all the blessings of life in great plenty; and which would have continued, had they attended to the exhortations, cautions, and warnings given them: *when men inhabited the south of the plain?* the land of Judea, as the Misnic[x] doctors say, was divided into three parts; the mountainous part, the plain, and the valley. Jerusalem was in the mountainous part, and these are the other two; and not only those parts of the land which were hilly, and those cities that were encompassed with mountains, were in safety and prosperity; but those also that were in the champaign country, and in the low valleys. The *south* was that part of the land of Canaan formerly inhabited by the Amalekites, and which they invaded when David was at Ziklag, Numb. xiii. 29. 1 Sam. xxx. 1. Sometimes it was called Negeb, as here; and sometimes Daroma, as frequently in the Jewish writings; in which Judea is often called the south, with respect to Galilee; for they distinguish between the inhabitants of Galilee and the inhabitants of the south country: and say, a disciple might intercalate the year for Galilee, but not for the south, *i. e.* Judea. It reached from Eleutheropolis to the south of the land, 18 or 20 miles: it was distinguished by the Jews[y] into upper and nether Daroma, or south country: the upper consisted of the hilly part of it; the nether of the plain; and by Jerom[z] mention is made of interior Daroma, by which there should be an exterior one. The *plain,* or *Sephela,* was all the champaign country, near to Eleutheropolis, to the north and west; and so the above writer[a] says it was called in his times: now each of these were well inhabited; Daroma, or the southern part; hence it is frequent, in Jewish writings[b], to read of such a Rabbi of Daroma, or the south, as R. Jacob, R. Simlai, and others; and of the elders of the south[c]; and so Jerom speaks of Eremmon, and Duma, large villages, in his days, in Daroma or the south; the one sixteen, the other seventeen miles from Eleutheropolis; and of Ether, Jether, and Jethan, one of which was eighteen, and another twenty miles from it[d]; and in 1 Maccab. xii. 38, mention is made of Adida in Sephela, fortified by Simon; and in which also were various other places well stored with inhabitants. This expresses the happy and safe state the Jews were in before their captivity, and in which they would have remained, had they hearkened to the words of the Lord.

Ver. 8. *And the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, saying.*] Giving him orders to repeat what the former prophets had said, and to urge the same things on the people which they had before rejected, the rejection of which had issued in their ruin.

Ver. 9. *Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying,* &c.] The same things as he had before; for the things following are ever in force, and always to be attended to, and to be regarded and preferred before any thing merely ritual and ceremonial; and especially before the traditions and commandments of men, of which nature the above fasts were: *execute true judgment;* or, *judge judgment[e] of truth;* this is addressed to the judges of the people, that when any cause came before them between man and man, that they would judge righteously, according to the law of God; and, without respect to persons, pass sentence as the truth of the case required: *and shew mercy and compassion every man to his brother;* whether in want of food, raiment, or in whatsoever distress, whether of body or mind; which is much more acceptable to God than any legal sacrifices, or outward abstinences and humiliations, Hos. vi. 6. 1 John iii. 17.

Ver. 10. *And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor,* &c.] Such as have no husband to provide for them, nor father and mother to care for them, and are in a strange land, where they have no friends or acquaintance, and are poor, and can't help themselves. Laws of this kind were frequently inculcated among the Jews; see Deut. xxiv. 14, 17: *and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart;* thoughts of evil are sinful, and forbidden by the law of God, as well as actions; which agrees with our Lord's sense of the law, Matt. v. 22, 28. see Lev. xix. 17.

Ver. 11. *But they refused to hearken,* &c.] That is, the Jews, before the captivity, refused to give heed to the above exhortations, and obey the voice of God in them: *and pulled away the shoulder;* from serving the Lord, and supporting his interest: or *they gave,* or presented, *a rebellious shoulder[f];* a refractory one, that slides back, like a backsliding or refractory heifer, that will not admit of the yoke, Hos. iv. 16. so these could not bear the yoke of the law, nor the burden of duty; nor suffer the words of exhortation, or receive the admonitions given them: *and stopped their ears, that they should not hear;* like the deaf adder, Psal. lviii. 4, 5, they would

[x] Misn. Shevilth, c. 9. sect. 2.
[y] T. Hieros. Maaser Sheni, fol. 56. 3. & Sanhedrin, fol. 18. 4.
[z] De locis Hebr. fol. 91. C. & 92. I.
[a] Ibid. fol. 91. M.
[b] T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 2. 2. & 11. 4. & Succah, fol. 53. 4.
[c] T. Hieros. Erubin, fol. 23. 3.

[d] Ut supra, fol. 90. K. & 91. C. & 92. I.
[e] משפט אמת judicium veritatis, Montanus, Calvin, Cocceius, Burkius; jus veritatis, Junius & Tremellius, Tarnovius.
[f] כתף סררת scapulam aversam, Pagninus; deficientem, Montanus; rebellem, Munster, Tigurine version; refractariam, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Ben Melech.

not hear, and pretended they could not; which was an instance of contempt to the speakers.

Ver. 12. *Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone,* &c.] The word here used is translated *a diamond* in Jer. xvii. 1. and it is said to be harder than a flint, Ezek. iii. 9. The Jewish writers say [g] it is a worm like a barley-corn, so strong as to cut the hardest stones in pieces; Moses (they say) used it in hewing the stones for the two tables of the law, and in fitting the precious stones in the ephod; and Solomon in cutting the stones for the building of the temple; and is so hard that it cannot be broken by iron: and as hard is naturally the heart of man, and which becomes more so by sinning, and obstinate persisting in it, that nothing can remove the hardness of it but the powerful and efficacious grace of God: as hard as the adamant is, it is to be softened by the blood of a goat, as naturalists say [h]; so the blood of Christ sprinkled on the heart, and a sense of forgiveness of sin by it, will soften the hardest heart: *lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets;* the words of reproof, admonition, caution, and exhortation, which Jeremiah and others were sent to deliver to them, under the influence of the spirit of God: *therefore came a great wrath from the Lord of hosts;* which brought the Chaldeans upon them, who carried them captive into Babylon.

Ver. 13. *Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried,* &c.] The Lord by the former prophets called them to repentance and obedience: *and they would not hear;* his words, nor obey his voice: *so they cried;* when they were besieged in Jerusalem, and were carried captive into Babylon: *and I would not hear, saith the Lord of hosts;* so as to deliver them out of the hands of their enemies; see Prov. i. 24—28.

Ver. 14. *But I scattered them with a whirlwind,* &c.] Denoting the fierceness of his wrath, and the strength of his fury, seen in their dispersion: *among all the nations whom they knew not;* such as the Babylonians, Medes, and Persians, people before unknown to the Jews: *thus the land was desolate after them;* that is, the land of Judea was destitute of inhabitants, or had but few remaining in it, after the Jews were carried captive into Babylon; for the rest, after the death of Gedaliah, fled into Egypt: *that no man passed through, nor returned;* neither from Egypt, nor from Babylon, until the seventy years of captivity were ended; nor indeed did any from other nations pass through and fro, or settle in it, during this time, that we have any account of: *for they laid the pleasant land desolate;* either the Israelites by their iniquities, which were the cause of it; or the Babylonians, as the instruments of God's vengeance. This pleasant land is the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey; the glory of all lands, for its great fruitfulness, and delightful situation; and especially for being the seat of the divine Majesty, and where his people dwelt, and where his temple was, and he was worshipped; see Ezek. xx. 6. Deut. viii. 7—10.

CHAP. VIII.

THIS chapter contains promises of various blessings to the people of the Jews; and exhortations to several duties incumbent on them; and is concluded with a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles. The cause of all the blessings promised is the love of God to them, signified by zeal, or jealousy for them, ver. 1, 2. The blessings promised are the Lord's return to dwell in Jerusalem, and the integrity and holiness of that city, ver. 3. The long life of the inhabitants of it, and the plenty of children that should be born in it, ver. 4, 5. and, however wonderful and incredible this might seem to some, it was not to the Lord, who was determined to bring his people that were in several distant countries to Jerusalem, and settle them there; and renew and re-establish his covenant with them, ver. 6, 7, 8. wherefore the Lord encourages them to go on in rebuilding the temple, ver. 9. and promises them that things would be better with them than in times past; that whereas there had been nothing but penury, affliction, and distress, now there should be great affluence and prosperity, ver. 10, 11, 12. and though before they were a curse among the nations, now they should be a blessing; and though their fathers were punished, they should be dealt well with, ver. 13, 14, 15. and then they are exhorted to the discharge of several duties mentioned, to which they are induced by the Lord's hatred of that which is evil, and by his turning their fasts into cheerful feasts, ver. 16, 17, 18, 19. to which is added a prophecy of the calling and conversion of the Gentiles, which would make for the glory of the Jewish church; who are described by their numbers, being many people, and the inhabitants of many cities; by their association together, to pray to the Lord, and worship him; by their coming up to Jerusalem for that purpose; and by their junction with the Jews, to which they'll be encouraged by having heard that God is with them, ver. 20, 21, 22, 23.

Ver. 1. *Again the word of the Lord of hosts came unto me, saying.*] The phrase, *unto me,* is wanting in the Hebrew text; and is the only place it is wanting in, as the Masora observes; though undoubtedly it is to be understood; and therefore is rightly supplied, as it is by the Targum, *with me.* Mention being made in the latter part of the preceding chapter of the desolations of the earth, comfort is here administered, as Aben Ezra notes.

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts,* &c.] This prophecy, according to Kimchi and Ben Melech, respects time to come; the days of the Messiah, in the war of Gog and Magog, when they shall come up against Jerusalem, and the Lord shall pour out his great wrath upon them; and it seems right to interpret it, not only

[g] Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 12. Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 5. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. Kimchi in 1 Reg. vi. 7. Jarchi in Isa. v. 6.

[h] Pausan. Arcadica, sive l. 8. p. 485. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 37. c. 4.

literally of Jerusalem, but spiritually of the church in Gospel times: *I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy*: the Arabic version reads, *for Jerusalem, and for Zion*: as in ch. i. 14. see the note there: *and I was jealous for her with great fury*: that is, against her enemies; the Babylonians and Chaldeans now, and the antichristian powers in Gospel times. The Targum paraphrases it, *against the people that provoked her to jealousy*: the past tense is put for the future, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe.

Ver. 3. *Thus saith the Lord, I am returned to Zion*, &c.] The temple being now building, and almost finished, and the worship of God restored in it. The Targum renders it, *I will return to Zion*; and it may refer to the time of Christ's incarnation, when the Redeemer came to Zion, Isa. lix. 20. or to the time of the conversion of the Jews in the latter day, of both which it is true; see Rom. xi. 26: *and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem*; or *cause my Shechinah to dwell* there, as the Targum paraphrases it; which was fulfilled when the Word was made flesh, και εσκηνωσεν, *and dwelt* or *tabernacled* among the inhabitants of Judea and of Jerusalem, and taught his doctrines, and wrought his miracles, in the midst of them; and will be also when he shall dwell among them by his spirit and grace in the latter day: *and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth*: when Christ, who is *truth* itself, was in it, and the truths of the Gospel were preached there by him and his apostles, and they were received and professed by many, though despised by others; and especially in the latter day, when the Jews shall generally and cordially embrace Christ and his Gospel, and shall worship God in spirit and in truth, and not in that shadowy, formal, and hypocritical way they do now; see Isa. i. 26, 27. and especially this will be true of the New Jerusalem, into which nothing shall enter that makes a lie, Rev. xxi. 27: *the mountain of the Lord of hosts*; which will be established upon the top of the mountains, and where the Lord will be seen and exalted in his glory, even the Lamb, with the hundred and forty-four thousand with him, Isa. ii. 2. Rev. xiv. 1: *the holy mountain*: where the holy word of God will be preached, the holy ordinances administered, and holiness of life and conversation will be strictly attended to; yea, Holiness will be upon the bells of the horses, Zech. xiv. 20.

Ver. 4. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts*, &c.] These words are used at every consolatory promise given, as Kimchi observes, for the confirmation of it: *there shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem*: signifying that the inhabitants should be very healthful; no sweeping disease or calamity should be among them, but they should live to a good old age, as follows: *and every man with his staff in his hand for very age*; or *because of multitude of days*[l]; the length of time they should have lived in the world, being worn out, not with diseases, but with old age, and therefore obliged to use a staff when they walk the streets for their support; all which is an emblem of the healthfulness of the inhabitants of Zion, who have no reason to complain of sickness, because their sins are forgiven them; and of that spiritual and eternal life, which they that are written among the living in Jerusalem do enjoy; who are in understanding men, fathers in Christ, and are growing up to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; see Isa. lxv. 20.

Ver. 5. *And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls*, &c.] Denoting a large increase of inhabitants, in a literal sense; and may spiritually signify the large numbers of converts, of new-born babes, who are regenerated by the grace and spirit of God, and are accounted of by the Lord for a generation: *playing in the streets thereof*: being in health and vigour, and in great security. The Targum renders it, *singing* or *praising in the spacious places thereof*: singing the praises of God in Gospel strains; saying their Hosannas to the son of David; rejoicing in the great salvation by Christ, and magnifying the grace of God, and setting forth the glories of it in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; see Matt. xi. 16, 17. and xxi. 15, 16. In Jerusalem, literally taken, there were various streets, besides the street of the temple, which led to it, Ezra x. 9. mention is made of others in Jewish writings, as of the upper street[k], and of the street of the butchers, and of the street of those that dealt in wool[l].

Ver. 6. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts*, &c.] This is repeated for the same end as before; see the note on ver. 4: *if it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days*; either in the then present days and time; and the sense is, if it should seem wonderful, incredible, and scarcely possible to the small number of the Jews in Judea, that all the great and good things before promised should be fulfilled; or in the times of the Gospel, when the remnant, according to the election of grace, would wonder at the marvellous loving-kindness of the Lord, in doing such great things for his church and people: *should it also be marvellous in mine eyes, saith the Lord of hosts?* no, not as if it was impossible to be done; it shall be done, as marvellous as it may seem to be. Aben Ezra understands these words, not as spoken by way of interrogation and admiration, but as an affirmation; that God would do that which was marvellous, and such as he had never done the like, even as follows:

Ver. 7. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, behold*, &c.] As being something wonderful, of great importance, and deserving attention: *I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country*; this can't be understood of bringing those Jews that remained in Babylon, and other places, to their own land, for Babylon lay north of Judea; see ch. vi. 6, 8. and as yet there were no Jews in the western part of the world; but now they are chiefly in the east and west, from whence they will be gathered at the time of their general conversion; though this may refer to the times of the apostles of Christ, and to their ministry in the several parts of the world, who went forth, east, west, north, and south, and were the means and instruments of saving the Lord's people, both Jews and Gentiles, wherever they came, from the rising of the sun, to the setting of the same; see Mal. i. 11. Matt. viii. 11.

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[l] מרב ימים prae multitudine dierum, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius, Burkius.

[k] Misn. Shekalim, c. 8, sect. 1.
[l] Misn. Erubin, c. 10. sect. 9.

Ver. 8. *And I will bring them,* &c.] To Zion, into the church of God, the Gospel fold, where Christ has engaged to bring his other sheep, that there may be one fold for Jew and Gentile, Jer. iii. 14. John x. 16: *and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem:* the Gospel church; and be no more foreigners and strangers, but of the household of God, enjoying all the immunities and privileges of the Jerusalem that is above, the mother of us all: *and they shall be my people:* appear to be so by effectual vocation; which makes those manifest to be the people of God, to be in the covenant of his grace, who before were not known to be so, either by themselves or others, 1 Pet. ii. 10: *and I will be their God, in truth, and in righteousness:* according to the covenant of his grace, which will now in a very open manner be truly and faithfully fulfilled; and they, in consequence of the grace bestowed on them, will worship God in sincerity and truth, being justified by the righteousness of Christ, and so will have no dependence on their own for their acceptance with God; see Hos. ii. 19, 20.

Ver. 9. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, let your hands be strong,* &c.] In going on with the building of the temple, which was typical of the church of God, since so many great and good things were promised by the Lord, Hagg. ii. 4: *ye that hear in these days:* such as Zerubbabel the ruler, Joshua the high-priest, and the rest of the people of the land: *these words by the mouth of the prophets;* that is, these prophecies of future good things, which were delivered by Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi; who were the prophets, *which were in the day that the foundation of the house of the Lord of hosts was laid;* which was in the second year of Darius, on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, Hagg. ii. 10. 18: *that the temple might be built;* in order to the rebuilding of it, the foundation was laid; and from that time it was to continue building, till it was finished [m].

Ver. 10. *For before these days,* &c.] That the temple began to be built: *there was no hire for men, nor any hire for beasts;* that turned to any account; the wages earned by the one, and with the other, were as if they were put into a bag with holes, did not prosper with them, or do them any service, Hagg. i. 6. and ii. 16: *neither was there any peace to him that went out or came in, because of the affliction:* there was no safety in passing to and fro, nor any peaceable enjoyment of what a man had, because of affliction and oppression by the enemy on every side, and from every quarter: *for I set all men every one against his neighbour:* expressive of the intestine divisions and contentions among themselves, which are said to be of the Lord, because he permitted them as a chastisement upon them for their sins.

Ver. 11. *But now I will not be unto the residue of this people,* &c.] The remnant brought out of captivity, settled in the land, and now rebuilding the temple: *as in the former days, saith the Lord of hosts:* when they neglected the house of the Lord, caring only for their own cieled houses, Hagg. i. 2—11.

Ver. 12. *For the seed* shall be *prosperous,* &c.] Being cast into the earth, it shall spring up again, and produce a large increase; whereas before, though they sowed much, it came to little, Hagg. i. 6: *the vine shall give her fruit;* be loaded with clusters, and produce large quantities of wine; whereas before there was a drought upon the new wine; and where there were wont to be had fifty vessels out of the press, there were but twenty, Hagg. i. 11. and ii. 16: *and the ground shall give her increase;* as usual, meaning of wheat and barley; whereas before there was a drought upon the corn, and where there used to be a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten, Hagg. i. 11. and ii. 16: *and the heavens shall give their dew;* which makes the earth fruitful; whereas before the heaven over them was stayed from dew, and instead of it were blasting, mildew, and hail, Hagg. i. 10. and ii. 17: *and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these things;* as a symbol of better things inherited by the remnant according to the election of grace; and who have the promise both of this life and that to come; and who, seeking in the first place spiritual things, have all others added to them, convenient for them.

Ver. 13. *And it shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the Heathen,* &c.] Reproached, vilified, and called accursed by them; see Jer. xxiv. 9. as true Christians, and real believers in Christ, are by the men of this world, 1 Cor. iv. 12, 13: *O house of Judah, and house of Israel;* both being carried captive at different times, and were typical of the true and spiritual Israel of God: *so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing;* be blessed in themselves with the above blessings of plenty and prosperity in outward things; see Hagg. ii. 19. and a blessing to others, and blessed by them; and all those who are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation are blessed with all spiritual blessings in him: *fear not;* neither their enemies, nor the accomplishment of these promises: *but let your hands be strong;* as in ver. 9.

Ver. 14. *For thus saith the Lord of hosts,* &c.] In order to assure them of the truth of what he promised, he observes the fulfilment of what he had threatened, he being as true and faithful in the one as in the other: *as I thought to punish you;* determined to do it, by suffering them to be carried captive: *when your fathers provoked me to wrath, saith the Lord of hosts:* by their immorality, idolatry, and contempt of his prophets: *and I repented not:* the Targum adds, *of my word;* of the resolution he had taken up in his heart, and of the declaration of it by his prophets, that he would punish them; this he did not repent of, revoke, change, and alter, but steadily abode by it, and executed it.

Ver. 15. *So again,* &c.] Or *so I am returned* [n], as in ver. 3: *I have thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah:* by bestowing the above-mentioned blessings on them; and as Jehovah has thought, so it comes to pass, and as he has purposed, so it stands; whatever he determines shall

[m] The true reading of these words, according to the accents, is, *Thus saith the Lord of hosts: let your hands be strong, that hear in those days these words:* out of *the prophets,* I say, ye have heard, *that, from the day the house of the Lord of hosts shall be founded, the temple* should be continued *to be built.* So Reinbeck. De Accent. Heb. p. 453.

[n] כן שבתי sic conversus sum, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin; ita conversus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; reversus sum, Burkius.

be, as for evil, so for good, Isa. xiv. 24: *fear ye not;* as in ver. 13.

Ver. 16. *These are the things that ye shall do,* &c.] Which were duties incumbent on them, and which it became them to perform, under a sense of the favours bestowed on them, to shew their gratitude to God, and that they might glorify him: *speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour;* not using deceit, prevarication, and lying, Ephes. iv. 25. and it becomes every man under the Gospel dispensation, according to the gift he has received, to speak, publish, and declare the truth of the Gospel, to the edification of others: *execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates;* that is, execute true judgment, as in ch. vii. 9. do justice between man and man, without respect of persons; the issue of which will be peace between the contending parties: and this was to be done *in* their *gates,* because there their courts of judicature were kept.

Ver. 17. *And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour,* &c.] See the note on ch. vii. 10. hatred without a cause was a governing vice under the second temple, and Jarchi says was the cause of the destruction of it; see John xv. 25: *and love no false oath;* whereby the character and property of a fellow-creature are hurt; nor any vain one, which the Jews were addicted to, Matt. v. 34, 35: *for all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord;* as being contrary to his nature, and to his law; and is a reason why they should be hated and avoided by men.

Ver. 18. *And the word of the Lord of hosts came unto me, saying.*] The word of prophecy, as the Targum paraphrases it: here begins a new prophecy, respecting the abrogation of Jewish fasts, and the calling of the Gentiles.

Ver. 19. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts,* &c.] What follows is a full answer to the question in ch. vii. 3: *the fast of the fourth month;* the month Tammuz, which answers to June: this fast was kept on the ninth day of the month, on account of the city of Jerusalem being broken up on that day[o], as it is said, 2 Kings xxv. 3. 4. Jer. xxxix. 2. and lii. 6, 7. though Kimchi says this was on the seventeenth day of that month, as also says the Misna[p]; on which day a fast was kept likewise, for the breaking of the two tables of the law on that day: the reconciliation of this with the above Scriptures is attempted in the Talmud[q], by observing, that the Scripture speaks of the first temple, the Misna of the second temple: *and the fast of the fifth;* the month Ab, which answers to July, on the tenth of which the city was burnt, Jer. lii. 12, 13. but the fast on account of it was kept on the ninth day; see the note on ch. vii. 3. on which day the Jews say that both the first and second temple were destroyed, Bither was taken, and the city ploughed[r]: *and the fast of the seventh;* the month Tisri, which answers to September; on the third of this month a fast was kept on account of the murder of Gedaliah; see ch. vii. 5. and on the tenth day of the same was the day of atonement, which was the grand fast; see Acts xxvii. 9: *and the fast of the tenth;* the month Tebet, which answers to December, on the tenth day of which the city of Jerusalem was besieged by Nebuchadnezzar; and this fast was kept on that account, Jer. lii. 4. now of all these fasts the Lord by the prophet says, they *shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts;* that is, there shall be no occasion for them; but, on the contrary, such plenty of good things, both temporal and spiritual, shall be had, that, instead of them, rather festivals should be kept with the greatest cheerfulness, joy, and gladness. So Maimonides[s] says, that all these fasts shall cease in the times of the Messiah, with all others, which will be times of joy and gladness. *Therefore love the truth and peace;* love to speak truth, and execute the judgment of peace, ver. 16. or express by words and deeds love to Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life; and also is our Peace, the Peace-maker, and Peace-giver; and on these accounts, as well as on others, is greatly to be loved: likewise the Gospel, which is the word of truth, and the Gospel of peace; which contains nothing but truth, and is the ministry of reconciliation, and is to be loved on that account; and even peace with men is no further to be loved and sought after than as it is consistent with truth; and these being the principal things under the Gospel dispensation, these, and not fasts, or any other ceremonial observances, are to be attended to.

Ver. 20. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, it shall yet come to pass,* &c.] This is another thing that shall certainly be accomplished: *that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities;* in the Gentile world; they shall come and hear the word, believe in Christ, and join together in a Gospel church-state; as they did at Antioch, Thessalonica, Corinth, and many other places: Ben Melech says this shall be in the days of the Messiah; and so it has been in the days of the true Messiah Jesus, and will be again in the latter day.

Ver. 21. *And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another,* &c.] Which shews their concern for the spiritual welfare of each other, their zeal for the honour and glory of God, and their readiness to attend divine worship: *saying, let us go speedily to pray before the Lord;* for pardoning, justifying, and sanctifying grace; which shews their sense of need of these things, and that they are only to be had of the Lord; and that their case required haste, and would admit of no delay: *and to seek the Lord of hosts;* by prayer and supplication, as before: the Chaldee paraphrase is, *to seek doctrine from the Lord of hosts;* to learn the truths of his Gospel; to know his will, and be informed of the right way of worshipping him, as well as to seek to Christ for life and salvation: *I will go also;* that is, *this shall say to that,* as the Targum supplies it; one shall say to another, and express himself in such language, by way of example and encouragement.

Ver. 22. *Yea, many people, and strong nations,* &c.] Or, *mighty kingdoms,* as the Targum renders it; even such have embraced the Gospel, and professed the Christian religion; of which there has been abundant proof, since the downfal of Paganism under Constantine: *shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem;*

[o] T. Bab. Roshhashanah, fol. 18. 2.
[p] Taanith, c. 4. sect. 7.
[q] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 28. 2.
[r] Roshhashanah, ut supra.
[s] Hilchot Taanioth, c. 5. sect. 19.

that is, shall attend the public worship of God in the church: *and to pray before the Lord:* join in public prayer, and other ordinances of the Gospel. This phrase, which is used also in the preceding verse, signifies that the Lord, and he only, is the object of prayer: it is not to be made to a creature, or to an idol made with hands, they had been used to pray to before, but to the one only living and true God, Father, Son, and Spirit; and that this is to be done as in the presence of God, who is omniscient, who knows all persons and their cases, and what are their ends and views in their petitions to him, and whether these come from a true heart and unfeigned lips; for all things are naked and open unto him, with whom we have to do; that, under the Gospel dispensation especially, men may come into the presence of God with great freedom and liberty, and pour out their souls before him, and with great boldness and confidence, through the blood of Christ being shed, and a new and living way opened by it, in which they may come and ask in faith whatever they want; though this should always be performed with reverence and godly fear, and with all humility and submission to the will of God: and though it may take in all sorts of prayer, and wherever and by whomsoever performed, either mental or vocal, in the closet or in the family, which is always to be done in like manner before God; yet it seems chiefly to design social and public prayer; which being put up to God in the church, may be said to be before the Lord, it being in the assembly of his saints, where he more especially grants his presence, and shews himself to be a God hearing and answering prayer; see Psal. lxv. 1, 2.

Ver. 23. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, &c.*] For the further confirmation and illustration of this prophecy: *in those days it shall come to pass;* this shall be done in the times of the preaching of the Gospel by Christ and his apostles: *that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew:* which may be understood either of our Lord Jesus Christ; who was a Jew by nation, the Jews were his own people, and Judea his nation; by descent, he springing from the tribe of Judah, and the family of David; by religion, being made under the Jewish law; by his habit and dress, by which, as well as by his language, the woman of Samaria knew he was a Jew, John iv. 9. and very probably he wore the fringe the Jews did on the border of his garment, Matt. ix. 20. Mark vi. 56. and which the Jewish doctors think is here meant [t] by the skirt; but this may intend, in a spiritual sense, the skirt being put for the whole garment, Ezek. xvi. 8, the robe of Christ's righteousness, which sensible sinners take hold of by faith, and put it on as their justifying righteousness; and *ten men* out of *all nations* being said to do it, and this number signifying many, Lev. xxvi. 26. 1 Sam. i. 8. may denote that the number of them that believe in Christ for righteousness, and are justified by it, are many, Isa. liii. 11. though they are but few when compared with others; and that as God has chosen, Christ has redeemed, so the Spirit calls some out of all nations; and God is the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews, since the one are justified by him as well as the other, Rom. iii. 29, 30. or this may be understood of any of the apostles of Christ, who were all Jews; and especially the Apostle Paul, who was the apostle of the Gentiles; who were sent into all the world to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, by which means they came to hear it; and many of them out of every nation laid hold on the skirts of these men; believed and embraced the doctrines they preached; were greatly affected towards them; gave up themselves to them; consorted with them; accompanied them, and cleaved unto them; did not care to part with them, as children, that lay hold on their parents' skirts, won't leave them, but go with them where they go, as follows: *saying, we will go with you;* either with Christ, resolving to follow him whithersoever he goes; to hold to him the Head; to abide by his truths and ordinances; to walk on in his ways, whatever they suffer for his name's sake: or with his ministers and people, determining to go along and join with them in all religious exercises; see Ruth i. 16: *for we have heard that God is with you;* with Christ, as he always was; in the council and covenant of grace before time, and at the beginning of time to his incarnation; and during his state of humiliation, and in his sufferings and death; and now in his state of exaltation; hence his name *Ithiel*, God with me, Prov. xxx. 1. see John i. 1. and viii. 29. and xvi. 32. or with his ministers and people, which he has promised to be unto the end of the world; and this the Gentiles heard and understood, by the power that went along with their ministry, to the conversion of multitudes of sinners; and by the miracles which they wrought, for the confirmation of the doctrines they delivered.

CHAP. IX.

THIS chapter treats of the conversion of the Gentiles, before spoken of in general, now particularly named; of the coming of Christ into the world, and the advantages of it to his church; of the preaching of the Gospel by the apostles, and of their protection, encouragement, and success. The Gentiles converted are first the Syrians that dwelt in Hadrach, Damascus, and Hamath, the Lord's eye being upon them, ver. 1. next the Phœnicians, the inhabitants of Tyre and Zidon, who had a vain opinion of their wisdom, and trusted in their riches, ver. 2, 3, 4. and then the Philistines, the inhabitants of Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and Ashdod, guilty of pride, murder, idolatry, and other abominations, ver. 5, 6, 7. when the church and people of God should be safely protected, ver. 8. to whom, for their joy and comfort, is given forth a prophecy concerning the coming of the Messiah; who is described by his character as a King, just, having salva-

[t] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 32. 2.

tion, lowly, and riding on an ass; by the peaceableness of his kingdom; by the several offices he executes: the prophetic office, speaking peace to the Heathen; the kingly office, his dominion being very large; and his priestly office, in the effusion of his blood, by which the covenant is confirmed, his people delivered out of distress, and encouraged to flee to him as their strong hold, where they find plenty and protection, ver. 9, 10, 11, 12. next the apostles are represented as military men, accoutred with the bow and the sword of the mighty, ver. 13. whose success is owing to the Lord's appearance over them, and the efficacy of his grace and spirit attending the word, ver. 14. who are protected and encouraged in it by the Lord, and honoured on account of it, ver. 15, 16. and the chapter is concluded with an exclamation, wondering at the grace and glory of Christ, and expressing the satisfying provisions of his house, ver. 17.

Ver. 1. *The burden of the word of the Lord*, &c.] A prophecy, as in Prov. xxxi. 1. which is sometimes of things sorrowful and distressing, as the destruction of people, as in Isa. xiii. 1. and xv. 1. and xvii. 1. and xix. 1. and xxi. 1, 11. and sometimes of things joyful, as in Zech. xiii. 1. and here it contains good news to the church of Christ, ver. 9, &c.: and is called a *burden*, because the word of the Lord is often so to carnal men; see Jer. xxiii. 33—39. the words may be rendered, *a declaration*, or *a publication*, *of the word of the Lord*[v]; it signifies a publishing of it or bringing it forth; and so the Arabic version renders it *a revelation of the word of the Lord*: a carrying of it about: which was made *in the land of Hadrach*: this is either the name of a man; of some king, as Aben Ezra observes; and some Jewish writers[w] say the King Messiah, who is חד *sharp* to the nations of the world, and רך *tender* to the Israelites: or rather the name of a place, and may design Syria, to which Damascus belonged; see Isa. vii. 8. or some place near it: says R. Jose[x], "I am of Damascus, and I call heaven "and earth to witness that there is a place there, the "name of which is Hadrach." Hillerus[y] takes it to be the same with Cœlesyria, or hollow Syria, a vale which lay between Libanus and Antilibanus, and goes by many names; the same that is called Hoba, Gen. xiv. 15. the plain of Aven, and the house of Eden, Amos i. 5. and here Hadrach; and thinks it had its name from Hadar, a son of Ishmael, Gen. xxv. 15. and observes what is said, Gen. xxv. 18, that the *Ishmaelites dwelt from Havilah*, which is to the south of Palestine, *unto Shur*, a town situated over-against Egypt, *as you go to Assyria*; that is, to the Agra of Ptolemy in Susiana. The Targum renders it "in the land of the south." There was a city in Cœlesyria, called Adra by Ptolemy[z]; which, as Jerom says[a], was distant from Bostra twenty-five miles; since called the city of Bernard de Stampis; where were Christian churches in the fourth and fifth centuries, whose bishops were present at councils held in those times[b]; and, according to this prophecy, here the word of the Lord was to be published; and it may have respect to the conversion of the inhabitants of it in future times; though some take it to be not the proper name of a place, but an appellative, and render it, *the land about*, or *the land about thee*[c]; that is, about Judea; the nations round about it, particularly Syria, Phœnicia, and Palestine. *And Damascus shall be the rest thereof*; either of the Lord himself; his glorious Shechinah shall rest there, as Kimchi interprets it; and so the Targum paraphrases it, "and "Damascus shall be converted, that it may be of the "house of his Shechinah;" see Isa. xi. 10. or of the word of the Lord, which should be declared and published there, as it was by the Apostle Paul, who was converted near it, and preached in it, Acts ix. 3, 19, 20. or of Hadrach, or the adjacent country: unless it is to be understood of the burden of the Lord resting on it, or of the taking of this city in the times of Alexander the great; which, with the destruction of the cities after mentioned, some make a type or symbol of the abolition of Paganism in the Roman empire; but the former sense seems best. *When the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be towards the Lord*; or, *when the eyes of men shall be to the Lord, and to all the tribes of Israel*; so Kimchi and Ben Melech; that is, as they interpret it, when the eyes of all men shall be to the Lord, and not to their idols; and also to all the tribes of Israel, to go along with them in their ways, as it is said above, *we will go with you*: or they shall look to the Lord, even as the tribes of Israel themselves do; and which is true of sinners when converted, whether Jews or Gentiles; and particularly was true of that great man, the Apostle Paul, who was converted near Damascus, when the eyes of his understanding being enlightened, and he seeing the insufficiency of all other objects, looked to the Lord alone for pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation; even as all true Israelites do, who are after the spirit, and not after the flesh. Though some understand these words of the eyes of the Lord being upon every man, as well as upon the tribes of Israel; upon wicked men to punish them, as upon his people to protect and defend them: and to this sense the Targum inclines, paraphrasing the words thus, "for be-"fore the Lord are manifest the works of the children "of men, and he is well-pleased with all the tribes of "Israel."

Ver. 2. *And Hamath also shall border thereby*, &c.] By the land of Hadrach, or by Damascus; and that it was near Damascus is clear from Isa. x. 9. Jer. xlix. 23. it is called Hamath the great in Amos vi. 2. and, according to Jerom[d], is the same with Antioch, which he says was so called by some; and the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel on Numb. xiii. 21, renders Hamath by Antioch: and, if so, here was the Lord's rest likewise; here the Gospel was preached, and many

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[v] משא דבר prolatio verbi Jehovæ, Cocceius.

[w] R. Judah in Jarchi, & R. Benaiah in Kimchi in loc. & R. Nehemiah in Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 24. 1.

[x] Shirhashirim ib. Siphre in Yalkut Simeoni in loc.

[y] Onomast. Sacr. p. 579.

[z] Geograph. l. 5. c. 15.

[a] De locis Hebr. fol. 87. 1.

[b] Reland. Palestina Illustrata, l. 3. p. 548.

[c] בארץ חדרך in terram circumstantem te, Junius & Tremellius, Tarnovius; super terram quæ te circuit, Grotius; in terra circa te, Cocceius; ad verbum, in terram circuitus tui, De Dieu.

[d] Comment. in Amos, fol. 44. C. & Quæst. Hebr. in Genesim, fol. 67. B. So Cyril. in Amos, p. 312.

converted, and a church, consisting of Jews and Gentiles, was formed; and here the disciples were first called Christians, Acts xi. 26. *Tyrus and Zidon;* these were famous cities of Phœnicia; upon the borders of these our Lord himself was, Matt. xv. 21. of the conversion of the inhabitants of these places the psalmist prophecies, Psal. xlv. 12. here likewise the Lord had his resting-place; we read of the disciples here, Acts xxi. 3, 4. and xxvii. 3: *though it be very wise;* particularly Tyre, which was famous for wisdom, Ezek. xxviii. 3, 4. which the Lord confounded by the preaching of the Gospel, and by the foolishness of that saved them that believe. Kimchi refers this to the times of the Messiah; his note is, she shall not trust in her wisdom in the time of the Messiah: so Ben Melech.

Ver. 3. *And Tyrus did build herself a strong hold,* &c.] Tyre was built upon a rock, and was a strong fortress itself, from whence it had its name; and, besides its natural defence, it had a wall 150 feet high, and its breadth was answerable to its height[e]; but yet, as it could not defend itself against Alexander the great, who took it; so neither against the Gospel of Christ, which found its way into it, and was mighty to pull down strong holds in a spiritual sense: *and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets;* the riches of these cities, especially Tyre, are often made mention of; they were famous for their wealth, being places of great trade and merchandise; see Isa. xxiii. 2, 8. Ezek. xxvii. 3. and xxviii. 4, 5. all which were to be holiness to the Lord, and for the sufficient feeding and durable clothing of them that dwell before him, Isa. xxiii. 18. his ministers.

Ver. 4. *Behold, the Lord will cast her out,* &c.] Or *inherit her*[f], or *them,* as the Septuagint render the words; when, being converted, she would become the Lord's inheritance and possession, and her riches should be devoted to his service: *and he will smite her power in the sea;* for Tyre was situated in the sea, at the entry of it, and was strong in it, Ezek. xxvi. 17. and xxvii. 3. Kimchi interprets this of her humiliation and subjection in the days of the Messiah; and in a spiritual sense it has been verified in such who have been spoiled of their carnal strength, in which they trusted, and have laid down their weapons, and have submitted to the sceptre of Christ: *and she shall be devoured with fire;* with the spirit of judgment, and of burning, which purges and removes the filth of sin; and with the fire of the word, which burns up and consumes its lusts; and with the flames of divine love, which make souls as a whole burnt-offering to the Lord. This was literally accomplished in the burning of Tyre by Alexander[g], which injected fear and dread in cities near it, as follow:

Ver. 5. *Ashkelon shall see it, and fear,* &c.] That is, as Kimchi explains it, when Ashkelon shall see that Tyre humbles herself and submits, she shall humble herself and submit also: and the sense may be, that the inhabitants of Ashkelon, seeing that Tyre, with all her wisdom and strong reasoning, could not stand before the power of the Gospel, but submitted and embraced the Christian religion, were induced, through the efficacy of divine grace, to do the same; and certain it is that this place became Christian; we read[h] of a bishop of Ashkelon, in the synod of Nice, and of other bishops of this place in after-councils: it belonged to Palestine, and was one of the five lordships of the Philistines, Josh. xiii. 3. *Gaza also shall see it, and be very sorrowful;* this was a city of Palestine, near to Ashkelon; they are mentioned together, Judg. i. 18. the Gentile inhabitants of this place, when they saw the progress the Gospel made in Tyre, Zidon, and Ashkelon, were grieved at it, but many among them submitted to it: very likely Philip the evangelist first preached the Gospel here; see Acts viii. 26. there was a Christian bishop of this place in the Nicene council, and others in after-ones[i]. *And Ekron; for her expectation shall be ashamed;* this was also one of the five lordships of the Philistines, Josh. xiii. 3. 1 Sam. vi. 16, 17. which, being near to Tyre, had its dependence on that, expecting it could never be taken; but when they saw that it was taken by Alexander, it was ashamed of its vain expectation, hope, and confidence: and so the inhabitants of this place, when the Gospel came to it, were *ashamed of the house of* their *confidence,* as the Targum paraphrases the words; the confidence they had in their idols, and in the works of their own hands; and were also *ashamed because of their iniquities,* as the Arabic version renders them; being convinced of them, and humbled for them, and betaking themselves to Christ for salvation from them. It is probable that Philip preached the Gospel here, seeing it was not far from Azotus or Ashdod, next mentioned, where Philip is heard of after the baptism of the eunuch: and if Ekron is the same with Cæsarea, that was called Strato's tower, as say the Jews[k]; and which also Jerom[l] observes, some say are the same; it is certain that Philip was there, Acts viii. 40. there were several Christian bishops of this place in after-times[m]. *And the king shall perish from Gaza;* some understand this of Batis, who was governor of Gaza, when it was taken by Alexander; who was fastened to a chariot, and dragged about the city, as Curtius[n] relates; but this man was not a king, but governor of the city under one: I rather think the idol Marnes, which signifies *the lord of man,* and was worshipped in this place, is here meant; which when it became Christian was destroyed, and a Christian church built in the room of it, as is reported by Jerom[o]. *And Ashkelon shall not be inhabited;* by Heathens, but by Christians.

Ver. 6. *And a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod,* &c.] Some[p] take *mamzer,* the word for *bastard,* to be the name of a people that should dwell in Ashdod; this is the same place with Azotus, Acts viii. 40. and was

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[e] Arrian. de Exped. Alex. l. 2. c. 21.
[f] ויורשנה κατακληρονομήσει αὐτήν, Sept.; possidebit eam, V. L. Munster, Castalio. So same in Vatablus.
[g] Curtius, l. 4. c. 4.
[h] Reland. Palestina Illustrata, l. 2. p. 594.
[i] Ib. p. 795.
[k] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 6. 1.
[l] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 88. D.
[m] Reland. ib. p. 676, &c.
[n] Hist. l. 4. c. 6.
[o] Comment. in Isa. xvii. tom. 5. fol. 39. H. Epist. ad Lætam, tom. 1. fol. 19. E.
[p] R. Judah ben Bilеam apud Aben Ezram in loc.

also one of the five lordships of the Philistines, Judg. xiii. 3. 1 Sam. vi. 17. some, by the *bastard* here, understand Alexander the great, who gave out that he was not the son of Philip, but of Jupiter Ammon: others think Jonathan the Maccabee is intended, who took this place and burnt it with fire, and the temple of Dagon in it, 1 Maccab. x. 83, 84. and though he was not a bastard, yet was a stranger to the Philistines; in which sense the Jewish commentators, Jarchi and Kimchi, interpret the word, and understand it of the Israelites who should dwell in this place; even those, as Aben Ezra says, who were abject, mean, and despised among the Israelites; which would be a great mortification to the proud Philistines, as is suggested in the next clause: and to this sense the Targum paraphrases the words, "and the house of Israel shall "dwell in Ashdod, who shall be in it as strangers:" but it is best to understand this of Israelites indeed, of true Christians, who are accounted spurious, not the children of God, but aliens and strangers, the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things; who should dwell here when the Gospel was preached in it, as doubtless it was by Philip, Acts viii. 40. and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions render the words, *and strangers shall dwell in Ashdod:* men of another religion, and despised and not owned even by their relations, as if they were bastards. *And I will cut off the pride of the Philistines;* by Alexander, and by the Jews in the times of the Maccabees, bringing them into subjection, which their haughty spirits could not well bear; or through the abolition of their old Heathenish religion, in which they prided themselves. It may be observed, that all along the conversion of these several people to Christianity is expressed in terms which seem to signify the destruction of them; and that partly because, in the literal sense, reference is had to the conquest of them by Alexander, by which means the Greek language obtained in Syria and Phœnicia, into which, a little after, the Bible was translated, which paved the way for the bringing of these people to the knowledge of Christ, through the preaching of the Gospel; and partly because Paganism was abolished in these places when Christianity prevailed.

Ver. 7. *And I will take away his blood out of his mouth,* &c.] The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read *their blood;* not the blood of the bastard, but of the Philistines. The Targum is, *I will destroy them that eat blood;* the meaning may be, that they shall no more thirst after blood, nor drink it; nor breathe out threatenings and slaughter against the saints, or persecute the people of God: or that they should no more offer the blood of their sacrifices upon the altars to their deities, or eat things sacrificed to them: *and his abominations from between his teeth;* their idols and idolatries they were tenacious of, as a man is of his food, or of any thing that is grateful to him; it may design things sacrificed to idols, eaten by them: *but he that remaineth, even he shall be for our God;* the Targum paraphrases it, "and the proselytes that remain among them, they "also shall be added to the people of our God:" Jarchi interprets it of the synagogues and schools in the captivity of Edom or Rome; but Aben Ezra's note is much better, that there shall be none remaining of the Philistines, but only such who serve the blessed God openly: but the true sense is, that here should be a remnant, according to the election of grace, who should evidently appear to be the Lord's people, by their conversion and effectual vocation: *and he shall be as a governor in Judah;* the Targum is, "they shall "be as the princes of the house of Judah;" that is, as the heads of the families in that tribe; see Mic. v. 2. compared with Matt. ii. 6. all true Christians are as princes, yea, they are kings and priests unto God; and some of them are כאלף, as a guide, teacher, and instructor of others; who go before them, and instruct them in the doctrines of the Gospel, as pastors and ministers of the word: *and Ekron as a Jebusite;* that is, the inhabitant of Ekron, that shall be converted to Christ, shall be as an inhabitant of Jerusalem, which was called Jebus, 1 Chron. xi. 4. shall have a dwelling in the church, the city of God, and enjoy all the privileges and immunities of it. Kimchi says this refers to the times of the Messiah, when, he supposes, the Ekronites will be tributary to the Israelites, as the Jebusites were in the days of David. The Targum is, "and Ekron shall be filled with the house of Israel, as "Jerusalem." The Syriac version is, *and Ekron shall be as Hebron.*

Ver. 8. *And I will encamp about my house, because of the army,* &c.] Of profane and wicked men, persecutors and heretics, who rose up in great numbers in the first ages of Christianity against the church, the house of God, where he dwells, which consisted of persons called from among the Gentiles as before; in order to protect and defend them from that great company which opposed them, the Lord encamped about them, partly by his angels, Psal. xxxiv. 7. and partly by his ministers, set for the defence of the Gospel; but chiefly by his own power and presence, who is as a fire round about them. The Targum is, "and I will cause "my glorious Shechinah to dwell in the house of my "sanctuary, and the strength of the arm of my power "shall be as a wall of fire round about it." *Because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth;* either that his people might pass and repass with safety, who attended the worship and service of his house; or because of Satan and wicked men, who go to and fro, seeking to do all the mischief they can to the saints of the most High. This may, in a literal sense, respect the care of God over the Jewish nation, his church and people, in the times of Alexander, who passed to and fro without distressing them; or in the times of the Lagidæ and Seleucidæ, the kings of Egypt and Syria, during whose commotions, and their passing to and fro against each other, and against them, were still continued a kingdom. *And no oppressor shall pass through them any more;* or *exactor*[q]; satisfaction for the sins of God's people being exacted, required, and demanded of Christ their surety, it has been given: wherefore no exactor shall pass through them, or over them, to require it of them; not the law, for they are freed by Christ from the exaction, curse, and condemnation of it; not justice, for that is fully satisfied, and infinitely well-pleased with the righteousness of Christ; nor

[q] נוגש exactor, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.

Satan, the accuser of the brethren, requiring punishment to be inflicted, which, though he may do it, will be of no avail against them; nor the Jewish tutors and governors, who exacted of the people obedience, not only to the law of Moses, but to the traditions of the elders; since Christ has redeemed his from this vain conversation, Christians are entirely free from that yoke of bondage. This shews that this prophecy is not to be literally understood, since it is certain, that, after the delivery of it, there were oppressors or exactors among the Jews in a literal sense: Antiochus and others oppressed them before the birth of Christ; they paid tribute to the Romans in his time; he was born at the time of a Roman tax; and, after his death, Titus Vespasian destroyed their nation, and city and temple: or, if it is, *any more* must be understood of a long time, as it were, before they were utterly oppressed. *For now I have seen with mine eyes*; these are either the words of God the Father, looking with pleasure upon his church and people, about whom he encamps; and upon the satisfaction his Son has given to the divine justice for their sins, whereby they are free from all exactions and oppressions: or of the Prophet Zechariah, as Aben Ezra thinks, who saw with his eyes, in the visions of the night, all that is contained in this prophecy: and now, inasmuch as all this predicted was to be fulfilled in, or near, or about the times of Christ, therefore next follows a glorious prophecy of his coming.

Ver. 9. *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem*, &c.] By whom are meant, not the inhabitants of Jerusalem in common; nor the children in it, that said Hosannahs to the son of David; but the church of God, and true believers in Christ, who are called upon to *rejoice* and *shout*; not merely in an external way, by shewing marks of outward joy, but in a spiritual manner, for which there was good reason, as follows: *behold, thy king cometh unto thee*; Aben Ezra says that interpreters are divided about the sense of this prophecy; some say it is Messiah the son of David; and others, Messiah the son of Joseph. R. Moses, the priest, he observes, thinks that Nehemiah the Tirshathite is meant; and he himself is of opinion that Judas Maccabeus is intended; but Jarchi affirms that it is impossible to interpret it of any other than the King Messiah; and this is the sense of many of their writers, both ancient and modern. It is applied to him in the Talmud; they say [r], he that sees an ass in his dream, let him look for salvation, as it is said, behold, thy king cometh unto thee, *riding on an ass*. R. Alexander relates that R. Joshua ben Levi opposed these two phrases to each other, *in its time*, and *I will hasten it*, Isa. lx. 22. and gave this as the sense to reconcile them: if they (the Israelites) are worthy, *i. e.* of the coming of the Messiah, *I will hasten it*; if they are not worthy, it shall be *in its time*; and that he also put these Scriptures together, and compared them to that Scripture, *behold, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven*, Dan. vii. 13. and also what is written, *poor, and riding on an ass*; if they are worthy, he'll come with the clouds of heaven; if they are not worthy, he'll come poor and riding on an ass [s]. In an ancient book [t] of theirs, at least so reckoned, it is said the King Messiah shall prevail over them all (the nations of the world, and the Israelites); as it is said, *poor, and riding on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of an ass*: and in several other places of that work, and other treatises in it [u], the text is applied to the Messiah; as it likewise is in their ancient Midrashes or expositions. In one [w] it is observed, "the Rabbins say an ox; "this is the anointed for war, as it is said, *his glory is* "*like the firstling of his bullock*, Deut. xxxiii. 17. an "ass: this is the King Messiah, as it is said, *poor, and* "*riding on an ass*;" and again [x], on these words, *binding his foal to the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine*, Gen. xlix. 11, this remark is made; this shall be when that shall come to pass which is written of him, *poor, and riding on an ass*. And in another [y] of their expositions, the two Redeemers, Moses and the Messiah, are compared together; and, among the several things in which they agree, this is one; as it is said of the former redeemer, *and Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them on an ass*, Exod. iv. 20. so it is said of the latter Redeemer (the Messiah), *poor, and riding on an ass*. And thus it is interpreted by many of their more modern writers [z]. This is to be understood of Christ's coming, not merely to Jerusalem, when he rode on an ass, after mentioned; but of his coming in the flesh, when he came to Zion, and for her good; and which was wonderful, and therefore a *behold* is prefixed to it; and is matter of great joy, which she is called to shew, because of the birth of him who is her Saviour; and because of the good things that come by him; and because of his appearing as a King, and her King; for, as he was prophesied of as such, as such he came, though his kingdom was not of this world; and as Zion's King, being placed there by his Father, and to which he has a right by virtue of redemption, and is owned as such by his people in effectual vocation, and to whom all the following characters belong. *He is just*; not only essentially righteous as God, but just and upright in the whole course of his life as man; and faithful in the administration of his office as Mediator; and the author and bringer in of righteousness to his people: *having salvation*; the salvation of his church and people; which he not only had at heart, but had it to execute, being appointed to that service by his Father, and having agreed unto it as the surety of his people, and was the business he was coming into the world to do, here prophesied of; yea, he is called salvation itself, as in a parallel text, Isa. lxii. 11. the purpose of it was purposed in him; God resolved to save his people by him, and by him only; he never intended to save any but in and through him; and the thing was not only consulted with him, but the scheme of it was drawn in him; God was in Christ reconciling

[r] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 56. 2.

[s] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 1. Vid. etiam ib. fol. 99. 1&c.

[t] Zohar in Gen. fol. 127. 3.

[u] Zohar in Numb. fol. 83. 4. & in Deut. fol. 117. 1. & 118. 3. Raya Mehimna apud ib. in Lev. fol. 33. 3. & in Numb. fol. 97. 2.

[w] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 75. fol. 66. 2.

[x] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 98. fol. 85. 3.

[y] Midrash Kohelet, fol. 63. 2.

[z] Jarchi in Isa. xxvi. 6. Baal Hatturim on Exod. fol. 88. 2. Abarbinel, Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 15. 4. R. Abraham Seba, Tzeror Hammor, fol. 46. 2. Caphtor Uperah, fol. 81. 2.

the world unto himself. The covenant of grace, in which salvation is a principal article, was made with him; and he, as the surety of that covenant, undertook it; and in the fulness of time being sent, came to effect it; for which he was abundantly qualified, being God and man in one person, and so had something to offer as a sacrifice for satisfaction to law and justice, in order to obtain it; and could put a sufficient virtue therein to answer the end, being the mighty God; and having as Mediator a commission from his divine Father, he is become, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, the author of eternal salvation to his people; and in him salvation is, and in no other; and in vain it is to expect it from any other, or in any other way, than by him, Acts iv. 12. Jer. iii. 23. Some render the word *saved* [a]; as he was by his divine Father, when he was raised from the dead, and not suffered to see corruption; see Heb. v. 7. others, *saving himself* [b]; when he raised himself from the dead, and thereby declared himself to be the Son of God; and when he brought salvation to his body, the church, which is himself, Isa. lxiii. 5. *lowly*; meek, and humble, as he appeared to be in the assumption of human nature; in his carriage to sinners, conversation with them, and reception of them; in his ministrations to his disciples; and in not seeking his own, but his Father's glory. Or *poor* [c]; as Jesus the Messiah was; born of poor parents, had not where to lay his head, and was ministered unto by others; see 2 Cor. viii. 9. *and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass;* which was fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, Matt. xxi. 4. 5. not that he rode upon them both, but on the foal only; for so it should be rendered, *upon an ass, that is, upon a colt, the foal of an ass* [d]. The Jews have a fable, that the ass Abraham saddled, when he went to sacrifice his son Isaac, was the foal of the ass that was created on the evening of the sabbath, that is, at the creation; and that the same Moses set his wife and sons upon, when he came out of Midian; and the same ass, they say, Messiah the son of David was to ride upon at his coming [e]; but one of such a prodigious age surely could not be called a colt, or a foal; however, this fable shews the conviction of their minds that this is a prophecy of the Messiah, and that they expected the Messiah to ride upon an ass, according to it, as our Messiah Jesus did. And the Greeks have another fable, which perhaps took its rise from this prophecy, that when Antiochus entered the temple at Jerusalem, he found in it an image of a man in wood, with a long beard, riding on an ass [f]. And a like falsehood is told by Tacitus [g], that the Jews consecrated the effigies of an ass in the inmost part of the temple; because a flock of wild asses, as he pretends, directed them to fountains of water, when in the wilderness, and ready to die with thirst; and yet he himself afterwards says, the Jews have no images, neither in their cities, nor in their temple: and from hence it may be arose the calumny cast upon the primitive Christians, who were sometimes confounded with the Jews, that they worshipped an ass's head; and which is refuted by Tertullian [h].

Ver. 10. *And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim,* &c.] That is, the military one; signifying that wars shall cease, Psal. xlvi. 9: *and the horse from Jerusalem;* the warlike one; see Mic. v. 10. Ephraim designs the ten tribes, and Jerusalem stands for the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; and the sense is, that these shall be one in the days of the Messiah, as Kimchi observes; and that all instruments of war shall be removed from them, and there shall be an entire peace between them; see Isa. xi. 13. Ezek. xxxvii. 16, 19: *and the battle-bow shall be cut off:* another instrument of war. The Targum paraphrases it, "I will break the strength of those "that make war, the armies of the people;" all this does not design so much the outward peace that should be in the world at the birth of Christ, as the spiritual peace of his kingdom; and that, as it is not of this world, so neither is it spread, supported, and defended by carnal weapons; and also the peaceableness and safety of his subjects, and the destruction of their enemies: *and he shall speak peace unto the Heathen:* not only the church of Christ, gathered out of the Jews, should enjoy great spiritual peace, prosperity, and safety; but the Gentiles also should share in it, to whom Christ went, and preached peace; not in his own person, being the minister of the circumcision; but by his apostles, who had the ministration of reconciliation committed to them; and being sent forth by Christ, went everywhere preaching peace by him, who is Lord of all, unto all nations; see Ephes. ii. 17: *and his dominion* shall be *from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth;* according to Aben Ezra, from the Red sea to the sea of the Philistines, and from the river Euphrates to the ends of the earth: or, as Kimchi cites him, from the south sea, called the sea of Edom, to the north sea, which is the sea of the ocean; from the river that goes out from Eden, which is at the beginning of the east, unto the ends of the earth, which is the end of the west: or, as the Targum paraphrases it, "from the sea to the west, and from "Euphrates to the ends of the earth." The phrases are expressive of the extensiveness of Christ's dominion, through the preaching of the Gospel, both in Judea and in the Gentile world, before the destruction of Jerusalem; and especially in the latter day; see Psal. lxxii. 8. This and the preceding clause are allowed to belong to the Messiah, by a modern Jewish writer [i].

Ver. 11. *As for thee also,* &c.] These words are not spoken to Christ, for את, *thee,* is of the feminine gender; but the congregation of Israel, as Kimchi observes; or the church of God: nor are they the words of Christ to her; he is the person before spoken of; but of God the Father, who, having given out prophecies

[a] נושע הוא & salvatus ipse, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius; servatus, Calvin, De Dieu. Schultens [*] observes, that ישע, in the Arabic language, signifies large, ample, spacious, and denotes amplitude of riches, power, knowledge, happiness, and glory; and in this place the word describes a king endued with most ample salvation, and brought into this amplitude out of poverty and straits, darkness and misery.

[b] Servabit seipsum, Vatablus.

[c] עני pauper, V. L. Calvin, Jun. & Trem. Piscator; inops, Cocceius.

[d] ועל עיר id est, super pullum, Noldius.

[e] Pirke Eliezer, c. 31. fol. 32. 1. Caphtor Uperah, fol. 81. 2.

[f] Diodor. Sicul. Excerpta, l. 34. p. 901, 902.

[g] Hist. l. 5. c. 3, 4, 5.

[h] Apologet. c. 16. ad nationes, l. 1. c. 11.

[i] R. Isaac, Chizzuk Emuna, par. 1. c. 1. p. 43, 44. So Kimchi in Isa. lxv. 19.

[*] Origines Hebr. l. 1. p. 18, 19, 20, & Indicul. voc. Hebr. in calce ejus.

concerning the coming of Christ, and the peaceableness and extensiveness of his kingdom, declares to the church the benefits that she and those that belonged to her should receive by the incarnation, sufferings, and death of Christ: *by the blood of thy covenant*: not of the covenant of works, nor of circumcision, nor of that that was made at Sinai, as the Jewish writers interpret it; all which were a yoke of bondage; but of the covenant of grace, namely, the blood of Jesus, which is a considerable article in that covenant; that by which it is ratified and confirmed, and through which all the blessings of it come, as redemption, peace, pardon, justification, and admission into heaven: and this covenant is called the church's covenant, because it is made with her in Christ, her covenant Head, in whom she was considered; and it was made on her account, and she has an interest in it, and in all things contained therein. God is her covenant God and Father; Christ her surety, Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour, and the covenant itself unto her; and all things in it, the blessings of grace and promises of good things, are hers: and though the covenant at Sinai is not the covenant here intended, that being a covenant which gendered to bondage, and under which men were held as convicted and condemned malefactors; and so cannot be that, the blood of which is the cause of a release from prison, and of bringing into a state of liberty; yet the allusion is unto it, which was a typical covenant; and the blood of the sacrifices then sprinkled on the people is called *the blood of the covenant*, Exod. xxiv. 8. It was not unusual with the Heathens, at making covenants, to use blood, even human blood: it was a custom with them to draw it from each other, and drink it, at least lick and taste of it, as particularly with the Medes and Lydians[k]; and was reckoned by them the most sacred bond of covenants; and such covenants with the Carmeni and Scythians were accounted the chief covenants of friendship, and their mutual blood they used the greatest bond of concord[l]; and the surest pledge of keeping faith, and that it would abide[m]; but the blood of Christ shed is a far greater proof, as well as cement, of love, concord, and friendship; and a much firmer bond of the covenant of grace; and a surer pledge of the continuance of it, and of its being faithfully performed; and which, having the nature of a will or testament, becomes of force through the death of him the testator; see Dan. ix. 27. Heb. ix. 14, 15, 16. and xiii. 20: *I have sent forth thy prisoners*: that is, the church's prisoners; not prisoners to her, or in her; for the church of Christ is no prison; nor are those that have a name and a place in her prisoners; they walk at large, and walk at liberty; are fellow-citizens with the saints; are Christ's freemen, and are possessed of many privileges and immunities: but these design such persons as are in a secret relation to her, and yet, being in a state of nature, are prisoners; and so are such as are not members of any visible church; nor as yet converted persons and believers in Christ, who have an open relation to the invisible church; but they are such who secretly belong to the general assembly and church of the first-born, written in heaven, whose names are in the Lamb's book of life; or are chosen in Christ, and also redeemed by his blood: but, being as yet in a state of unregeneracy, are prisoners to sin; are under the power, dominion, and guilt of it; and, being transgressors of the law, are arraigned by it as guilty persons; are convicted and condemned, and shut up in it, and held under it; and are also the captives of Satan, being led as such by him, at his will; and thus they are prisoners, though there is a secret connexion between the church and them: and sooner or later, by virtue of the blood of that covenant, which she and they have an interest in, they are brought *out of the pit wherein is no water*: which is expressive of the state and condition men are in by sin, and whilst in unregeneracy; they are in mire and clay, in a most filthy and famishing condition, in a very wretched and uncomfortable one; as in a dark and lonesome dungeon, and where no refreshment can be had; where there are no true peace, joy, and comfort. The allusion is to the custom of the eastern countries, and still continues, who, in the night-time, put their slaves into a well or pit, and there shut them up till the morning, when they are let out for business: now, from this state of captivity and bodage to sin, Satan, and the law, and from all the miseries of such a state, are the Lord's people, and who belong to Zion, the general assembly and church of the first-born, delivered by virtue of the blood of Christ, shed for the redemption of them; in consequence of which it is said to these prisoners of sin, Satan, and the law, go forth; these are made sensible of their wretched condition, and are called and drawn out of it, and delivered from it, and brought into a state of liberty. Ben Melech interprets this pit of the captivity of the Jews.

Ver. 12. *Turn ye to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope*, &c.] *That hope for redemption*, as the Targum paraphrases it; not for redemption from the Babylonish captivity, at the end of seventy years, which was now over; but for redemption and salvation by Christ; for not the people of the Jews, who stayed in Babylon, can be meant; for, as they were at liberty to go from thence by the edict of Cyrus, they can't be said to be prisoners, much less prisoners hoping for deliverance, when they had, or might have it; but rather the Jews, who were come out of Babylon, as out of a pit, wherein was no water; out of an uncomfortable state and condition, and yet in their own land were encompassed with many straits and difficulties, through the opposition they met with from many, who discouraged and hindered them in their work; but were hoping they should surmount all their difficulties, and get out of their troubles: though it seems better to understand it of such, who, about the time of the Messiah's coming, were looking for the consolation and redemption of Israel, and hoping and waiting for it; as good old Simeon, and others, who were prisoners under the former dispensation; but expecting deliverance and salvation by the Messiah. It may be applied to all sensible sinners, in every age and period of time; all men are concluded in sin, shut up under the law, and led captive by Satan; but some are not sensible of their

[k] Herodot. Clio, sive l. 1. c. 74.
[l] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 5. c. 3.
[m] Mela de Situ Orbis, l. 2. c. 1.

imprisoned state, nor desirous of being out of it, nor have any hope concerning it; others groan under their bondage, long for deliverance, and are hoping for it: they hope that Christ will receive them, and save them; that he will pardon their sins; that the spirit of God has begun a good work in them, and will perform it; and that they shall enjoy eternal glory and happiness; for all which there is good ground to hope: as that Christ will receive sinners sensible of their lost perishing condition into his arms of mercy; since he is the good Samaritan, the merciful High-priest, the compassionate Saviour; who, in his love and pity, has redeemed the sons of men; and seeing he died for sinners, even the chief of them; and therefore it need not be doubted that he will receive them; and, besides, he has made kind invitations to them to come to him, and has promised he will in no wise reject them; and has actually received sinners, and most kindly and tenderly embraced them: as also that they shall be saved by him; since complete salvation is wrought out by him, and that for such as are lost, and even the most abandoned of sinners; and which is freely to be had, not according to the works of men, or as they shall deserve; but purely through the free grace of God, and his abundant mercy in Christ: as well as that their sins shall be pardoned of God for his sake, seeing there is forgiveness with God; he has promised, proclaimed, and published it; the blood of Christ has been shed for it; and he is exalted as a Saviour to give it, and has ordered it to be preached in his name; and some of the greatest of sinners have had their sins forgiven them: likewise such have good ground to hope that the work of God is begun in them; though it may be at present but a day of small things with them; there being some light let into them, as to their state, and the way of salvation by Christ; some fear of God, and love to him, to Christ, his people, truths, ordinances, ways, and worship; sin is become odious, and Christ precious: and good reason they have to hope, and even to be confident, that this good work will be performed in them, though at times they have many fears about it; since it is in such good hands, and the glory of all the divine Persons is concerned in it; wherefore they may most safely go on to hope for eternal life, which God has promised, before the world began, is in Christ, and in his hands to give; and is the free gift of God through him, whose righteousness entitles to it, and whose grace makes meet for it; wherefore, having the one, they may truly hope for the other; for grace is a well of living water, springing up unto eternal life: such as these may well be called prisoners of hope; partakers of that grace, and as it were shut up in it, and under the influence and in the exercise of it; which is a gift of grace; is of the operation of the spirit of God, through whose power it is exercised; is founded on the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ; is encouraged by the promises of the Gospel; and is increased through the discoveries of the love of God; and deals with things unseen and future: and those who have the least share of it, as these described are supposed to have, are here encouraged *to turn to the strong hold;* by which is meant, not Judea, nor Jerusalem, nor the temple in it, nor the church of God; but rather the blessed God, as Kimchi interprets it; and indeed a divine Person is intended, even the Messiah, who is a *strong hold* for refuge, and was typified by the cities of refuge, whither the manslayer fled, and was safe; to which the allusion may well be thought to be, since one of the names of the cities of refuge was Bezer, which signifies a fortress, or strong hold; and comes from the same root as the word here used: and such who are enabled and encouraged to flee to Christ for refuge, are safe from vindictive justice, which is fully satisfied by the blood, righteousness, and atoning sacrifice of Christ; and from the law, its curses, and condemnation; Christ being made a curse for them, and having had its sentence of condemnation executed on him; and from all their sins, and the sad effects of them; from the guilt of them, and obligation to punishment by them; from Satan, and all enemies, in whose power it is not to destroy them, being out of their reach; and from the wrath of God, everlasting destruction, and the second death: and such find Christ to be a strong habitation, or a dwelling-place; where they may and do dwell safely, pleasantly, and comfortably, enjoying plenty of all good things; their bread in this munition of rocks being given to them, and their water sure unto them; and to *turn* to it is to quit all other dependencies, and to believe in Christ, and trust all with him: *even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee:* which is said, either to the church, or rather to her prisoners, to each of them, to encourage them to flee to Christ, and trust in him; seeing, by the present declaration of grace made, they may expect to enjoy all fulness of grace, plenty of blessings, temporal and spiritual; the promise of this life, and that which is to come; all spiritual blessings in Christ, grace here, and glory hereafter. So *double* signifies any thing large, sufficient, plentiful, Isa. xl. 2. and lxi. 7. particularly the Spirit and his grace; and double comfort from him, instead of distress and trouble before experienced: according to the accents, the word for *double* is to be connected with the word *declare*, and be read *this day*, at this present time, however distressing it may be, or you in it be attended with uncomfortable and distressed circumstances, *I declare double* *; double grace, as some supply it, an abundance of it; which *I will render unto thee;* to every one of the prisoners of hope, who turn to the strong hold Christ, in whom they will find a fulness of all grace, and shall receive out of it grace for grace; double grace, a large measure of it; double to what was received under the former dispensation. Cocceius renders it *another declarer*, discoverer, or shewer forth, *do I render unto thee* *; meaning the Spirit of God, the other Comforter from the Father: Christ was the first declarer, who declared his Father, his nature, perfections, purposes, mind, and will, John i. 18. the Holy Spirit is the second, or the other declarer, who was to bring all things to remembrance spoken by Christ, and to lead into all truth, and shew things to come, and to take of the things of Christ, and shew them to his people, John xiv. 16, 26. and xvi. 13,

* מגיד משנה annuncians duplicem *gratiam*, quam reddam tibi, Vatablus.

* Indicem alterum reddo tibi, Cocceius.

14. and who was sent after Christ, was received up into heaven, as his second, his deputy, to officiate in his room and stead; as this word is used sometimes of the second priest, or sagan, or deputy of the high-priest, Jer. lii. 24.

Ver. 13. *When I have bent Judah for me*, &c.] By whom are meant the apostles, who were Jews, and whose ministrations were made use of as a bow with arrows, to strike the hearts of men, and bring them into subjection to Christ: they were a bow of the Lord's bending and preparing, and which abode in strength, being made strong and effectual through the hands of the mighty God of Jacob: *filled the bow with Ephraim*: or rather, *filled Ephraim with the bow*[p]; filled his hand with it; meaning, that some out of the ten tribes, as were the apostles, should be employed in drawing the bow of the Gospel, and shooting its arrows, the doctrines of it; which are comparable to them for swiftness, suddenness, and secrecy, and for their piercing and penetrating nature: *and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece*: that is, persons of the land of Judea, as such the apostles were, and who belonged to Zion the church of Christ; who were raised up, qualified, and sent forth by him into the Gentile world, with weapons of warfare, not carnal, but spiritual; against the Gentiles in general, and the wise men of Greece, as at Athens, in particular, to confound some, and to conquer others, and bring them to the obedience of Christ. Some understand this of the Maccabees raised up against Antiochus, and the Greeks that possessed the kingdom of Syria: *and made thee as the sword of a mighty man*: that is, made the Gospel in the hands of the church, and of her sons, as a sword in the hand of a mighty man, by whom execution is done with it; this is the sword of the spirit, even the word of God; and is sharp and cutting, and is the power of God unto salvation; as it is girt upon the thigh, and is in the hands of Christ the most Mighty; and as it is accompanied with the spirit of God, and of power.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord shall be seen over them*, &c.] His apostles and ministers: or, *shall appear to them*[q]; and be seen by them, as he was in the days of his flesh; they saw his person, his miracles, his sorrows, and sufferings; they saw him after his resurrection, and some have seen him since his ascension, with the eyes of their bodies, as well as with the eyes of their understandings; and so were fit to be witnesses of him: or, *the Lord shall appear over them*, or *upon them*[r]; he was seen over, and above them, when he ascended up to heaven; and upon them, by the descent of his Spirit on them at the day of Pentecost, and in other miraculous gifts bestowed upon them: or, *the Lord shall appear unto*, or *for them*[s]; by giving strength of body, and fortitude of mind; by protecting and preserving them, and by succeeding their labours: *and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning*: meaning the Gospel, and the swift progress of it, as well as the light it communicates, and the glory that goes along with it, and the efficacy of it: *and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet*: of the Gospel, so called, in allusion to the jubilee trumpet, which proclaimed liberty to servants, and restoration of inheritances: or to the trumpets made for the congregation of Israel to gather them together, and to express their joy at feasts: or to the trumpet used to proclaim war, and as an alarm for it; and this was blown by the Lord himself in person when here on earth, and by his ministers in his name: *and shall go with whirlwinds of the south*: that is, the Lord in the ministration of the Gospel shall go forth with the efficacy and energy of the Spirit: the Spirit is compared to *wind*, because he works in a sovereign way where he listeth, and oftentimes imperceptibly, and ever powerfully; and to the *south* wind, because that brings warmth, serenity, and calmness, produces rain, and makes fruitful; and he it is which makes the Gospel efficacious; see Cant. iv. 16. John iii. 8.

Ver. 15. *The Lord of hosts shall defend them*, &c.] Against all their enemies; against Satan, and his temptations, and all the opposition made by him; against the world, and all the rage and reproach of men; this was remarkably verified in the apostles, who were preserved by the Lord amidst a thousand snares and dangers; and who was able to do it, being Jehovah, and the Lord of armies in heaven and in earth; he was as a shield unto them, as the word[t] used signifies; and to which he is often compared in Scripture. The Targum renders it, "the Lord of hosts shall have mercy "on them;" he encompassed them about with his favour as with a shield: *and they shall devour*; or *eat*[u]; spiritual food; Christ the bread of life; whose flesh is meat indeed, and who is lived upon by faith; the blessings and promises of the everlasting covenant, of which the meek eat, and are satisfied; the Gospel and the truths of it, the words of faith and good doctrine, with which faithful ministers are nourished; all which is necessary, that they may be strengthened, and qualified to feed others with knowledge and understanding: *and subdue with sling-stones*; such who are stout-hearted, and far from righteousness; who become by their ministry penitent and humble, and subject to Christ, his Gospel and ordinances, even by the means of preaching of the word, which seem very unpromising and unlikely; being to men foolishnesss, and like the scrip and sling David took with him, and by which he brought Goliah down to the ground: *and they shall drink*; of the love of God, which, for its antiquity, purity, and refreshing nature, is like the best wine; and of the blood of Christ, which is drink indeed; and of the grace of the Spirit, which revives, strengthens, and extinguishes thirst: *and make a noise as through wine*; being full of joy and thankfulness for their spiritual food and drink; and so warm, zealous, and fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; free and open in their ministrations, loudly proclaiming the grace of God; bold, and fearless of danger: *and they shall be filled like bowls*; that were full of the blood of the offerings, as Jarchi and Kimchi explain it; or rather, as the Targum, that were full of fine flour and oil;

[p] קשת מלאתי אפרים arcu implebo manum Ephraim, Vatablus; so Ben Melech.

[q] עליהם יראה aderit illis, Vatablus, Drusius.

[r] Super eos, V. L. Calvin; super eis, Montanus, Piscator; super illis, Cocceius.

[s] So the particle is sometimes used; see Noldius, p. 690, 703.

[t] יגן obteget, Burkius.

[u] ואכלו ut comedant, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius, & edent, Burkius.

they having their souls filled with good things, as the first of the above writers observes; a comfortable view of interest in the love of God; a large measure of spiritual joy, and a fulness of the gifts and graces of the spirit, qualifying them for their work: and, *as the corners of the altar;* the Targum is, "they shall shine as "the blood that shines upon the wall of the altar;" at the corners of which it was poured out; signifying that they should be as full of the spirit, and spiritual things, as the altar was of blood: so the Jewish writers say, when the priest took the blood in the bowl, he sprinkled of it two sprinklings upon the two corners of the altar, on the diameter of it, and below upon the north-east horn, and upon the south-west horn; and he ordered it so, as to sprinkle the blood on the horn, that it might surround the corners, and that the blood might be on the four sides of the altar round about [w].

Ver. 16. *And the Lord their God shall save them in that day,* &c.] In the times of the Gospel, and the dispensation of it; meaning either the apostles, before said to be protected and defended, ver. 15. or rather the persons converted, conquered, and subdued by them, who are not killed, but saved by the Lord their God, their glorious Redeemer, from sin, Satan, the law, wrath to come, and out of the hands of all their enemies: *as the flock of his people;* they being his special people, by choice, by covenant grace, and by redemption, and like to a flock of sheep; to sheep, for harmlessness, meekness, weakness, and timorousness, for being prone to go astray, and for their being clean, profitable, and sociable; and to a flock, being a distinct society of men, and but one, and a small one too, though a flock beautiful and holy: *for they* shall be as *the stones of a crown;* like the gems and precious stones which are on a king's crown; they being Christ's jewels, highly valued and esteemed of by him; and comparable to them, for their richness through the grace of God, and for their purity, brightness, and glory in themselves, as owing to that; and for the glory they give to Christ, and for the durableness of them. The Targum renders it, *the stones of the ephod;* they may be translated, *the stones of separation* [x]; set for boundaries to distinguish places; those being separated by the grace of God, in effectual calling, from the rest of mankind, and laid as lively stones upon the foundation Christ: *lifted up as an ensign upon his land;* the land of Judea, as trophies of victorious grace; as monuments of praise and thankfulness; and as means of encouraging others to seek to Christ, and believe in him. The allusion seems to be to trophies erected on account of victories obtained by valiant men, to perpetuate their memories; which were sometimes of brass, and sometimes of marble, with inscriptions and titles on them, that they might endure for ever; and where sufficiency of such materials could not be got, a vast heap of stones used to be laid together; or large trees, and their branches cut down, and the spoils of the enemy laid upon them; and these were raised up as trophies to perpetuate the memory of mighty men to posterity. So Germanicus, having conquered the nations between the Rhine and the Elbe, piled up a vast heap of marble stones, and dedicated them to Tiberius [y]; and Fabius Æmilianus, having, with an army not amounting to 30,000 men, defeated an army of the Gauls near the river Rhosne, consisting of 200,000 men, set up a trophy of white stone, as well as built two temples, one to Mars, and another to Hercules [z]; and Domitius Ænobarbus, and Fabius Maximus, having got the victory over the Allobroges, the people of Savoy and Piedmont, erected stone towers on the spot, and fixed trophies adorned with hostile arms, which before had been unusual [a]; and it was an ancient custom with the Goths and Swedes, in the camps and fields where battles were fought, to fix stones like the Egyptian pyramids, on which they engraved, in a brief manner, the famous exploits performed, thereby to perpetuate the memory of the names and actions of great men [b]; and these pillars of stone set up for trophies, the chapiters of them might be made in the form of crowns, and may be here referred to; and so some render the words to this sense [c].

Ver. 17. *For how great is his goodness?* &c.] Not of the land of Judea, as Kimchi; nor of the doctrine of the law, as the Targum; nor of the people of the Jews; but of the Messiah: and designs not his essential nor his providential goodness; but his goodness as Mediator, which he has in his heart, and has shewn unto his people, in being their surety, and becoming their Saviour; in assuming their nature; bearing their sins, and obeying and suffering in their room and stead: and also that which he has in his hands for them, and communicates to them; his fulness of grace; all those spiritual blessings that are in him; the large measures of grace given at conversion; and the numerous instances of his goodness afterwards; yea, it includes glory, as well as grace: *and how great* is *his beauty?* not as God, nor as man, but as Mediator; as beheld in the covenant and promises; in the Gospel, and in the truths and in the ordinances of it: *corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids:* by *young men* are meant the same as in 1 John ii. 14. believers in Christ, who are lively, warm, and zealous for Christ, his cause and interest; who are active, diligent, and industrious in the discharge of duty; and are strong in Christ, and in his grace; and particularly in the grace of faith, and quit themselves like men: and by *maids* or *virgins* are meant the same; so called because of their chaste adherence to Christ; for their beauty, comeliness, and attire; and for their purity of divine worship and conversation: and the Gospel is intended by *corn* and *new wine;* which is compared to *corn,* in opposition to the chaff of human doctrines; and because it contains Christ the bread of life, and is nourishing and comfortable: and to *new wine,* not because it is a novel doctrine, for it is the everlasting Gospel ordained before the world was; but because, under the Gospel dispensation, to which this prophecy refers, it is newly and more clearly revealed; see the note on ver. 15. The effect of which is, that it makes saints *cheerful,* fills them with joy and spiritual mirth; for it is a

[w] Maimon. Maase Hakorbanot, c. 5. sect. 6.
[x] אבני נזר lapides separationis, Sanctius; so Aquila in Drusius.
[y] Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 1. c. 22.
[z] Strabo. Geograph. l. 4. p. 126.
[a] Flori Roman. Gest. l. 3. c. 2.
[b] Olai Magni de Ritu Gent. Septentrional. Epitome, l. 1. c. 16.
[c] Lapides coronarii, Junius & Tremellius; lapides coronati, i. e. epistyliis ornati trophæis, Piscator.

joyful sound: or, *shall make fruitful*[d]; it causes them to grow and increase, and makes them fruitful in every good word and work: or, *shall make them speak* eloquently[e]; or cause them to put forth the fruit of their lips, in giving thanks to God for the abundance of grace bestowed upon them: or, *shall* make *them sing*[f], as others; in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. This new wine may be interpreted of the gifts and graces bestowed in great plenty on the day of Pentecost, both on sons and daughters, on servants and handmaids, whereby they prophesied, and saw visions, Acts ii. 16, 17. see Ephes. v. 18, 19.

CHAP. X.

THIS chapter is a prophecy of the conversion of the Jews in the latter day, when the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in, spoken of in the preceding chapter. It begins with an exhortation to ask rain of the Lord; denounces wrath upon his enemies; and consists of various promises to his people. The exhortation to ask rain is in ver. 1. to which encouragement is given from its being of the Lord, from his willingness to grant it, and from the fruitfulness occasioned by it. The vanity of idols, and idolaters, who can't give it, is exposed; and the distress and confusion they were thrown into is observed, ver. 2. The anger of the Lord against the principal of them is declared; and his gracious visitation of the people of the Jews, whom he will honour and glorify, is taken notice of, ver. 3. from whom the Messiah sprung, than which a greater glory can't be enjoyed, ver. 4. and then follow various promises relating to them; as of victory over their enemies, through the presence of the Lord with them, ver. 5. of strength and salvation to them, as owing to his free grace and mercy, ver. 6. of inward spiritual joy in them and theirs, ver. 7. of their effectual vocation and spiritual increase, in consequence of redeeming grace, ver. 8. of their having a name and a place in Gospel churches, where they'll remember the Lord, and live with their children, being converted, ver. 9. which conversion of theirs is represented in terms alluding to their deliverance from Egypt and Babylon, ver. 10, 11. and the chapter is concluded with a promise of spiritual strength, so that they shall continue in their profession of faith in Christ, and persevere therein to the end, ver. 12.

Ver. 1. *Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain*, &c.] There was the former and the latter rain, of which see Hos. vi. 3. Joel ii. 23. The former rain was in autumn, a little before or about seed-time; the latter was in the spring, and a little before harvest, which is here referred to. So Hesiod[g] calls those rains the autumnal and vernal rains; and between these two rains there was seldom any more. Jerom says[h] that he never saw in the eastern countries, especially in Judea, any rain at the end of the month of June, or in July; and now, at Aleppo, a little more northerly, for three or four months after May, they have scarce so much as any dew upon the ground, as Pemble on the place observes. So Dr. Shaw says[i], little or no rain falls in this climate (of Algiers and Tunis), during the summer-season; and in most parts of the Sahara, particularly in the Jereede, they have seldom any rain at all. It was likewise the same in the holy land, Prov. xxvi. 1. where rain is accounted an unusual thing in *harvest*, 2 Sam. xxi. 10. where it is also mentioned, *from harvest till rain dropped on them*; i. e. their rainy season fell out, as in Barbary, in the autumnal and winter months.—The first rains (he observes) fall here some years in September, in others a month later; after which the Arabs break up their ground, in order to sow wheat, and plant beans: this commonly falls out about the middle of October.—If the latter rains fall as usual in the middle of April, (in the holy land we find they were a month sooner, Joel ii. 23.) the crop is reckoned secure; the harvest coming on in the latter end of May, or in the beginning of June, according to the heat and quality of the preceding seasons: wherefore, since there was so little rain fell in these countries, and particularly in Judea; if these former and latter rains failed, a scarcity followed; for, for want of the former rain, the earth was hard, and not easily ploughed up; and for want of the latter the corn withered away in the blade, and did not ear, at least did not produce ears plump and good; so that these rains were great temporal blessings, and to be asked for, as they were by the Jews, when they were wanted; and for which they appointed fasts[k], and were emblems of spiritual blessings here designed; for rain here is not to be literally understood, but mystically and spiritually; and designs either the love and favour of God, and the comfortable discoveries of it; see Prov. xvi. 15. and xix. 12. which may be compared to rain in its original; it is from above, from on high, it comes from heaven; it is not owing to any thing in man, but to the will of God; and is distinguishing, as rain falls on one city, and not on another; in its objects, undeserving persons, as rain is sent on the just and unjust; in its manner of communication, it tarries not for the will and works of men; it comes at times in great abundance, and the discoveries of it are to be asked for; in its effects, it softens and melts the heart into evangelical repentance; it cools and extinguishes the flaming wrath of a fiery law in the conscience; it refreshes and revives the drooping spirit, and makes the barren soul fruitful: or the blessings of grace in general may be meant; these are from above, depend on the will of God; are to be sought after, and asked for; are free-grace gifts; are given largely and plentifully, and make fruitful: or the coming of Christ in the flesh

[d] ינובב germinare faciet, Montanus; progerminare faciet, Burkius; fœcundabit, Castalio; dicitur de virginibus spiritualibus, quæ sunt fructus multi evangelii, Zech. ix. 17. Stockius, p. 634.

[e] Facundas faciet, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius.

[f] Cantare faciet, Pagninus, Drusius; so Ben Melech.

[g] Opera & Dies, l. 2.

[h] Comment. in Amos iv. 7. fol. 39. F.

[i] Travels, p. 136, 137. Ed. 2.

[k] Misn. Taanith, c. 1. sect. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

in particular is intended; see Hos. vi. 3. who came down from heaven; is a free gift of God to men, was sought after, and greatly desired, and to be desired, by the Old-Testament saints, and very grateful to such when he came. This may also be applied to his spiritual coming in his power and kingdom in the latter day, which is to be earnestly wished and prayed for, Psal. lxxii. 7, 8, 16. or else the Gospel may be designed; see Deut. xxxii. 2. Isa. lv. 10, 11. this is of God, and from above; comes and falls upon the sons of men, according to divine direction; softens hard hearts, when it becomes effectual; comforts the souls of God's people; is a blessing to be desired, and asked for; and will be enjoyed in great plenty in the latter day: so *the Lord shall make bright clouds:* by which may be meant the ministers of the Gospel, who are of God's making, and not man's: these may be compared to *clouds* for their number, especially as they will be in the latter day; and for their moving to and fro, to communicate spiritual knowledge: and to *bright* ones, such as from whence lightning springs, thunder-clouds, full of water; (the same word is used for lightning, Job xxxviii. 25;) because full of Gospel truths, and because of that clear light they diffuse to others: *and give them showers of rain* productive, under a divine influence, of large conversions among Jews and Gentiles: *to every one grass in the field:* on whom these showers fall with efficacy, and a divine blessing; every one of these have a spiritual knowledge of Christ, faith in him, repentance towards God, food and fulness of it; and are filled with the fruits of righteousness, or good works, to the glory of God; see Isa. lv. 10. The Targum is, "that he may give to them (the children "of men) corn to eat, and grass to the beasts in the "field;" taking the words literally.

Ver. 2. *For the idols have spoken vanity*, &c.] The vanities of the Gentiles cannot give rain; if they promise it, they speak vain things; God only can give it, and therefore it must be asked of him, Jer. xiv. 22. The word for idols is *teraphim*, the same as in Gen. xxxi. 19. Hos. iii. 5. and here signifies worshippers of idols, as the Targum interprets it; and may be understood of the idolatrous Papists, who worship idols of gold, silver, brass, and wood, Rev. ix. 20, 21. and who speak lies in hypocrisy, great swelling words of vanity, and even blasphemy against God, his name, his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven, 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. Rev. xiii. 6. Jarchi on 2 Kings xxiii. 24, says, the teraphim are images that speak by sorcerers or sorceries; and to such evils the followers of the man of sin are addicted, Rev. ix. 21. and xviii. 23. and the Jews[l] have a notion that those images were so formed, that they were capable of speaking and talking with men; see Hos. iii. 4. they seem to confound them with the *talismen: and the diviners have seen a lie;* delivered it out, and others believed it, being given up to judicial blindness, because they received not the love of the truth, 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11. The Targum is, "the di-"viners prophesy falsehood;" or preach false doctrine, as the Romish clergy do, who are meant by the diviners: *and have told false dreams;* about transubstantiation, purgatory, &c. which are visionary things; false doctrines are compared to dreams, Jer. xxiii. 25, 27, 28, 32: *they comfort in vain;* by works of supererogation, by selling pardons, and praying souls out of purgatory: *therefore they went their way as a flock:* as a flock of sheep straying from the fold. The Targum is, "they are scattered as sheep are scattered;" that is, the Jews, being hardened against the Christian religion, by the idolatry, lies, and dreams of the Papists, wander about in their mistakes and errors concerning the Messiah; which is their case to this day, and will be until the man of sin is destroyed: *they were troubled, because there* was *no shepherd*; or, *no king*, as the Targum paraphrases it; that is, the King Messiah, according to them, is not yet come; which is their affliction and trouble, that they are as sheep without a shepherd: or, *they answered, that* there is *no shepherd*[m]; they replied to the diviners, the tellers of false dreams and idolaters, and affirmed that the Messiah is not come, and that the pope of Rome is not the shepherd and bishop of souls.

Ver. 3. *Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds*, &c.] The Targum interprets it of *kings:* as the *goats* of *princes*, in the next clause; by whom, according to Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Abarbinel, are meant the kings of Greece; but rather the antichristian kings are designed, the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication with the whore of Rome, which is the cause of the anger of the Lord being kindled: or else ecclesiastical rulers are meant, the Romish clergy, the chief of them, as cardinals, archbishops, bishops, &c. who may fitly be represented by the shepherds of Israel in the times of the prophets for their name, professing to be of Israel, or to be Christians; and by them for their ignorance, covetousness, luxury, disregard to the flock, tyranny and cruelty over it, and murder of it; see Isa. lvi. 10. against these the fire of God's wrath will be kindled, and with it will they be destroyed: *and I punished the goats;* not the Seleucidæ, as the above Jewish writers; though they may with propriety be so called, since they were the successors of Alexander, signified by the he-goat in Dan. viii. 5. rather the monks and friars, comparable to these for their filthiness and uncleanness; and because they pretend to be guides of the people, and to go before them, and yet use them ill, and push them with their horns of power; wherefore God will punish them, and kill those children of Jezabel with death, Rev. ii. 22, 23: *for the Lord of hosts hath visited his flock, the house of Judah:* by sending the Gospel to them, and his spirit with it, to make it effectual to their conversion; which will be at the time that the antichristian hierarchy will be destroyed; then the Lord's flock, who have gone astray, shall be returned to the true Shepherd and Bishop of souls, and shall seek the Lord their God, and David their King, and shall be saved by him: a gracious visitation this will be! *and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle:* this denotes that the Jews, when converted, will be bold in their God; valiant for the truth on earth; courageously fight the good fight of faith, and be victorious over their ene-

[l] Targum Jon. in Gen. xxxi. 19. R. Eliezer Pirke, c. 36. fol. 40. 1.

[m] יענו כי אין רעה testificati sunt nullum fuisse pastorem, Junius & Tremellius, Heb.; responderunt, Piscator; respondebunt quod non sit pastor, Burkius.

mies; and that they will be in great honour and esteem among the saints, though so mean and justly despicable now: the sense is, that as the horse shews its strength and courage in battle, so should they; see Job xxxix. 19—25.

Ver. 4. *Out of him* came forth *the corner,* &c.] Or *corner-stone*: by which is meant a king or ruler, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi; and is no other than the King Messiah, who was to come out of Judah, and did spring from that tribe, 1 Chron. v. 2. Heb. vii. 14. and this is a reason why God will visit the house of Judah, or the Jews, in the latter day, because the Messiah was promised and sent unto them, salvation was of them, though they rejected him; but the Lord will have mercy on them; the Redeemer shall come to Zion in a spiritual manner, and turn away iniquity from them, and then all Israel shall be saved by him. The epithet of a *corner* stone well agrees with him, that being not only the ornament, but the strength and support of the building, which knits, cements, and keeps the whole together: Christ is a beautiful and precious corner-stone, which gives glory and lustre to the church, and is the support, yea, the foundation of it; and who joins and unites together men and angels; Jews and Gentiles; Old and New Testament saints; saints above and below; saints in all ages and places, and of all nations and denominations; and is the Head of the corner, being superior to men and angels, to the kings of the earth, and to the church of God; see Ephes. ii. 20. *Out of him the nail;* the Targum is, *out of him his Messiah;* which shews that this text was formerly understood of Christ by the Jews; Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it of a prince and governor; so Eliakim the governor is said to be *as a nail in a sure place,* Isa. xxii. 23. who was a type of Christ; and this agrees with Christ himself. The allusion is either to a nail, by which the timber in the building is compacted together, and the whole is strengthened, as the church is by Christ: or to a nail to which the cords of tents are fastened, as those of shepherds, travellers, or soldiers; the church is as such a tent; Christ is the nail to which its cords are fastened, which denotes the stability and security of it: or to a nail fixed in a wall, on which things are hung; on Christ are hung all the vessels of mercy; the covenant of grace, and all its promises and blessings; and all the glory of his Father's house, of his building, the temple, and of the salvation of his people, is to be hung on him. *Out of him the battle-bow;* or *warrior,* as Jarchi interprets it; the Lord is a man of war; Christ makes war in righteousness; the armies of heaven follow him; he is at the head of them, and fights the battles of his people, and is victorious, and makes them more than conquerors; their spiritual armour is from him, and they are armed by him, Rev. xix. 11—14. *out of him every oppressor together;* or *exactor*[a]; which is used in a good sense, Isa. lx. 17. as it must be here, since all the rest of the epithets are; and may design the apostles of Christ, who preached the doctrines of grace and righteousness, and required of men the obedience of faith; and these came out of Judah and Jerusalem, and went into all the world, demanding faith in and obedience to the son of God.

Ver. 5. *And they shall be as mighty men,* &c.] That is, the converted Jews shall be such; they shall be strong in faith, giving glory to the Messiah; they shall be strong in the grace that is in him; they shall be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; his strength shall be made perfect in their weakness: *which tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle;* being victorious over sin, Satan, and the world, through Christ, in whom they will believe: *and they shall fight;* against all their inward and outward enemies, the good fight of faith, with great valour and courage: *because the Lord is with them;* who is the Lord of hosts or armies; his presence gives boldness and intrepidity; for, if he is for them, who can be against them? the battle is theirs, success is certain: *and the riders on horses shall be confounded;* such that come up against them on them, and trust in them, shall be beaten by them, and so made ashamed; and the flesh, both of the horses and their riders, shall be the food of the fowls of the air, Rev. xix. 18. perhaps the Turkish cavalry is meant, who may attempt to hinder the settlement of the Jews in their own land; the armies of the Turks consisting greatly of horsemen, Rev. ix. 16.

Ver. 6. *And I will strengthen the house of Judah,* &c.] Both with internal and external strength, so that they shall be able to stand their ground against enemies of every sort: *and I will save the house of Joseph;* the ten tribes, such of them that shall be found, for all Israel shall be saved, Rom. xi. 26. not only temporally, but spiritually, with an everlasting salvation: *and I will bring them again to place them;* there is but one word in the original text; it is composed of two words, as Kimchi observes, of שוב, *to return,* and ישב, *to sit or dwell*[b], quietly, constantly, and at ease; and our version takes in both senses: the meaning is, that these people should be returned from the state and condition and from the several places they are in, and be settled either in their own land, or in Gospel churches, under a Gospel ministry, enjoying Gospel ordinances, or in both: *for I have mercy upon them;* which is the spring and source of all the above benefits promised, or that are after mentioned; even of the covenant and its blessings; the mission of Christ, and salvation by him; regeneration, pardon, and eternal life; hence they that had a *lo-ammi* upon them, and were not the people of God, now will be his people; and those who had not obtained mercy shall obtain it, even those that were concluded in unbelief: *and they shall be as though I had not cast them off;* or rejected them from being his people; which was done when the natural branches, the Jews, were broken off, and the Gentiles of the wild olive-tree were graffed in; when their civil and church state were dissolved, and their city and temple destroyed: *for I am the Lord their God;* convenant-interest always remains, and is the source of all the blessings of grace, and will be of the conversion of the Jews, Rom. xi. 26, 27, 28, 29: *and will hear*

[a] נגש exactor, Montanus, Vatablus, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Calvin, Drusius, De Dieu, Cocceius, Burkius.

[b] והושבותים & reverti & habitare faciam, Burkius.

them: when, the spirit of grace and supplication being poured upon them, they shall cry unto the Lord, and look to him for salvation. The Targum is, "and "I will receive their prayer."

Ver. 7. *And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man,* &c.] What remain, and shall be found of the ten tribes, shall be as is said of Judah, or the Jews of the two tribes, ver. 5: *and their heart shall rejoice as through wine:* they shall be filled with inward and spiritual joy, through the love of God shed abroad in their heart; and through the Gospel of Christ having a place there; and through the blessings of divine grace, those streams of love, and which flow in the Gospel, and make glad the hearts of God's people; all which are comparable to wine: *yea, their children shall see it, and be glad:* they shall see the strength, victory, and salvation of their fathers, and the joy they shall be possessed of, and join with them in it, having a share in the same blessings they are partakers of: *their hearts shall rejoice in the Lord:* in the person and offices of Christ, who will now be known by the spiritual seed and offspring of the church, and in the great salvation wrought out by him, and in all the blessings of grace that accompany it. The Targum is, "their heart "shall rejoice in the word of the Lord;" the essential Word, the Son of God.

Ver. 8. *I will hiss for them,* &c.] Or *whistle for them*[r]; the word signifies, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe, the motion of the lips with the voice, and is a sign of calling; and so the Targum renders it, I will cry or call for them; and it denotes the call of them by the Gospel, which is the voice of Christ, which is soft, sweet, and melodious; is a sound of love, grace, and mercy; of peace, pardon, life, and salvation: the allusion seems to be to the shepherd gathering his sheep together with his pipe or whistle, and which was a reed; and so may denote the weakness of the instrument, the ministry of the word in itself, which is made the power of God unto salvation: *and gather them;* from the places where they are scattered, into their land; or, by effectual calling, out from the state and condition in which they are, and from among the men of the world, to the Lord himself, as their Redeemer and Saviour; and to him for pardon and righteousness: and into his churches, and communion with him there: Kimchi observes, that some interpret this verse of future time; and Jarchi says it relates to it; and in the Talmud[s] it is applied to the times of the Messiah; where they speak of a bird called *racham,* which we translate the gier-eagle, Deut. xiv. 17. and they say it is so called, because, when that comes, mercies come into the world, which this word signifies. R. Bibi bar Abi says, when it sits, it makes a whistling or hissing, from whence it is called *sarakrak,* a word derived from what is here used; and when it sits on the ground, and hisses or whistles, the Messiah will come, as it is said, *I will hiss for them,* &c.; the gloss is, when it stands not, but sits and chirps, it is a sign of good news. The design seems to be to shew, that the Messiah's coming is owing to mercy, and would be good news, which the Gospel publishes. *For I have redeemed them:* from sin, Satan, the law, death, and hell, and every enemy, by his precious blood, and the sacrifice of himself when here on earth; and this is the foundation of the effectual vocation of any and every sinner; and will be the reason of the conversion and ingathering of the Jews in the latter day; they being a people redeemed and purchased by the blood of Christ, Isa. xliii. 1: *and they shall increase as they have increased:* either when in Egypt, or in the days of Solomon; their number shall be as the sand of the sea, Hos. i. 10. a nation shall be born at once; they shall be multiplied, and not be few, and glorified, and not be small; yea, the place shall be too strait for them to dwell in, Jer. xxxi. 18. Isa. xlix. 18—22. and lxvi. 8.

Ver. 9. *And I will sow them among the people,* &c.] The people of God in the Gentile world: this is to be understood of the conversion of the Jews, when they will become the good seed that hear the word, and understand it, and bring forth fruit; and of their being known, acknowledged, and reckoned among the people of God, who now are not; and of their being planted in Gospel churches, where the word is truly preached; the ordinances are faithfully administered; the Lord grants his presence, and saints have communion one with another; to be in such a fruitful soil, and in such sacred enclosures, fenced by the power and grace of God, is a great happiness: *and they shall remember me in far countries:* they shall call to mind what their ancestors did to Christ, and mourn on account of a pierced Saviour; they shall remember him in the ordinance of the supper, being in a Gospel church-state; they shall remember what he did and suffered for them, and his love to them in all, and that with faith, affection, and thankfulness: *and they shall live with their children;* a very happy, comfortable, temporal life; and they shall live a spiritual life; a life of faith on Christ; of communion with him, and of holiness from him, and to his glory: and their children also shall live the same life, being regenerated and quickened by the same grace; these are the church's children: *and turn again;* that is, when they shall turn again, either to the Lord, shall be converted unto him; or return to their own land.

Ver. 10. *I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt,* &c.] The Targum paraphrases it, "and as I "brought them out of the land of Egypt, so will I "gather their captivity out of Assyria;" suggesting there would be a likeness between the one and the other. Egypt may denote the state of distance and bondage in which all men are by nature; and the Jews, at their conversion, will be brought out of it, into the glorious liberty of the children of God, by the mighty arm of the Lord, according to his purposes and promises. Moreover, as Coccelus observes, Egypt may signify Rome, or the Romish jurisdiction, which is spiritually called Egypt and Sodom, Rev. xi. 8. for darkness, idolatry, tyranny, and cruelty; and out of which the Jews, as many of them as are there, will be brought at the time of their conversion: *and gather them out of Assyria;* which may design the Turkish or Persian dominions, or both, as the above commentator suggests; from whence the Jews, as many as are in those parts, will

[r] אשרקה sibilabo, i. e. fistula pastorali, Grotius, Burkius.

[s] T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 63. 1.

be brought into their own land, as follows; see Isa. xi. 11. Rev. xvi. 12: *and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon:* Gilead was a land of pasture, and signifies *a heap of testimonies;* and may mystically intend the Scriptures, which testify of Christ, and direct to green pastures, beside the still waters: and Lebanon, that goodly mountain, and hill of frankincense, and where cedars grew, may design the church, whither the converted Jews will be brought, and worship before it, Rev. iii. 9. or both may literally be understood, which they shall return unto; Gilead being, as Kimchi observes, beyond Jordan eastward; and Lebanon, comprehending the whole land of Israel, on this side of it: *and place shall not be found for them;* they will be so numerous; see Isa. xlix. 20, 21. the Targum is, "and I will bring them to the land of "Gilead and the sanctuary, and it shall not be sufficient for them;" that is, to hold them. The Septuagint render it, *and not one of them shall be left;* all Israel shall now be converted and saved, though their number will be as the sand of the sea, Hos. i. 10.

Ver. 11. *And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, &c.*] Either the people of the Jews, as Israel of old did, when they came out of Egypt, to which the allusion is; or the wind shall pass through the sea, as Aben Ezra supplies it, and it shall become dry: that is, the river of Egypt: or *affliction* [r], as many supply it, shall pass through the sea; the nations, which are many as the sea, as Kimchi interprets it; and so may design that hour of temptation that shall come upon all the earth, Rev. iii. 10. or with which the kingdom of the beast, who rose up out of the sea, and consists of many waters, people, tongues, and nations, will be afflicted, Rev. xiii. 1. and xvii. 1, 15. and xvi. 3. and xviii. 21. which the Lord shall pass through and smite; or it may in general denote the sea of this world, and the afflictions of it, which the Lord causes his people to pass through, and brings them out of them: *and shall smite the waves in the sea;* that is, the Lord shall smite them; repress afflictions, which are like the proud waves, not suffering them to proceed further than is for his glory and his people's good, and remove all obstacles in their way; see Isa. xi. 15, 16. or destroy their enemies, which are like the proud waters, that otherwise would go over their souls, and overwhelm them; and particularly the antichristian states, at the pouring out of the vials, signified by the sea, and by fountains and rivers, Rev. xvi. 3, 4. Kimchi explains it of the multitude of the people: *and all the deeps of the river shall dry up;* not Nile, the river of Egypt, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra [s], but the river Euphrates; see Rev. xvi. 12. the drying up of which signifies the destruction of the Turkish empire; and the Targum paraphrases it, "all the kings of the people "shall be confounded:" *and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down;* the pride of the Ottoman empire, of which the old Assyria is a part, and which has been large and powerful, that shall be destroyed; this will be at the passing away of the second woe; and then quickly comes the third, which is as follows, Rev. xi. 14: *and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away;* all rule and government shall cease; see Gen. xlix. 10. meaning that the kingdom of the antichristian beast of Rome, called Egypt, Rev. xi. 8. shall be at an end; which will be at the blowing of the seventh trumpet, and upon and through the pouring out of the seven vials. So the Targum, the dominion of the Egyptians shall be taken away; or its rod, with which it has smote, hurt, and greatly oppressed and afflicted the saints; persecution shall now cease; it will not be in the power of the Romish antichrist to persecute any more.

Ver. 12. *And I will strengthen them in the Lord, &c.*] Not the Egyptians and Assyrians, but the Jews, as in ver. 5. the Targum is, "I will strengthen them "in the word of the Lord;" in the Messiah, by his power, and in the grace that is in him; and their faith and hope in him, and love to him: or *by* [t] him; so that, through him strengthening them, they will be able to do all things; to exercise grace; perform duty; withstand temptation; oppose indwelling sin; bear the cross of Christ; endure afflictions; engage with all their spiritual enemies, and conquer them: for the words may be rendered, *I will cause them to prevail, or overcome in the Lord* [u]; all their enemies, temporal and spiritual; and even to be more than conquerors through him that has loved them: *and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord;* walk in him, the way to the Father, to heaven and happiness; walk by faith on him, in his strength, and in imitation of him; walk according to his Gospel, calling on his name, professing and worshipping him; and walk in his church and ordinances, agreeably to his will; see Mic. iv. 5. Kimchi owns that this whole chapter belongs to the times of the Messiah, as well as the former. The words may be considered as a testimony to the doctrine of the Trinity; that I, Jehovah the Father, will strengthen them in Jehovah the Son; and they shall walk up and down in the name of the Son of God, saith Jehovah the Spirit. Moreover, as a promise of the saints' final perseverance, very peremptorily expressed; I *will* strengthen them, and they *shall* walk, *&c.*

CHAP. XI.

THIS chapter contains a prophecy of the destruction of the Jews, and shews the causes and reasons of it; and is concluded with a prediction concerning antichrist. The destruction of the temple and city of

[r] Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Vatablus, Calvin, Drusius, Cocceius.
[s] So Stockius, p. 891.
[t] ביהוה per Jehovam, Piscator.
[u] וגברתים et faciam illos ut vincant, Cocceius.

Jerusalem, and the inhabitants of it, is signified by figurative expressions, ver. 1, 2. which occasions an howling among the shepherds or rulers of Israel, on account of whose cruelty and covetousness the wrath of God came upon them without mercy, ver. 3, 5, 6. but inasmuch as there were a remnant according to the election of grace among them, named the flock of the slaughter, Christ is called upon to feed them; who undertakes it, and prepares for it, ver. 4, 7. but being abhorred by the shepherds, whom he therefore loathed and cut off, he determines to leave the people to utter ruin and destruction, ver. 8, 9. and, as a token of it, breaks the two staves asunder he had took to feed them with, ver. 10, 11, 14. and, as an instance of their ingratitude to him, and which is a justification of his conduct towards them, notice is taken of his being valued at and sold for thirty pieces of silver, ver. 12, 13. but, in the room of these shepherds cut off, it is suggested that another should arise, who is described by his folly, negligence, and cruelty, ver. 15, 16. to whom a woe is denounced, ver. 17.

Ver. 1. *Open thy doors, O Lebanon*, &c.] By which may be meant, either the temple of Jerusalem, which was built of the cedars of Lebanon; "the gates of which "are said[w] to open of themselves forty years before "the destruction of Jerusalem, when Jochanan ben "Zaccai, who lived at the same time, rebuked them, "saying, O temple, temple, wherefore dost thou fright "thyself? I know thine end is to be destroyed; for "so prophesied Zechariah, the son of Iddo, concern"ing thee, *open thy doors, O Lebanon*." So Lebanon, in ch. x. 10, is interpreted of the sanctuary, both by the Targum and by Jarchi; or else it may be understood of Jerusalem, and of the whole land of Judea, because it was situated by it; it was the border of it on the north side. *That the fire may devour thy cedars;* of which the temple was built, and the houses of Jerusalem, which were consumed by fire; unless the fortresses of the land are meant. So the Targum paraphrases it, "and the fire shall consume your fortresses."

Ver. 2. *Howl, fir-tree: for the cedar is fallen*, &c.] By which are designed the princes, nobles, and magistrates of the land: so the Targum interprets them of kings and princes; see Nah. ii. 3. Ezek. xxxi. 3: *because all the mighty are spoiled;* which is an explanation of the figurative expressions in the former clause, and in the following; and designs rich men, as the Targum paraphrases it, who at this time would be spoiled of their wealth and substance. *Howl, O ye oaks of Bashan;* which the Targum interprets of governors of provinces; and men of power and authority are doubtless intended; see Isa. ii. 13. Amos ii. 9: for the *forest of the vintage is come down;* or rather, *the fortified forest;* meaning the city of Jerusalem, which was a fortified place, and like a forest full of trees, for number of inhabitants, but now cut down and destroyed; see Isa. x. 16, 17, 18, 19.

Ver. 3. There is *a voice of the howling of the shepherds*, &c.] Which may be understood either of the civil rulers among the Jews, who now lose their honour and their riches; and so the Targum, Jarchi, and Aben Ezra, interpret it of kings; or of the ecclesiastical rulers, the elders of the people, the Scribes and Pharisees: *for their glory is spoiled;* their power and authority; their riches and wealth; their places of honour and profit; their offices, posts, and employments, whether in civil or religious matters, are taken from them, and they are deprived of them: *a voice of the roaring of young lions;* of princes, comparable to them for their power, tyranny, and cruelty: the Targum is, "their roaring is as the roaring of young lions:" *for the pride of Jordan is spoiled;* a place where lions and their young ones resorted, as Jarchi observes; see the note on Jer. xlix. 19. Jordan is here put for the whole land of Judea now wasted, and so its pride and glory gone; as if the waters of Jordan were dried up, the pride and glory of that, and which it shewed when its waters swelled and overflowed; hence called by Pliny[x] *ambitiosus amnis*, a haughty and ambitious swelling river.

Ver. 4. *Thus saith the Lord my God*, &c.] The Syriac version adds, *to me;* not the Prophet Zechariah, but the Messiah, who calls the Lord his God, as he was man and Mediator, John xx. 17. for what follow are the words of God the Father to him, calling upon him, and giving him a commission to *feed the flock of the slaughter;* meaning the people of the Jews in general, to whom Christ was sent as a prophet, to teach and instruct them by the ministry of the word; so *feeding* is interpreted of prophesying, by the Targum and Jarchi: and these are called *the flock of slaughter*, because of the cruel usage they met with from their shepherds and owners, mentioned in the next verse; and because they were appointed and given up to ruin and destruction of God, on account of their sins and transgressions; though there was a remnant among them, a little flock, afterwards in this chapter called the poor of the flock, who were the special care of Christ, and were fed by him in a spiritual manner; and may go by this name, because exposed to the cruelties of men, and are accounted as sheep for the slaughter, Rom. viii. 36. these Christ was called upon by his Father in the council of peace to take care of, which he did; and in the everlasting covenant of grace he agreed to feed them; and in the fulness of time he was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, who were as sheep without a shepherd; and he fed them with knowledge and with understanding.

Ver. 5. *Whose possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty*, &c.] Not the Romans after Christ came, into whose hands they were delivered, and by whom they were slain in great numbers, not accounting it any sin to put them to death; but the priests, Scribes, Pharisees, and doctors, among the Jews, who ruined and destroyed their souls, by feeding them with poisonous doctrines; teaching them the commandments of men, and to observe the traditions of the elders; and to seek for life and salvation by the works of the law, which was a ministration of condemnation and death to them; and yet thought they did God and the souls of men good service: *and they that sell them;* as false teachers make merchandise of the souls of men: *say, blessed be the Lord, for I am rich;* having devoured widows' houses and substances,

[w] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 39. 2.

[x] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 15.

under a pretence of long prayers; and enriched themselves through tithes of every thing, and by other methods; as the Scribes and Pharisees did: *and their own shepherds pity them not*; those who should have been concerned for the welfare of their souls had no compassion on them. Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, interpret this of God, the Shepherd of Israel; the verb being singular, though the noun is plural: so God is called Makers, Creators, Psal. cxlix. 2. Eccl. xii. 1. and this sense agrees with the following words.

Ver. 6. *For I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land, saith the Lord, &c.*] Or spare them; but cause his wrath to come upon them to the uttermost, as it did at the time of Jerusalem's destruction by the Romans: *but, lo, I will deliver the men every one into his neighbour's hand*; this seems to refer to the factions and divisions among themselves during the siege of Jerusalem, when multitudes fell into the hands of the zealots, and heads of parties, and perished by them: *and into the hand of his king*; Vespasian the Roman emperor; the Jews having declared, long before this time, that they had no king but Cæsar, John xix. 15. and now into his hands they were delivered up: *and they shall smite the land*; that is, the Romans shall lay waste the land of Judea: *and out of their hand I will not deliver them*; as formerly out of the hands of their neighbours, the Philistines, Ammonites, &c. and out of the captivity of Babylon. It denotes that their destruction would be an utter one; nor have they been delivered yet, though it has been near 1700 years ago.

Ver. 7. *And I will feed the flock of slaughter, &c.*] According to the call and commission he had from his divine Father, ver. 4. he determines to do as it was enjoined him, and as he had undertook: *even you, O poor of the flock*: besides the people of the Jews in general, to whom Christ was sent, and he came to feed, there were a small remnant, according to the election of grace, he had a special regard for; and whom he fed by the word and ordinances with himself, the bread of life; and with the discoveries of his love, and with the covenant of grace, its blessings and promises, the sure mercies of David. These are called *the poor of the flock*, because they were the poor of this world, as were the disciples and followers of Christ; *the poor have the Gospel preached unto them*: Matt. xi. 5. and because they were spiritually poor, or poor in spirit, Matt. v. 3. who saw their spiritual poverty, and owned it; who bewailed it, and were humbled under a sense of it; and sought after the true riches; and acknowledged that all they had were owing to the grace of God: and who, as to the frame of their mind, are the meek and humble ones; or, as to their outward state and condition, afflicted ones, as the word [y] may be rendered; who were persecuted, reviled, reproached, and accursed by others, John vii. 49. and, as to their gifts and graces, the meanest of God's people: *and I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands*; Jarchi, agreeably to the Targum, interprets this of the division of the kingdom of Israel into two parts, in the times of Rehoboam and Jeroboam. Some think persons are meant. In the Talmud [z] it is explained of the disciples of the wise men in the land of Israel, who make each other pleasant by their doctrines; and of the disciples of the wise men in Babylon that corrupt one another, or object to one another: according to Aben Ezra, Zerubbabel and Nehemiah are intended: others, the good king Josiah, and the bad king Zedekiah: others the priest, and the king, as Abendana observes; and Kimchi explains it of the different manner in which the Lord led the people, according to their behaviour to him; when they behaved well, they had good kings and governors, which led them in a right way, and they were filled with good things; but when they behaved otherwise they had evil kings, and evil befell them. The first of these staves some render *clemency* [a], lenity, kindness, gentleness; and suppose it has respect to the kind and gentle manner in which God dealt with the Jews before the times of Christ, both as to civil and religious things; as to civil things, by bringing them into and settling them in a pleasant land, a land flowing with milk and honey; by giving them wholesome laws, by which they were governed, such as no other nation had; and by setting over them judges, to protect, defend, and deliver them; and kings to rule over them, very wise and good, especially some of them, David, Solomon, &c.; and as to religious things, by giving them a revelation of his mind and will, his word, statutes, and judgments, he did not give to other nations; and by sending prophets to instruct them in them, and stir them up to the observance of them; and by appointing a place of worship, and settling the form of it; setting apart men to the office of priests, and ordering sacrifices to be offered, with the whole of temple-service; which were the beauty of the Lord, to be beheld in his sanctuary: and then the latter, called *Bands*, which some render *destroyers* [b], may denote either the destruction of this people, when they sinned against God, either by the Chaldeans or by the Romans; when severity was exercised on them, and wrath came upon them to the uttermost, in the ruin of their nation, city, and temple: and others think these may refer to the different usage of the Roman emperors, with respect to the Jews, who, for the most part, used them kindly, until the times of Nero; but afterwards, by him and other emperors, they were treated very roughly, until they were utterly destroyed by them; but as it plainly appears from the context that this is spoken of no other shepherd but Christ, and of no other feeding but his, they must design the instruments he makes use of, and still continues to make use of, in feeding his people. Shepherds commonly have but one staff, rod, or crook; but Christ has two: so the psalmist makes mention of a *rod* and *staff*, when speaking of Christ as a Shepherd, Psal. xxiii. 4. and these two staves some interpret of his twofold way of government, lenity to his people, and severity to his enemies; but rather it denotes the very great diligence and care

[y] עניי miseros de grege, Grotius; afflictos pecoris, Montanus; afflictos gregis, Burkius.
[z] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 24. 1.

[a] נעם clementia, Cocceius.
[b] חבלים perditores, Munster; destructores, Vatablus; perdentes, Burkius.

Christ takes of his flock, both in guiding and directing them, and in protecting and defending them from their enemies: he fed his people in his own person when here on earth, with his staff *Beauty, or clemency*: he was sent, and came to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and had great compassion on them, as being like sheep without a shepherd; their present shepherds, or who bore that name, being such as are before described: and his tenderness and gentleness towards them appeared in his calling sinners to repentance; in his gracious invitations to come unto him; by his kind reception of them; his affable and courteous deportment towards them; the gentle reproofs and suitable instructions he gave them, and the comfortable truths of the Gospel he delivered to them; and, during his personal ministry, he suffered his disciples to go nowhere else with his Gospel; and, at his resurrection from the dead, ordered them to begin preaching at Jerusalem, and to continue preaching to the Jews first everywhere, as they did, until they rejected the Gospel; and then Christ broke both his staves, or removed the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, which I think are meant by these staves: for these staves are not only ensigns of the shepherd, as instruments of guiding, directing, and protecting the flock; but emblematical, as their names shew; and emblems they might be of the stay and staff of food, of the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water, Isa. iii. 1. and we find that Christ's rod and staff, in a mystical sense, are of use to feed, refresh, and comfort, as well as to guide and direct, Psal. xxiii. 4. by the staff *Beauty* we are to understand the Gospel, which was preached to the Jews before the destruction of Jerusalem, which is beautiful and pleasant in itself; the doctrines of it are so, such as those of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; and such are the promises of it, being absolute and unconditional, sure and suitable to the cases of God's people, and likewise its ministers, Isa. lii. 7. and the ordinances of it comely and lovely; and besides, it sets forth the beauty of Christ, and represents the saints' beautifulness in him; and it is like the shepherd's staff, of great use in feeding the flock, not only by supplying with food, being food itself, milk for babes, and meat for strong men; and by directing to Christ, his covenant and church, where it is to be had; but by setting right such who are going in wrong pastures; pushing forward such as are backward to duty; fetching back such as are driven away, or backslidden, and preserving the whole from wolves and bears: and by the other staff, *Bands*, the ordinances of the Gospel are designed, which are of use to keep the saints together, and to direct them to proper food; particularly the ordinance of the Lord's supper, which, as it is a feeding ordinance, and sets forth Christ, as food for faith, his flesh which is meat indeed, and his blood which is drink indeed; so it is a knitting and uniting ordinance, and is fitly expressed by *bands*; is not only a means of knitting the affections to Christ, whose love is so fully expressed in it; but of uniting the hearts of believers to one another, who herein become one bread, and one body, and feed together; and have communion with each other, and maintain their church-state in a comfortable manner; and keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; and the ordinances of the Gospel, though they are such bonds as are disagreeable to graceless persons, who are for breaking them asunder; yet they are a yoke that is easy, and a burden light to the people of God, Psal. ii. 3. Matt. xi. 30. It may be observed, that the word for *bands* is rendered *pilots*, Ezek. xxvii. 8, 29. and masters or governors of ships, Jon. i. 6. and is so rendered here[c]; and as churches may be compared to ships, Rev. viii. 9. so may ministers of the word to those who have the government and direction of them; and whose business lies in the ministration of the word, and the administration of ordinances, and taking care of the discipline of the Gospel: this seems to be the evangelic sense of these words; and they express the manner in which Christ fed his own dear people in Judea, partly by his own ministry, and partly by the ministry of his apostles, whilst he had an interest there, until the sins of that nation brought utter ruin upon them. It is a most ridiculous application made of these two staves by Antoninus, archbishop of Florence[d], that Zechariah, being of the Dominican order, took to him in the person of God two staves; the one he called *Beauty*, which is the order of the preaching Friars; and the other *Bands*, which is the order of the Minors: *and I fed the flock*: with the said staves, as he had determined; which includes the doing of the whole office of a shepherd; taking an exact account of his sheep, that none be lost; going before them, and setting them an example in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty; leading them to the still waters of his Father's love; to the fountains and fulness of his own grace; to the rich provisions of his house, and the green pastures of Gospel ordinances; feeding them himself, and with himself, the bread of life, the hidden and heavenly manna; appointing shepherds under him, whom he qualifies to be pastors, gives them to his churches as such, and who receive from him the doctrines of the Gospel to feed them with; and protecting them from all their enemies, the roaring lion, Satan, wolves in sheep's clothing, false teachers, and the world's goats, who thrust with side and shoulder, and push with their horns of power; as well as by seeking that which is lost; bringing back that which is driven, or drawn away; binding up that which is broken; strengthening the weak; healing the sick; and watching over the whole flock night and day, lest any hurt them.

Ver. 8. *Three shepherds also I cut off in one month, &c.*] Not Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, as is suggested in the Talmud[e]; nor David, Adonijah, and Joab, who died in the space of a month; nor the three kings, Jehoash, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah, who died by the hand of their enemies in a very little time; which is the sense of some, as Abendana observes; nor the three last prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, according to Aben Ezra; nor the three Maccabees, Judas, Jonathan, and Simon, as Abarbinel; rather the three sects among the Jews, the Pharisees, Sad-

[c] Nautæ, vel gubernatores, Cocceius.
[d] Apud Quistorpium in loc.

[e] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 9. 1.

ducees, and Essenes, instead of which last some put the Herodians; and others the Scribes; though some are of opinion that the three sanhedrim or courts of judicature among the Jews are designed; but it seems best of all to interpret them of the three orders of magistrates among them, princes, prophets, and priests; and the *cutting* them *off* may denote the cessation of civil government, the sealing up of vision and prophecy, and the putting an end to sacrifice; which is much better than to interpret them of the three Roman emperors who succeeded Nero; that is, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, who were put to death by their own subjects, within the space of a year and some days[f]; and which is a term of time that can't well be thought to be expressed by a month; which either signifies in general a small space of time; or, if a certain month is meant, either it designs the month Nisan, in which Christ suffered, when of right sacrifice should have ceased, as well as then prophecy was sealed up, and there was no more of it among the Jews, nor any civil government in their hands: or else the month Ab, in which the city of Jerusalem was burnt; and so an end was put in fact to all the above offices there. It may be that a month of years is intended, as in Rev. xi. 2. and xiii. 5. and so Abarbinel here interprets it; though he applies it to the times of the Maccabees; but it may respect the thirty years, or thereabout, which were between the death of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem, within which compass of time the above events were actually and manifestly fulfilled: *and my soul loathed them;* because they did not perform the duties of their office; the civil magistrate did not govern according to the laws of God; the prophets did not teach sound doctrine; and the priests did not do their service aright, nor teach the people the use and end of sacrifices, and in them direct to the Messiah, as they should have done: wherefore Christ expressed his dislike of them by words in his ministry, particularly in Matt. xxiii. and by deeds, causing vengeance to come upon them to the entire removal of them: or, *my soul was shortened*, or *contracted in them*, or *towards them*[g]; his affections were lessened towards them; he loathed their ways and works, which were not good; and he rejected and cast them off as his people, and wrote a *lo-ammi* on them; took away his Gospel from them, and abolished their civil and church state: *and their soul also abhorred me;* which is the reason of the former; and so the Targum paraphrases it, "and my Word cast them away, because their soul "abhorred my worship;" all ranks and orders of men among the Jews had Christ in abhorrence; they abhorred his person, his name, his miracles, his doctrines, his ordinances, and his people; this they did because of his mean appearance; and because of his inveighing against their traditions, superstitions, and immoralities; and this appeared by their contemptuous rejection of him as the Messiah; by their crucifixion of him; and by persecuting his disciples and followers.

Ver. 9. *Then said I, I will not feed you*, &c.] That is, any longer; either personally, or by his apostles; he fed them himself, during his public ministry; and afterwards by his apostles, whom he ordered to preach the Gospel to the Jews first; but that being contradicted, blasphemed, and despised by them, they were ordered to turn away from them, and go to the Gentiles: this shews that not the shepherds only, but the body of the people, abhorred Christ and his Gospel; and therefore it was taken away from them: *that that dieth, let it die;* literally, by the pestilence, that going by the name of death in Scripture; and spiritually, they that are dead in sin, let them continue so; let them die through famine of the word they have despised; let them die in their sins, and die the second death, they justly deserve: *and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off;* literally, by the sword; spiritually, the meaning is, that whereas some were in righteous judgment appointed to ruin, vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; let them be left to themselves, to a judicial blindness, and hardness of heart, and be cut off as unfruitful branches, and be no more in a church-state here, and hereafter cast into everlasting burnings: *and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another;* through famine; or destroy each other in their intestine divisions, which was the case of the Jews, when Jerusalem was besieged; see Gal. v. 15.

Ver. 10. *And I took my staff*, even *Beauty, and cut it asunder*, &c.] Signifying that he dropped his pastoral care of them: the Gospel indeed, which is meant by the staff *Beauty*, cannot be made void; it will have its designed effect; it is the everlasting Gospel, and will endure; its blessings, promises, doctrines, ordinances, and ministers, shall continue, till all the elect are gathered in, even unto the second coming of Christ: but then it may be removed from one place to another; it may be taken from one people, and given to another; and which is generally owing to contempt of it, unfruitfulness under it, and indifference to it; and this is the case here, it designs the taking away of the Gospel from the Jews, who despised it, and the carrying of it into the Gentile world; see Matt. xxi. 43. Acts xiii. 46. 47: *that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people;* not the covenant of works, that was made with all mankind in Adam; that was broke, not by the Lord, but by man; and was broke before the Gospel was published; nor the covenant of grace, for this was not made with all the people, nor can it be broken; but the Mosaic economy, the Sinai covenant, called the old covenant, which gradually vanished away; it was of right abolished at the death of Christ; when the Gospel was entirely removed, it more appeared to be so; and this was thoroughly done at the destruction of the city and temple. The last clause may be rendered, *which* covenant *I have made with all the people:* the Gentiles, having promised and given orders to send the Gospel unto them, which was accordingly done.

Ver. 11. *And it was broken in that day*, &c.] In right, the day Christ died; apparently, when the Gospel, the substance of it, was removed; and, in fact, at the time of Jerusalem's destruction: *and so the poor of the flock;* see the note on ver. 7: *that waited*

[f] Calmet's Dictionary, in the word *Shepherds*.

[g] ותקצר נפשי בהם & abbreviata est anima mea in eis, Montanus, Cocceius, Burkius; coarctata est, Calvin; contractabatur, vel contrahet sese, Vatablus; contracta est, Drusius, Grotius.

upon me: as servants on their masters; as clients on their patron; as beggars at the door for alms; as attendants on the worship of God, for the manifestations of himself, for the performance of promises, and for answers of prayer: or *observed me*[h]; what he said and did, his word, and his ordinances; what he abolished, and what he instituted: *knew that it was the word of the Lord*; either that Christ the Shepherd was the essential Word of the Lord; or that the prophecies concerning the destruction of the Jews, their civil and ecclesiastical state, were the word and decree of God now fulfilled; or that the Gospel taken from them is the word of the Lord, which he is the author of; his grace is the matter and substance of; and which he speaks by his ministers; and may be known by the matter and efficacy of it; by the refreshment and comfort it gives; by its leading souls to Christ; and by the harmony, agreement, and uniformity of its doctrines.

Ver. 12. *And I said unto them*, &c.] Not to the poor of the flock that waited on him, and knew the word of the Lord, and valued it; but to the other Jews that despised Christ and his Gospel: *give* me *my price*; or, *give my price*[i]; what I am valued at by you, to Judas the betrayer: or the price due unto him for feeding the flock, such as faith in him, love to him, reverence and worship of him. So the Targum paraphrases it, *do my will*. Kimchi says the price is repentance, and good works: *and if not, forbear*; unless all is done freely, willingly, and cheerfully; see Ezek. ii. 5, 7. or, if worth nothing, give nothing: *so they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver*; the price a servant was valued at, Exod. xxi. 32. see the fulfilment of this prophecy in Matt. xxvi. 15. The Jews own[k] that this prophecy belongs to the Messiah; but wrongly interpret it of thirty precepts given by him: in just retaliation and righteous judgment, thirty Jews were sold by the Romans for a penny, by way of contempt of them[l].

Ver. 13. *And the Lord said unto me*, &c.] The Prophet Zechariah, in a visionary way representing the sanhedrim of the Jews, the chief priests, scribes, and elders: *cast it unto the potter*; for the purchase of his field, in order to make a burying-ground of it for strangers: *a goodly price that I was valued at of them*: this is sarcastically said; meaning that it was a very poor price; and shewed that they had no notion of the worth and value of Christ, the Pearl of great price: *and I took the thirty* pieces *of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord*; it is a question with some what these pieces of silver were; they are commonly understood of silver shekels. So the Targum, in Gen. xx. 16. and xlv. 22. renders pieces of silver by shekels of silver; and Eusebius[m] calls these here thirty staters, the same with shekels; which, if common shekels, reckoned at one shilling and threepence, made but thirty-seven shillings and sixpence; and if shekels of the sanctuary, which at most were but two shillings and sixpence, thirty of these would make but three pounds fifteen shillings; and therefore may be truly called, ironically speaking, *a goodly price*; being no more than the price of a servant, as before observed: but Drusius objects to this, seeing a potter's field was bought with this money; and asks, who can believe that a field near so populous a city as Jerusalem could be bought for thirty shekels? and observes, from R. Elias Levita[n], that it is a rule with their doctors, that all silver mentioned in the law signifies shekels; in the prophets, pounds; and in the Hagiographa, talents: this is said, but not proved: to understand these of pounds, indeed, would make the price considerable, and sufficient for the purchase of a large field; for a silver maneh or pound with the Jews was of the value of sixty shekels, Ezek. xlv. 12. and thirty of these make two hundred and seventy pounds; but then this would not in an ironical way be called a *goodly price*: and as to the objection about the purchase of a field with such a sum of money as thirty shekels amount to, it may be observed, what Grotius seems rightly to conjecture, that this was a field the potter had dug up, and had made the most of it, and so was good for nothing but for such an use, for which it was bought, to bury strangers in. It is also a difficulty to fix it certainly to whom this money was ordered to be given, and was given. It is here said *to the potter*; but Jarchi and Kimchi observe, that some of their interpreters render it *the treasurer*; א and י being sometimes changed for one another; thus, the Targum paraphrases it, "under the hand of the treasurer;" and so others[o]; and indeed the money was given to the chief priests and elders, some of whom might be in that office, Matt. xxvii. 3, 6. though there is no need of such an alteration of the word, since the money Judas took for betraying Christ, and cast into the temple to the priests, they took up, and gave it to the potter for the field they bought of him with it; and, in the evangelist, the phrase by way of explanation is rendered, *for the potter's field*; and may be here properly enough translated, *for the potter*; as the particle אל is sometimes used[p]; that is, to be given to him for purchase-money[q]: and whereas the money is said to be cast, or given to him, *in the house of the Lord*, i. e. in the temple, it appears a fact, in the accomplishment of this prophecy, that it was cast into the temple, Matt. xxvii. 5. and was took up by the priests; who, in all probability, sent for the potter thither, and agreed with him for his field, and paid him his money there; for there is no reason to believe that he had a work-house for his business in the temple; though it may be he had one near it; see Jer. xviii. 1, 2. and worked for the service of it, since earthen vessels were used in temple-service[r]. The accomplishment of all this is in Matt. xxvii. 7, 8, 9, 10.

Ver. 14. *Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands*, &c.] By which is meant, either the removal of the form of civil government from the Jews; or the abrogation of the Mosaic law, and the carnal ordi-

[h] השמרים אתי qui observabant me, Burkius.
[i] הבו שכרי date mercedem meam, Vatablus, Calvin, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.
[k] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 98. fol. 85. 3.
[l] Egesippus de Urb. excidio Anacep. p. 690.
[m] Demonstr. Evangel. l. 10. p. 479.

[n] In Tishbi, p. 130.
[o] Ad thesaurarium, Pagninus, Vatablus.
[p] Vid. Nold. Ebr. Part. Concord. p. 60.
[q] אל היוצר pro figulo, Cocceius; conferendos in figulum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; ut detur ad figulum, Burkius.
[r] Vid. Misn. Parah, c. 5. sect. 1.

nances of the Jews, in which judaizing Christians joined them, until the destruction of Jerusalem; or rather the ordinances of the Gospel, which, upon taking that away, ceased: *that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel;* the Gospel and Gospel ordinances being removed from the Jews, there was no more work of conversion among them; their church-state came to nothing, and an entire disagreement between them and the Gentiles ensued: and so it is when God takes away his word and ordinances from a people, they are unchurched, and their brotherhood is broken, those being the bands which keep them together; and therefore, when loosed, their unity and society cease. There seems to be an allusion to the case of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and of the ten tribes; the former are often signified by Judah only; and the latter by Israel or Ephraim: the division between them was made in the times of Rehoboam, which continued unto their respective captivities; after the Jews' return from the Babylonish captivity, there was some shew of an union between them; some of the ten tribes returning with the Jews, and coalescing in one state; and moreover, at their certain stated feasts, they came from different parts of the world, and joined together in religious service; see Acts ii. but, upon the dissolution of their civil and church state, this friendly correspondence was broken off, and their communion with each other ceased: and as for the Jews, after the Christians were called out from among them at Jerusalem, and removed to Pella, they fell into intestine divisions and quarrels among themselves, which lasted during the siege of that city; and when it was taken and destroyed, their brotherhood and union among themselves were broken to such a degree, that they were scattered one from another; and now know not of what kingdom and tribe they are, whether of Judah or Israel, or of what tribe in either.

Ver. 15. *And the Lord said unto me,* &c.] The Prophet Zechariah: *take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd:* the meaning is, that the prophet should put on the habit of a shepherd, and take a scrip and staff in his hands, and represent a foolish shepherd, hereafter described.

Ver. 16. *For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land,* &c.] Not in the land of Judea, but in the Roman empire; and so not Herod, nor King Agrippa, as Kimchi; nor Antiochus Epiphanes, as others; nor those wicked priests and princes, who governed after the times of Zechariah; nor the Scribes and Pharisees in Christ's times, though they are often called fools by him, and were truly foolish shepherds; nor even Titus Vespasian, who destroyed the city and temple; nor Bar Cozba, who set up for the Messiah, and was a false one; or any other of that sort. Calmet [s] thinks this designs the Roman emperors, successors of Tiberius, under whom Jesus Christ was crucified. Caligula succeeded Tiberius, Claudius Caligula, and Nero succeeded Claudius: every one knows (adds he) the characters of those princes, that they were truly foolish shepherds, mad, wicked, and cruel: but rather it intends shepherd, or shepherds, not in a civil, but in an ecclesiastic sense; all such after Christ, who took upon them this office, but did not perform it aright, as heretics, false teachers, with which the first ages abounded; and especially it points at the bishop of Rome, and all under him, when he fell off from the true doctrine and discipline of the Gospel, the man of sin, or antichrist, as Jerom rightly observes; who, though his coming is according to the working of Satan, yet may be said to be raised up by the Lord, because he suffered him to rise; and by his secret providence, and wise ordination in righteous judgment, he came to the height of his power: with him agrees the name of a *shepherd;* he calls himself the vicar of Christ, the chief shepherd and bishop of souls; Peter's successor, who was ordered to feed the sheep and lambs of Christ; and universal pastor, and a single one, that will not admit of any associate. The character of a *foolish* one belongs to him, though he would be thought to be wise; nor is he wanting in wicked craft and cunning, but ignorant of the pastoral office, and how to feed the church of God; and is a wicked or evil shepherd, as the word [t] used is pretty much the same in sound with our English word *evil;* he governing the flock, not with and according to the word of God, but according to his own will and laws; for his *instruments* are laws of his own making, an exercise of tyrannical power over kings and princes, unwritten traditions, pardons, indulgences, *&c.:* which *shall not visit those that be cut off:* not that cut off themselves, or are cut off by the church; but such that go astray, wander from the fold, and are in danger of being lost; אובדות, that are perishing, as Jarchi explains the word; these he looks not after, nor has he any regard to their spiritual and eternal welfare: *neither shall seek the young one:* the lamb, the tender of the flock; he will not do as the good shepherd does, carry the lambs in his arms, Isa. xl. 11. or, *that which wanders* [u]; that strays from the fold, and out of the pastures, or the right way: *nor heal that that is broken;* that is of a broken and of a contrite spirit; or whose bones are broken, and consciences wounded, through falls into sin: *nor feed that that standeth still;* that can't move from its place to get fresh pasture, but is obliged to stay where it is, and needs supply and support there: *but he shall eat the flesh of the fat;* that is, as the Targum well explains it, "shall spoil the "substance of the rich;" see Rev. xviii. 3, 7: *and tear their claws in pieces;* take all their power and privileges from them; all which well agrees with the pope of Rome.

Ver. 17. *Woe to the idol-shepherd,* &c.] Or, *the shepherd of nothing* [w]; that is, no true shepherd, that is good for nothing, for an idol is nothing in the world, 1 Cor. viii. 4. and who is an idol himself, sits in the temple of God, and is worshipped as if he was God, 2 Thess. ii. 4. Rev. xiii. 4, 8, 15. and is an encourager and defender of idolatry: *that leaveth the flock;* has no regard to its spiritual concerns; does not feed it, but fleece it, and leaves it to the cruelty and avarice of his

[s] Dictionary, in the word *Shepherds.*
[t] אויל.
[u] הנער errantem, Noldius; quod præ ruditate evagatur, Cocceius.

[w] רעי האליל pastori nihili, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius. So R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 4. 2.

creatures under him: *the sword shall be upon his arm* with which he should feed the flock: *and upon his right eye* with which he should watch over it: *his arm shall be clean dried up*: his power shall be taken away from him; the antichristian states, which supported him, shall withdraw from him; the ten kings shall hate the whore, strip her naked, eat her flesh, and burn her with fire, Rev. xvii. 16: *and his right eye shall be utterly darkened*: not only given up to judicial blindness, which has been always his case; but his kingdom shall be full of darkness, Rev. xvi. 10. his hidden things of darkness shall be exposed; all his crafty schemes will be confounded; and all his wit, cunning, and subtlety, will cease; and every thing desirable to him will be taken away from him. His *arm* may denote his secular power, which shall be taken away from him: and his *right eye* his knowledge of the Scriptures, judgment in controversies, and infallibility pretended to by him, which will cease, even in the opinion of men. Ben Melech interprets it the eye of his heart or mind; and so Aben Ezra.

CHAP. XII.

THIS chapter contains a prophecy of the defence, protection, and salvation of the church of God; and of the effusion of the spirit; and of the conversion of the Jews in the latter day. It begins with a title and preface, describing the power of God, from the creation of the heavens and earth, and soul of man, ver. 1. then follows the subject-matter of the prophecy, in a way of judgment upon the enemies of the people of God, and in a way of salvation to them. The judgments on their enemies are signified by various metaphors; by Jerusalem's being a cup of trembling, a burdensome stone, and a hearth, and torch of fire to them, ver. 2, 3, 6. The effects of which are to them astonishment, madness, blindness, and utter destruction; and to the people of God confidence in him, salvation from him, and strength and protection by him, ver. 4, 5, 7, 8. and, at the same time that God will destroy all the enemies of his people, he will pour out his spirit upon his chosen ones among the Jews. The consequence of which will be, their faith in Christ, signified by looking to him whom they have pierced; and their repentance towards God, expressed by mourning; and this illustrated by mourning for an only and first-born son, ver. 9, 10. and which is further illustrated by the mourning for Josiah in the valley of Megiddon; and by an enumeration of the several families in Jerusalem, that should separately mourn on this account, ver. 11, 12, 13, 14.

Ver. 1. *The burden of the word of the Lord for Israel, &c.*] And against their enemies; for the good of the church of God, for its joy, comfort, and salvation; or, *concerning Israel* [x]; what shall befall them in the latter day, as the destruction of antichrist, prophesied of in the preceding chapter; and what is hereafter said may be believed that it shall be accomplished. The Lord is described in the greatness of his power, speaking as follows: *saith the Lord, which stretcheth forth the heavens*; as a curtain, Psal. civ. 2. the expanse or firmament of heaven, which is stretched out as a canopy over all the earth around: *and layeth the foundation of the earth*: firm and sure, though upon the seas and floods, yea, upon nothing, Psal. xxiv. 2. Job xxvi. 7: *and formeth the spirit of man within him*: the soul of man, with all its powers and faculties, gifts and endowments; which is of his immediate creation, and which he continues daily to form, and infuse into the bodies of men, and holds in life there; hence he is called the Father of spirits, Heb. xii. 9.

Ver. 2. *Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, &c.*] The Targum renders it, "a vessel full of inebriating liquor;" which intoxicates and makes giddy, and causes to tremble, stagger, and fall like a drunken man. The phrase denotes the punishment inflicted by the Lord upon the enemies of his church and people; see Isa. li. 22, 23: *when they shall be in the siege both against Judah* and *against* Jerusalem; not by Antiochus Epiphanes; nor by Titus Vespasian; nor by Gog and Magog, as Kimchi; but by the antichristian powers, especially the Mahometan nations, the Turks, which shall come against Jerusalem, when the Jews are returned thither, and resettled in their own land; see Ezek. xxxviii. 5, 6. The words should be rendered, *and upon Judah shall it be* [y], i. e. the cup of trembling, *in the siege against Jerusalem*; according to the Targum, and the Jewish commentators, the nations of the earth shall bring the men of Judah by force to join with them in the siege of Jerusalem; as, in the times of Antiochus, many of the Jews were drawn in to fight against their brethren; but the meaning is, that not only the wrath of God will come upon the Mahometan nations that shall besiege Jerusalem; but also on those who bear the Christian name, who are Jews outwardly, but not inwardly; and shall join with the Turks in distressing the people of the Jews upon their return to their own land: to besiege Judah, or a country, is not proper and pertinent: Jerusalem, when again in the hands of the Jews, according to this prophecy, only is to be besieged, as it will, by the Turks; and it should be observed, that it never was besieged by Antiochus, and therefore the prophecy can't be applied to his times, as it is by many.

Ver. 3. *And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people, &c.*] The Targum renders it *a stone of offence*; at which they shall stumble and fall; but it seems to design the immovableness of the state and condition of Jerusalem, that those who attempt to remove her out of her place, or to make any alteration in her happy circumstances, will not be able to do it, Psal. cxxv. 1. Jerom makes mention

[x] על de, Piscator, Drusius; super Israele, Cocceius, Burkius.

[y] וגם על יהודה יהיה & etiam super Jehudah erit, Pagninus, Montanus, Burkius.

of a custom in the cities of Palestine, and which continued to his times throughout all Judea, that large, huge, round stones, used to be placed in the towns and villages, which the youths exercised themselves with, by trying to lift them up as high as they could, by which they shewed their strength; and the same ancient writer observes that a like custom obtained in Greece; for he says he himself saw in the tower at Athens, by the image of Minerva, a globe of brass, of a very great weight, which he, through the weakness of his body, could not move; and asking the meaning of it, he was told that the strength of wrestlers was tried by it; and no man might be admitted a combatant, until it was known, by the lifting up of that weight, with whom he should be matched; and the throwing of the *discus* was an ancient military exercise, as old as the times of Homer, who speaks [z] of it; and is mentioned by Latin writers, as appears from some lines of Martial [a]; see 2 Maccab. iv. 14. and this, as it tried the strength of men, so it was sometimes dangerous to themselves, or to standers by, lest it should fall upon their heads: and as it was usual to defend themselves and oppress enemies by casting stones at them, so young men used to exercise themselves by lifting up and casting large stones; to which Virgil [b] sometimes refers; and it is well known that Abimelech was killed even by a woman casting a piece of a millstone upon his head, Judg. ix. 53. and such heavy stones, and the lifting of them up, in order to cast them, may be alluded to here: *all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces*: all that attempt to unsettle and remove it shall be pressed down with the weight of it, and be utterly destroyed: or, *shall be torn to pieces* [c]; as men's hands are cut and torn with rough and heavy stones. The Targum is, "all that "injure her shall be consumed;" which gives the sense of the passage: *though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it*: so safe and secure will the people of God be: he being a wall of fire round about them, and the glory in the midst of them.

Ver. 4. *In that day, saith the Lord, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness,* &c.] The meaning is, the enemies of God's people shall be astonished at the unsuccessfulness of their attempts, and be filled with fury and madness because they cannot accomplish their designs; and shall be at their wits' end, not knowing what course to take: perhaps reference is had to the Turkish armies, that shall be brought against Jerusalem to recover it into their possession, which generally consist of a large cavalry; see Rev. ix. 16, 17: *and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah*: which phrase is sometimes used, as expressive of the wrath of God against his enemies, Amos ix. 4, 8. and, if the house of Judah signifies the same as Judah, joined with the nations of the earth in the siege, ver. 2, it must be so understood here; but rather it seems to be different, and to intend those who will inhabit other parts of Judea, and who will be truly the people of God, Jews not only literally, but spiritually; and so is to be interpreted in a good sense, of the divine love to them, care of them, and protection over them; see Job xiv. 3. and so the Targum paraphrases it, "and upon those of the house "of Judah, I will reveal my power to do them good:" *and will smite every horse of the people with blindness*: that is, every rider of them, either with blindness of mind or body, or both. It may be, as the former smiting, mentioned in the beginning of the verse, respects the mind, this may regard the body; so that they shall not see their way, and their hands shall not perform their enterprise.

Ver. 5. *And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart,* &c.] The governors of the rest of the cities in Judea, besides Jerusalem, when they shall observe the armies of the people, their horses and their riders, smitten by the Lord, as above, shall take heart, and be of good courage: and secretly say within themselves, *the inhabitants of Jerusalem* shall be *my strength in the Lord of hosts their God*: that is, they, in the strength of the Lord, shall overcome their enemies, and so be the means of preserving and securing the other cities of Judah from destruction: the governors don't place their strength and confidence in the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but as they are strengthened in and by the Lord their God, from whom all strength, safety, and salvation come. In this and the following verse, by *the governors of Judah* are not meant Judas Maccabeus, and his brethren, as some think; for though there are some things in the context that seem to agree with them, and they may be an emblem of the governors in the times referred to, for their courage, bravery, and success; yet the thread of history, and series of prophecy, will not admit such a sense.

Ver. 6. *In that day will I make the governors of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood,* &c.] As a large hearth of fire, with wood all about it, devours and consumes it; so shall the governors of Judah be to the nations that shall come up against Jerusalem. The Targum renders it, "as a garment of fire among wood:" *and like a torch of fire in a sheaf*; of wheat, which presently destroys it; see Obad. ver. 18: *and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left*; on the south and on the north, as the Targum interprets it. The phrase denotes the utter destruction of the people on all sides: *and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place*, even *in Jerusalem*: upon that very spot of ground which was formerly called Jerusalem shall the city be built again, and inhabited; and shall continue, notwithstanding the attempts of all the nations of the earth to destroy it; see Jer. xxx. 18.

Ver. 7. *The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah first,* &c.] That is, the Jews, who will be in other parts of the land encamped in tents, to defend themselves against their enemies; these will be saved out of the hands of them, before the inhabitants of Jerusalem will be saved; and in such a manner, that it will evidently appear that their salvation is of the Lord: and his end

[z] Iliad. 9. & 23.
[a] Splendida cum volitent Spartani pondera disci
Este procul pueri; sit se mel ille nocens.—Epigr. l. 14. Ep. 157.
[b] Certabant Troes contra defendere saxis.—Æneid. l. 9.
Hi jaculis, illi certant defendere saxis.—Æneid. l. 10.—Vid. Lydium de Re Militari, l. 5. c. 2. p. 178, 179. & Menochium de Republica Hebr. l. 6. col. 555, 556.
[c] שרוט ישרטו incidendo incidentur, Montanus, Burkius; lacerando lacerabuntur, Pagninus, Cocceius.

in so doing will be, *that the glory of the house of David, and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, do not magnify* themselves *against Judah*: lest the chief of the family of David, and the principal inhabitants of Jerusalem, should glory over their brethren in other parts of Judea; and say it was owing to them that they were saved and delivered out of the hands of their enemies.

Ver. 8. *In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem*, &c.] As with a shield against their enemies; and such is the Lord to all his people: he is their shield to protect them; he keeps and guards them by his power; he encompasses them about with his favour, as with a shield; and gives unto them the shield of salvation; all which will eminently appear to be the case of the Jews at this time: *and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David*; they that have the most fearful hearts, and feeble minds, shall be as courageous, as valiant, and as victorious as David; and they that are the weakest, in a spiritual sense, in the grace and in the doctrine of faith, and in that part of it, respecting the use of things indifferent, who are ready to be *offended, stumble*, and *fail*[d]; for the spiritual reign, which will at this time take place, will not be a state of perfection; even those will be like David, beloved of the Lord, kings as well as priests unto God, and as strong in faith as he: *and the house of David* shall be *as God*: the stronger sort of believers among them, such as are strong in the Lord, in the grace of faith, and in the doctrines of the Gospel; they shall have much of God with them, great grace upon them, and be like unto him in goodness, truth, and holiness: or they shall be like *Elohim*, the angels, as this word is rendered, Psal. viii. 5. for knowledge, purity, and readiness to do the will of God; and it follows: *as the Angel of the Lord before them*: that is, as Christ, who is the Angel of the covenant, and of the divine Presence; and in whom the name of the Lord is; who is at the head of his people, and goes before them, as their Leader and Commander, and the Captain of salvation, Mic. ii. 13. whose image they bear, and into which they are changed from glory to glory by the spirit of God; and which will now be very clearly discerned upon the saints in the latter-day glory. Kimchi and Ben Melech, by *the house of David*, understand the King Messiah[e], who was to be of the seed of David; and so does Coccejus, who takes the *as* to be a note, not of similitude, but of truth, he being truly God, and the Angel of Jehovah. The Targum is, "the house of David shall be like great men or "princes that shall prosper, as the Angel of God "before them."

Ver. 9. *And it shall come to pass in that day*, &c.] So often mentioned in this chapter; by which is meant the latter part of the Gospel dispensation, the spiritual reign of Christ: that *I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem*: and shall destroy them. The whole of this paragraph seems to refer to the same as in Ezek. xxxviii. 39.

Ver. 10. *And I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem*, &c.] The Jews that belong to the family of Christ, and to the heavenly Jerusalem, the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven: *the Spirit of grace and of supplications*: by which is meant the Holy Spirit of God, who is called *the Spirit of grace*: not merely because he is good and gracious, and loving to his people, and is of grace given unto them; but because he is the author of all grace in them; of gracious convictions, and spiritual illuminations; of quickening, regenerating, converting, and sanctifying grace; and of all particular graces, as faith, hope, love, fear, repentance, humility, joy, peace, meekness, patience, long-suffering, self-denial, *&c.*: as well as because he is the revealer, applier, and witnesser of all the blessings of grace unto them: and he is called *the Spirit of supplications*; because he endites the prayers of his people, shews them their wants, and stirs them up to pray; enlarges their hearts, supplies them with arguments, and puts words into their mouths; gives faith, fervency, and freedom, and encourages to come to God as their Father, and makes intercession for them, according to the will of God: pouring it upon them denotes the abundance and freeness of his grace; see Isa. xliv. 3: *and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced*; by nailing him to the tree at his crucifixion; and especially by piercing his side with a spear; which, though not personally done by them, yet by their ancestors, at least through their instigation and request; and besides, as he was pierced and wounded for their sins, so by them: and now, being enlightened and convicted by the spirit of God, they shall look to him by faith for the pardon of their sins, through his blood; for the justification of their persons by his righteousness; and for eternal life and salvation through him. We Christians can have no doubt upon us that this passage belongs to Christ, when it is observed, upon one of the soldiers piercing the side of Jesus with a spear, it is said, *these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled; they shall look on him whom they have pierced*: and it seems also to be referred to in Rev. i. 7. yea, the Jews themselves, some of them, acknowledge it is to be understood of the Messiah. In the Talmud[f], mention being made of the mourning afterspoken of, it is asked, what this mourning was made for? and it is replied, R. Dosa and the Rabbins are divided about it: one says, for Messiah ben Joseph, who shall be slain; and another says, for the evil imagination, that shall be slain; it must be granted to him that says, for Messiah the son of Joseph that shall be slain; as it is written, *and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn*, &c. for, for the other, why should they mourn? hence Jarchi and Kimchi on the place say, our Rabbins interpret this of Messiah the son of Joseph, who shall be slain; and the note of Aben Ezra is, all the nations shall look unto me, to see what I will do to those who have pierced Messiah the son of Joseph. Grotius observes, that Hadarsan on Gen. xxviii. understands it of Messiah the son of David. The Jews observing some prophecies speaking of the Messiah in a state of humiliation, and others of him in an exalted state, have coined this

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[d] נכשל lapsabundus, ad lapsum propensus, proprie qui facile offendit, Drusius; corruens, Montanus; collapsus, Burkius.

[e] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. c. 26. p. 307.

[f] T. Bab. Succah, fol. 52. 1.

notion of two Messiahs, which are easily reconciled without it. The Messiah here prophesied of appears to be both God and man; a divine Person called Jehovah, who is all along speaking in the context, and in the text itself; for none else could pour out the spirit of grace and supplication: and yet he must be man, to be pierced; and the same is spoken of, that would do the one, and suffer the other: and therefore must be the Θεάνθρωπος, or God-man in one person. As to what a Jewish writer[g] objects, that this was spoken of one that was pierced in war, as appears from the context; and that if the same person that is pierced is to be looked to, then it would have been said, *and mourn for me, and be in bitterness for me*; it may be replied, that this prophecy does not speak of the piercing this person at the time when the above wars shall be: but of the Jews mourning for him at the time of their conversion, who had been pierced by them, that is, by their ancestors, hundreds of years ago: which now they will with contrition remember, they having assented to it, and commended it as a right action: and as for the change from the first person to the third, this is not at all unusual in Scripture: *and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only* son; or, *for this*[h]; that is, piercing him; for sin committed against him; because of their rejection of him, their hardness of heart, and unbelief with respect to him; and on account of their many sins, which were the occasion of his being pierced; which mourning will arise from, and be increased by, a spiritual sight of him, a sense of his love to them, and a view of benefits by him. Evangelical repentance springs from faith, and is accompanied with it; and this godly sorrow is like that which is expressed for an only son; see Amos viii. 10. Luke vii. 12. and indeed Christ is the only-begotten of the Father, as well as the first-born among many brethren, as follows: *and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born*: sin is a bitter thing, and makes work for bitter repentance.

Ver. 11. *In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, &c.*] Great numbers being awakened, convinced, and converted, and brought to true repentance: *as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.* Lightfoot[i] thinks the prophet alludes to the two great and general lamentations of Israel; the one about the rock Rimmon, where a whole tribe was come to 400 (it should be 600) men, Judg. xx. 47. and may be rendered, *the sad shout of Rimmon*; and the other in the valley of Megiddo, for the death of Josiah. Some take Hadadrimmon to be the name of a man, as Aben Ezra; and the Targum and Jarchi say who he was, and also make two mournings to be alluded to[k]; paraphrasing the words thus, "at that time mourning "shall be multiplied in Jerusalem, as the mourning of "Ahab the son of Omri, whom Hadadrimmon the "son of Tabrimmon slew in Ramoth-gilead; and as "the mourning of Josiah, the son of Amon, whom "Pharaoh-necho, or the lame, slew in the valley of "Megiddo:" and so the Syriac version renders it, "as the mourning of the son of Amon in the valley "of Megiddo." Of the first of these, see 1 Kings xxii. 31—37. and of the latter, 2 Kings xxiii. 29. according to Jerom, it was the name of a place in the valley of Megiddo, near to Jezreel; and which, in his time, went by the name of Maximianopolis, called so in honour of the Emperor Maximian; it was seventeen miles from Cæsarea in Palestine, and ten miles from Jezreel[l]; and mention is made by Jewish[m] writers of the valley of Rimmon, in which place the elders intercalated the year; though Jerom elsewhere[n] says, that Adadrimon was a king, the son of Tabrimmon, who reigned at Carchemish, whom Pharaoh-necho slew at the same time he slew Josiah. Both words, Hadad, or Adad, and Rimmon, are names of idols with the Syrians.

Ver. 12. *And the land shall mourn, &c.*] That is, the inhabitants of it; not only Jerusalem, but the land of Judea, and the people in it everywhere: in the Talmud[o] 'tis said, this is the mourning of the Messiah, that is, on his account: *every family apart*; though the mourning will be general and public, yet it will be not in a body of the whole people together, but separate and distinct: *the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart*; the men by themselves, and the women by themselves, which is according to the custom of the Jews in public worship; those that belong to the family of David shall mourn because of the Jews' long rejection of the King Messiah, Jesus the Son of David, the Saviour, whom God raised up of his seed: *the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart*; not of Nathan the son of David, the brother of Solomon, as some think: for, as Aben Ezra observes, he and his family are comprehended in the family of David; but of Nathan the prophet, who will mourn because the Jews have so much slighted Jesus the great Prophet, the Lord raised up in Israel, his doctrines and ordinances.

Ver. 13. *The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart, &c.*] Because of the contempt of the priestly office of Christ, which theirs prefigured, and was abolished by his; because of their trampling upon his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice: *the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart*; not of Shimea the son of David, 1 Chron. iii. 5. as Jarchi thinks, for his family is comprehended in the family of David; nor of Shimei the son of Merari, and grandson of Levi, 1 Chron vi. 16, for the same reason: some think that, by way of prophecy, the family of Semei, mentioned among the progenitors of Christ, Luke iii. 26, is intended; and others have thought of Shammai, a famous Misnic doctor in the times of Christ, whose disciples were called the house or family of Shammai, of which frequent mention is made in the Misna and Talmud: but the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read *the family of Simeon*: mentioned together with Levi, as brethren in iniquity, and now mourn for the common concern they had in the crucifixion of Christ, and their refusal of him.

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[g] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. c. 36. p. 309.

[h] עליו super hoc, Junius & Tremellius; propter hoc, Gussetius; super illo, Piscator, Cocceius.

[i] Works, vol. 1. p. 46.

[k] Vid. T. Bab. Megillah, fol. 3. 1. & Gloss. in ib. & Moed Katon, fol. 28. 2.

[l] Vid. Reland. Palestina Illustrata, tom. 2. p. 892.

[m] T. Hieros. Chagigah, fol. 78. 4.

[n] Trad. Heb. fol. 86. 1.

[o] T. Hieros. Succah, fol. 55. 2.

Ver. 14. *All the families that remain*, &c.] That will be in being in those times: *every family apart, and their wives apart*; for the whole nation shall be born at once, and converted, and all Israel shall be saved, Isa. lxvi. 8. Rom. xi. 26.

CHAP. XIII.

IN this chapter are prophecies concerning the purification of the penitent Jews before spoken of; the removal of idols, and false prophets, out of the earth; the death of Christ; the destruction of the greater part of men, and the salvation of a few of them. The cleansing of such that mourn for sin, in a fountain opened for that purpose, is spoken of, ver. 1. the utter abolition of idols, and false prophets, and unclean spirits, is affirmed, ver. 2. the parents of false prophets will forbid them to prophesy; they themselves will be ashamed of their visions; they'll throw off the rough garment, which was a token of their being prophets, and by which they deceived: they'll confess they are no prophets, and what they are, and own the wounds they have received from their friends on that account, ver. 3, 4, 5, 6. and whereas the Messiah, as pierced and crucified, is spoken of in the preceding chapter, whose blood is the cleansing fountain mentioned in this, an account is given of his death; who is described by his office, the Shepherd of the Lord; and by his natures, human and divine, the Man his fellow; his death is signified by smiting with the sword, which was done by the order of the Lord; the consequences of which were the scattering of the sheep, and the turning of the hand of the Lord upon them in a way of mercy, ver. 7. and then it is declared that two parts in three of the land should be cut off, and a third part saved, but yet so as by fire, whom the Lord would own as his people, and they should acknowledge him to be their God, ver. 8, 9.

Ver. 1. *In that day there shall be a fountain opened*, &c.] Which Aben Ezra and Kimchi understand literally; but R. Moses the priest figuratively; and so the Targum, which interprets it of the doctrine of the law being open as a fountain of water; and so Abendana, who compares it with Isa. ii. 3. but rather it should be understood of the preaching of the Gospel, and the administration of Gospel ordinances; though better of Christ himself, the fountain of gardens, and of living waters, from whose pierced side, of whom mention is made as pierced in the preceding chapter, sprung blood and water; blood for justification, remission, and cleansing, and water for sanctification: and best of all of his blood particularly, called a *fountain*, not so much for the quantity of blood shed, as for its full virtue and efficacy to answer the purposes for which it was shed; it being the blood not only of man, and of an innocent man, but of the Son of God; and may be said to be *opened*, because of its continued virtue to cleanse from sin; it is not sealed, but opened, and always stands open; there is no hinderance or obstruction in coming to it; not the meanness or poverty of persons, they that have no money may come to these waters; nor their sinfulness, even though they are the chief of sinners; nor their being of this and the other nation, it is exposed to all; to all that the Father has given to Christ; to all sensible sinners: though it follows, *to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem*; for this, as it may be literally understood of the Jews in the latter day, including their great men and common people, high and low, rich and poor; so mystically of all the family of Christ the son of David, and of all that belong to the heavenly Jerusalem, even the whole church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven: *for sin, and for uncleanness*: that is, for sin, which is uncleanness; sin is an unclean thing, and has defiled all human nature, and nothing can remove the pollution of it; but the blood of Christ can remove it, and that being shed makes atonement for it, procures the pardon of it, and justifies from it in the sight of God; and being sprinkled on the conscience, removes it from that. The Targum interprets it mystically of the forgiveness of sins, paraphrasing it thus, "I will forgive their "iniquities, as they are cleansed with the water of "sprinkling, and the ashes of the heifer, which is for "sin."

Ver. 2. *And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts*, &c.] In the latter day, at the time of the conversion of the Jews, when they shall turn to the Lord, and their sins shall be forgiven, and washed away in the fountain of his blood; for this refers not to the times of the Babylonish captivity, and their deliverance from that, which was now over, when idolatry ceased among that people; nor to the times of Christ, when soon after the false prophets among the Heathens, and their lying oracles, ceased, and Paganism in the Roman empire was destroyed; but to the times before mentioned, of which it is predicted by the Lord, saying, that *I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered*; meaning the idols of gold, silver, brass, and wood; images of the Virgin Mary, and saints departed, worshipped by the Papists, Rev. ix. 20, 21. for at this time mystical Babylon will fall, the idolatry of the church of Rome will be at an end, and will never be revived more: *and also I will cause the prophets, and the unclean spirit, to pass out of the land*: by *the prophets* are meant false prophets, as the Targum explains it, even all the Popish hierarchy, pope, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, &c. all that wretched body, which goes by the name of the false prophet, who at the battle of Armageddon will be taken, and with the beast cast alive into the lake of fire, Rev. xix. 20. and by *the unclean spirit*, or *spirits*, the singular for the plural, are meant the three unclean spirits like frogs, and which are the spirits of devils, that come out of the mouth of the dragon, beast, and false prophet, the jesuits, monks, and friars; these shall be no more then on the earth, after these times, Rev. xvi. 13, 14. Jarchi and Kimchi interpret *the unclean spirit* of the corruption of nature; but that will not cease as long as men are in a mortal state. This

prophecy is, by the ancient Jews[z], applied to the times of the Messiah.

Ver. 3. *And it shall come to pass*, that *when any shall yet prophesy*, &c.] Or attempt to prophesy, or propagate their idolatrous religion and principles after this time, when they shall be abundantly detected and exposed: *then his father and his mother that begat him*, of whom he is born, and who, as his parents, must be supposed to have the most tender regard unto him, even to these the imposture will be so flagrant, that they will not encourage him, but, on the contrary, *shall say unto him, thou shalt not live*; but die, according to the law against the false prophet in Deut. xviii. 20: *for thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord*: which is the very character of the followers of the man of sin, who speak lies in hypocrisy, pretending that they are of God, and carrying a shew of truth, religion, and holiness, 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2: *and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth*: so great will be their love to God, and to his truth, that, notwithstanding the nearness of blood, their hands will be upon him first, and either beat him, or put him to death; a son, according to the law, not being to be spared in such a case, Deut. xiii. 6—10.

Ver. 4. *And it shall come to pass in that day*, that *the prophets shall be ashamed, every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied*, &c.] He shall be ashamed of the doctrines he has delivered, they will appear to all men so ridiculous and absurd; as the doctrines of merit, and the works of supererogation; of transubstantiation and purgatory; of pardons, penance, &c: *neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive*; or, *a hairy garment*[a]; such as the first and ancient inhabitants of the earth wore, who used the skins of beasts for covering, as Diodorus Siculus[b] observes: and Pausanias[c] says of the first natives of Locris, not knowing how to weave and make garments, used to cover their bodies, to preserve them from the cold, with the undressed skins of beasts, turning the hair outward, as more becoming: and such a hairy garment, or much like it, Elijah wore; hence he is called a hairy man, 2 Kings i. 8. and John the Baptist, who came in the power and spirit of that prophet, appeared in a like habit, clothed with camel's hair, Matt. iii. 4. and in like manner good men, especially in times of distress and trouble, used to wander about in sheepskins and goatskins, Heb. xi. 37. which seem to be the same sort of raiment: and now, in imitation of such-like good men, and true prophets of the Lord, particularly Elijah, the false prophets, as Jarchi and Kimchi observe, in order to deceive the people, and pass for true prophets, put on such rough and hairy garments, as if they were very humble and self-denying men. Braunius[d] thinks the prophet may have respect to a custom among the idolatrous prophets, who used to clothe themselves with the skins of the sacrifices, and lie on them in their temples, in order to obtain dreams, and be able to foretel future things; of which see the note on Amos ii. 8. but it seems to have respect to the habits of the monks and friars, and of the different orders by which they are distinguished as religious persons, and gain respect and veneration among men; and under the guise of sanctity and devotion, and of an austere and mortified life, impose their lies and deceptions upon them; but now will lay their habits aside, as being ashamed of their profession and principles.

Ver. 5. *But he shall say, I am no prophet*, &c.] That he is not of the Romish clergy, or of any of their religious orders, having laid aside his habit: *I am an husbandman*: he shall put on the habit of a husbandman, and work for his bread; for he'll not be able to support himself, as before, with the sale of pardons and indulgences, and by praying souls out of purgatory; for no man hereafter will buy of his merchandise, Rev. xviii. 11. and he'll be ashamed of his former calling and traffic, and will not own that he was ever concerned therein: but will affirm that he was never of the Romish clergy, but always a layman, and employed in husbandry: *for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth*: he will say he was brought up to husbandry, or in some mechanic business, from his youth, and never was in any convent or monastery, or of any religious order: it may be rendered, *for man made me to work from my youth*[e]; and is not to be restrained to keeping cattle, or any particular employment.

Ver. 6. *And one shall say unto him, what are these wounds in thine hands?* &c.] That is, if thou art not a prophet, what's the meaning of these wounds in thine hands? which design either those his father and mother had given him, when they thrust him through for being a false prophet, ver. 3. or the mark of the beast he received in his right hand, which he was obliged to take when he entered into holy orders, Rev. xiii. 9, 16, 17. or the wounds and stripes he gave himself, in the exercise of his superstition and will-worship: *then he shall answer*, those *with which I was wounded in the house of my friends*: he will pretend that these were wounds he had privately in his father's family, by way of correction, for not doing his civil and secular business as he ought to have done; or he shall be obliged to confess the mark of the beast on him; or that these were wounds he had given himself in the temples and churches, dedicated to angels and saints, his patrons, friends, and lovers; with whom he committed spiritual adultery or idolatry, and before whose images and shrines he had cut and given himself these wounds and gashes, to the great dishonour of Christ, as if his crucifixion and wounds were of no avail; wherefore his sufferings and death are next spoken of: and some understand these words of Christ, introduced after this manner: the prophet having spoken of the false prophet, thrust through by his parents, because that Christ would be reckoned a false prophet and impostor by his countrymen the Jews, and be crucified by them as such, represents the Jews as upbraiding him with his crucifixion, which they suggest he righteously suffered, for seducing their nation: to which he replies, that indeed he was crucified, and thereby wounded with the nails drove into his hands and feet; and this usage he met with from those of his own nation, and

[z] Zohar in Gen. fol. 52. 4. & 73. 1.
[a] אדרת שער pallio pili, Montanus; piloso, Pagninus; chlamyde pilosa, Munster; pallium ex pilis, Cocceius; pallium pili, Burkius.
[b] Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 21.
[c] Phocica, sive l. 10. p. 685.
[d] De Vestitu Sacerdot. Heb. l. 1. c. 4. sect. 9. p. 97.
[e] הקנני fecerunt me operari, Noldius; homo operari fecit me, De Dieu, Burkius.

who pretended to be the friends of the Messiah, and to expect his coming, and this at or near Jerusalem, where was the temple or house of God; but all this he endured, not for any crime he had been guilty of, but according to the counsel and will, purpose and decree, of God; whereby he was appointed the Shepherd of the flock; the Mediator between God and man; the Saviour of his people; and to die such a death, in order to obtain salvation for them; which counsel and will of God are clearly and strongly expressed in the following verse: and to this sense Capellus interprets the words.

Ver. 7. *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd,* &c.] Not Judas Maccabeus, slain in battle by Bacchis[w], as Grotius fancies; but Christ, Jehovah's Shepherd; for these are the words of Jehovah the Father, concerning his Son, whom he calls *my Shepherd*; because he has a property in him, as well as in the flock; and he was chosen, called, set up, and sent as such by him; on whom he laid the strayings of all the sheep; and who as such died and rose again, and is accountable to his divine Father for the flock committed to him: by *the sword* awoke against him are meant either the sorrows and afflictions of Christ, which, like a sword, pierced through his soul; or the violent death he was put to, being stricken and cut off for the transgressions of his people; or the Jews, who were the instruments of it; so wicked men are called, Psal. xvii. 13. or rather the glittering sword of justice, which was drawn against him, and sheathed in him; which is called upon to *awake*, it seeming as though it was asleep; it having been a long time since the first sin of Adam was committed, in which all his posterity was concerned, and for which satisfaction to divine justice must be made; and longer still since Christ became a surety, and engaged to do it; moreover, it was a great while since it was promised that he should come, and be smitten and wounded for sin; and, after he was come into the world, it was some time before the orders were given to this sword to awake against him: even *against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts*; the human nature of Christ is signified by *the man*; not that he was really man before his incarnation, only in the purpose and covenant of God; and he often appearing in a human form; and the Scripture speaking of things future as present; though here it regards him in the days of his flesh, and as suffering: his divine nature is expressed by being *the fellow* of the Lord of hosts; not only being near to him in place and affection, but his equal, being truly a divine Person; of the same nature, glory, and majesty, with him[x], though distinct from him; and so fit to be the Shepherd of the flock: *smite the Shepherd*; the order is given to the sword of justice, by the Lord of hosts, to smite the Messiah, the Shepherd, even unto death: this was according to his purpose; was his will of command; agreeable to his mind; what he took a kind of pleasure in, and in which he had a hand himself; for it is rendered *I will smite*, Matt. xxvi. 31: *and the sheep shall be scattered*; particularly the apostles, who, upon the seizure of Christ, were scattered from him, and one another, whereby this prophecy was fulfilled, Matt. xxvi. 31, 56: *and I will turn my hand upon the little ones*: the same with the sheep, the disciples of Christ[y]; yea, all that Christ died for, and to whom God is gracious for his sake; even all the little ones that believe in him; who are few in number, little in their own sight, and contemptible in the eyes of the world; pusillanimous, fearful, and of little faith, as the apostles of Christ were at the time he died: on these the Lord turned his hand; not his chastising hand, though that is sometimes on the saints; much less his hand of justice, which was laid on Christ, and it would have been unjust to have laid it on sinner and surety both; but his hand of grace and mercy, power and protection; which was upon the apostles in their ministrations, succeeding them to the conversion of sinners, and preserving them from their enemies; and all the elect are saved in consequence of the death of Christ, and redemption by him. Aben Ezra says this prophecy refers to the great wars which shall be in all the earth in the times of Messiah ben Joseph; but they regard the times of Christ the son of David, who is already come. The Targum is, "be revealed, O "sword, against the king, and against the ruler his "companion, who is like unto him;" and Jarchi interprets it of the king of Moab; and Aben Ezra of every king of the nations that shall in the above times reign over the earth, who thinks himself to be as God: which sense Kimchi approves of, and observes, that the *little ones* are governors and princes, who are less than kings: and another Jewish writer[z] says the sense is, awake, O sword, against the king of Ishmael, who is called the king of the Turks (the grand seignior), that rules over Asia and Africa; which are more than three-fourths of the world, and the greater part of the Jewish nation are in captivity under his hand; him God calls his Shepherd, because he hath given into his hand to feed his flock in their captivity, and this flock is the nation of Israel; and he is called the man his fellow, because he thinks himself, through the pride and haughtiness of his heart, to be as God; and upon the ruin of this prince, he supposes, will be the deliverance of the Jews, who, being scattered into several parts, will, in separate bodies, return to their own land: and by the *little ones* he thinks are meant the kings of the nations of Edom, or of the Roman nations, which are the lesser pastors of the sheep. Manasseh ben Israel[a] makes mention of the same exposition of the passage, but is of opinion that the words are rather to be understood of the pope of Rome, who calls himself a pastor, and next to God, and his vicar on earth; and against him and those like to him, inferior in power, God will make war. But much more agreeable, and very remarkable, are the words of R. Samuel Marochianus[b], who, writing of the coming of the Messiah, says, "I fear, O my Lord, that "that which Zechariah the prophet said, *I will smite* "*the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered*, was fulfilled when we smote the Shepherd of

[w] Vid. Joseph. Antiqu. l. 12. c. 11. sect. 2.

[x] עמית socius, proximus; speciatim tribuitur Messiæ, qui patri æterno est conjunctissimus & intimus, cum sit ejusdem numero essentiæ, gloriæ, et majestatis cum eo. Stockius, p. 794.

[y] So Stockius, p. 912.

[z] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. c. 37. p. 310, 311.

[a] De Resurrect. Mort. l. 3. c. 5. sect. 5. p. 299.

[b] Apud Burkium in loc. e Mallero.

"those little ones and holy apostles." Moreover, it may be observed, that the word for *little ones* sometimes signifies great ones, as Mr. Pocock[f] has observed, and particularly in this text; which, according to the sense some give of it, mentioned by R. Tanchum, is, *I will turn mine hand upon the illustrious and the princes*, and not *upon the little ones*, as commonly understood; and which he takes to be the best of the expositions adduced: and with this agree the several oriental versions; some copies of the Septuagint read, *upon the shepherds*; and so the Arabic version; and the Syriac version renders it, *the superiors*; and so may very well be applied to the apostles of Christ, who were in the highest office in the church, and shepherds of the flock: on whom, after the death of Christ, God turned his hand of power, which was upon them, and was with them in their ministrations, making them successful wherever they went; and also his hand of providence was upon them, protecting and preserving them, until they had done the work they were sent about. After this prophecy concerning the Messiah, occasionally inserted here, the prophet returns to his prediction of the state of the church, and what shall befall it in the latter day.

Ver. 8. *And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord*, &c.] Either in all the land of Israel, as Kimchi interprets it; or rather in all the world, as Aben Ezra and others; for this prophecy seems to have respect, not to the calamities of the Jews at the destruction of Jerusalem, after the death of Christ, when a few were saved, a remnant according to the election of grace, yet so as by fire, for whose sake the days of tribulation were shortened; but to the external state of the church, and the trouble of it throughout Christendom, about the time of the destruction of antichrist: *two parts therein shall be cut off and die*; all hypocrites, formalists, and outward-court worshippers; who seem as if they would be at this time two-thirds of the professors of true religion; who will not be able to stand the hour of temptation that will come upon all the earth, to try the inhabitants of it; which will be the last struggle of the beast of Rome, Rev. iii. 10. but will be twice dead, plucked up by the roots; will die to the profession of religion, and be cut off from the people of God, and have no more a name with them: *but the third shall be left therein*: the few names in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments; the hundred forty and four thousand that will stand with Christ, and by him, on Mount Zion, being redeemed from among men, Rev. iii. 4. and xiv. 1, 4. compare with this Rev. xvi. 19.

Ver. 9. *And I will bring the third part through the fire*, &c.] Into tribulation, as the Targum explains it; or into great distresses, comparable to fire, as Kimchi observes; this is the hour of temptation that will be in the Philadelphian church-state, Rev. iii. 10. Daniel's time of trouble, such as there never was since there was a nation, Dan. xii. 1. and the time of the slaying of the witnesses, Rev. xi. 7, 8, 9: *and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried*: their graces, principles, and profession, will be tried; their dross and tin will be removed, and they will be purged and purified; a more pure and glorious state of the church will take place, in which there will be great purity of Gospel worship, discipline, and conversation; when the word will be more purely preached, the ordinances more purely administered, and the saints will live more holy lives and conversations, signified by the witnesses ascending up into heaven, Rev. xi. 12: *they shall call on my name*: which includes the whole of divine worship, and particularly designs prayer, that pure offering and incense, which shall now be offered to the name of the Lord in every place, Mal. i. 11. hence it follows, *and I will hear them*: accept their prayers, and give an answer to them: so the Targum paraphrases the words, "he shall pray in my name, "and I will receive his prayer:" *I will say, it is my people*: the Lord will make it appear to themselves and others that they are his special, peculiar, and covenant people, by calling them out of Babylon; by bestowing his favours upon them; and by granting his presence with them, as well as by the witnessings of his spirit to them; see Rev. xviii. 4. and xix. 1: *and they shall say, the Lord is my God*: they shall know him to be their covenant God and Father, and claim their interest in him, and acknowledge him as such; which is the greatest happiness that can be enjoyed, Psal. cxliv. 15. Rev. xxi. 3.

CHAP. XIV.

THIS chapter treats of the coming of Christ with all his saints, and his personal appearance among them; and of the signs of the times before that; and of what shall befall the enemies of the church, both open and secret; and of the happy state and condition of the church itself. First there will be a time of great affliction to the people of God, ver. 1, 2. when the Lord will appear and fight for them, and will appear to them, and with them, ver. 3, 4, 5. but before this time it will be an uncommon season, neither day nor night; at the close of which, light will break forth, ver. 6, 7. the Gospel will be spread far and near, attended with the spirit and grace of God in great plenty, ver. 8. which will bring on the spiritual reign of Christ over all the earth, ver. 9. particularly the land of Judea, and the city of Jerusalem, shall be inhabited by men with safety, ver. 10, 11. and all those that oppose and fight against the Lord's people shall be destroyed, partly by an immediate plague from the Lord upon them, and partly by the hands of one another, and also by the saints of the most High; and the plague shall not only be upon their persons, but upon their cattle likewise, ver. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. and as for those that profess the Christian name, and yet neglect or refuse to worship the Lord in a spiritual and evangelical manner, there shall be no rain upon them, ver. 17, 18, 19. and

[f] Not. Miscell. in Port. Mosis, c. 2. p. 19.

as for the church and people of God, there shall be universal holiness among them, and not a single Canaanite to be found in the midst of them, ver. 20, 21.

Ver. 1. *Behold, the day of the Lord cometh*, &c.] Or the day when the Lord will come, both in his spiritual and personal reign; for this is not to be understood of his first coming in the flesh, at which time none of the things after mentioned happened; nor of his coming to take vengeance on the Jews; but rather of his coming to convert them: *and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee*: not the substance of the nations, divided by the Israelites in the midst of Jerusalem, as the Targum and Jarchi interpret it; but the spoil of Jerusalem, when taken by the enemy, as is after said, which should be divided by them with great joy and triumph, in the midst of it: this refers not to the spoil of Jerusalem by Antiochus or the Romans, but to the slaying of the witnesses, and the triumph of their enemies over them, Rev. xi. 7, 10. or else to the spoil and prey the Turks will come to Jerusalem for, when it shall be in the possession of the Jews; and who perhaps at first will have some success; see Ezek. xxxviii. 12, 13.

Ver. 2. *For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle*, &c.] Meaning not the Romans, in the time of Vespasian, for they were not all nations; nor did a part of the city only go into captivity then, but the whole; nor did any remain in it: it seems right to refer it to the gathering of the kings of the earth to the battle of the Lord God Almighty at Armageddon, Rev. xvi. 14—16. unless it may be thought better to interpret it of the vast numbers, out of several nations, the Turk will bring against Jerusalem, to dispossess the Jews of it, by whom it will be again inhabited in the latter day; see Ezek. xxxviii. 4—8. and Kimchi interprets it of the Gog and Magog army. The Jews, in their ancient Midrashes[d], apply it to the times of the Messiah; which is true, if understood not of the first times of the Messiah, whose coming they vainly expect, but of the last times of the Messiah. *And the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished, and half of the city shall go into captivity*: this will be the time when the outward court shall be given to the Gentiles, the Papists; the two witnesses shall be slain, and their enemies shall rejoice and send gifts to one another, Rev. xi. 2, 7, 10. this will be a trying season, and such a time of trouble as has not been known: *and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city*: there will be a remnant according to the election of grace; the city, the church, shall not be wholly extinct; Christ will reserve a seed for himself in those very worst of times, as he has always done: this cannot refer to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, for then all the inhabitants of the city were cut off, or carried captive, and none left; but, if literally to be understood, must refer to what will be, when the army of Gog shall come against it in the latter day; though these circumstances are not mentioned in Ezekiel.

Ver. 3. *Then shall the Lord go forth*, &c.] Out of his place in heaven, either in person, or by the display of his power; that is, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose name is called the Word of God, and is the King of kings, and Lord of lords, described as a mighty warrior, Rev. xix. 11, &c.: *and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle*: the Targum adds, *at the Red sea*: when the Lord fought for Israel against the Egyptians, Exod. xiv. 25. and afterwards against the Canaanites, when they entered the land of Canaan under Joshua: thus Christ shall judge, and make war in righteousness, and overcome those that shall make war with him; and with the sharp sword that goeth out of his mouth shall smite nations, and with a rod of iron rule them, and break them to shivers, Rev. xiv. 14. and xix. 11. 15, and ii. 27. see also Ezek. xxxviii. 21, 22, and xxxix. 1, 3, 4.

Ver. 4. *And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives*, &c.] Where he often was in the days of his flesh, and from whence he ascended to heaven, Luke xxi. 37, and xxiii. 29. Acts ii. 12. but here he did not appear at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem; wherefore this must refer to a time to come; and seeing it is certain that he will stand in the latter day on the earth, at the time of the resurrection, and will come down from heaven in like manner as he went up; it seems very probable that he will descend upon that very spot of ground from whence he ascended, Job xix. 25, 26, 27. Acts i. 11, 12. The Jews[e] have a notion, that, at the general resurrection of the dead, the mount of Olives will cleave asunder, and those of their nation, who have been buried in other countries, will be rolled through the caverns of the earth, and come out from under that mountain. This is what they call *gilgul hammetim*, the rolling of the dead; and *gilgul hammechiloth*, the rolling through the caverns. So they say in the Targum of Cant. viii. 5. " when the dead shall live, the mount " of Olives shall be cleaved asunder, and all the dead " of Israel shall come out from under it; yea, even the " righteous, which die in captivity, shall pass through " subterraneous caverns, and come from under the " mount of Olives." This is sometimes[f] represented as very painful to the righteous; but another writer[g] removes this objection by observing, that at the time of the rolling through the caverns of the earth, we may say that this rolling will be of no other than of the bone *luz*, out of which the whole body will spring; so that this business of rolling will be easy and without pain; but they are not all agreed about the thing itself: Kimchi says[h], " there is a division in " the words of our Rabbins, concerning the dead " without the land (*i. e.* of Israel); some of them say " that those without the land shall come up out of their " graves; and others say they shall come out of their " graves to the land of Israel by rolling, and by the " way of the caverns; but this verse (Ezek. xxxvii. 12) " proves that those without the land shall live, as the " dead of the land of Israel; for it says, *I will open " your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves*;

[d] Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 22. 2. & Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2.
[e] Targum in Cant. viii. 5.
[f] T. Bab. Cetubot. fol. 111. 1.

[g] Judah Zabarah apud Pocock. Not. Miscell. p. 119.
[h] Pirush in Ezek. xxxvii. 12.

"and after that, *and I will bring you into the land of* "*Israel.*" *Which is before Jerusalem on the east*; a sabbath-day's journey from it, about a mile, Acts i. 12: *and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west: and there shall be a very great valley, and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south*; and this valley will be made by cleaving and removing the mountain in this manner, to hold the dead together when raised; and this is thought by some to be the same with the valley of Jehoshaphat, called the valley of decision, into which the Heathen, being awakened and raised, will be brought and judged, Joel iii. 2, 12, 14.

Ver. 5. *And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains*, &c.] To seek for shelter and safety in them, for fear of the Lord, and the glory of his majesty, whom every eye shall see, Isa. ii. 19. Rev. i. 7: *for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal*; a name of a place not known; it may be thought to be at some considerable distance: *yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah*; two years before which Amos prophesied, Amos i. 1. and which, according to Josephus[1], was at the time when King Uzziah was stricken with a leprosy for invading the priest's office; when, as he says, at a place before the city called Eroge, half-part of the mountain towards the west was broken, and rolled four furlongs towards the eastern part, and there stood; so that the ways were stopped up to the king's gardens: *and the Lord my God shall come*; the Lord Jesus Christ, who is truly God, and the God of his people; and who will appear to be so at his second coming, which is here meant, by raising the dead, gathering all nations before him, and separating them; by bringing to light all secret and hidden things; judging the whole world, and executing the sentence on them; and particularly by taking his own people to himself: *and all the saints with thee*: the Targum, and the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, *with him*: meaning either the holy angels; so Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech; who will attend him partly for the glory of his majesty, and partly for terror to the wicked, and also for service; or rather glorified saints, the spirits of just men made perfect, whom Christ will bring with him to be united to their bodies, which will now be raised, and to be with him in the new heavens and new earth, which will now be formed, and to be presented to him, and dwell with him, during the thousand years.

Ver. 6. *And it shall come to pass in that day*, &c.] Which shall precede the coming of Christ, both his spiritual and personal reign; for what follows will not agree with either state: *that the light shall not be clear nor dark*; before the latter-day glory it will be a darkish dispensation; not *clear*, as in the first times of the Gospel, when the sun of righteousness appeared, and the shadows of the ceremonial law were removed, and the Gospel shone out in the ministry of Christ and his apostles; nor as at the reformation from Popery, when the morning-star was given, Rev. ii. 28. nor as it will be in the spiritual reign of Christ, when Zion's light will be come, and her watchmen will see eye to eye; when the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun seven-fold as the light of seven days; and much less as will be in the kingdom-state, when there will be no need of the sun or moon; or in the ultimate glory, when we shall see no more darkly through a glass, but face to face: and yet it will not be *dark*, as it was with the Jews under the legal dispensation; and much less as with the Gentiles before the coming of Christ; or as in the dark times of Popery; it will be a sort of a twilight, both with respect to the light of doctrine, and of spiritual joy, comfort, and experience; which is much our case now. Some read the words, *there shall be no light, but cold and frost*[k]; it will be a time of great coldness and lukewarmness, with regard to divine and spiritual things; iniquity will abound, and the love of many wax cold, Matt. xxiv. 12.

Ver. 7. *But it shall be one day*, &c.] A very singular, remarkable, and uncommon one; and it will be but one day; things won't continue long in such a position: *which shall be known to the Lord*; all times and seasons are known unto the Lord, but this will come under his special notice and observation, and be under the direction of his special providence; it will only be taken notice of by him, and not by others; scarce any will observe it, or know what God is doing in it, or about to do: *not day, nor night*; not clear and full day, as at noon; nor yet quite night or dark, as at midnight; see the note on ver. 6: *but it shall come to pass, that at evening-time it shall be light*; after this day is over, which is neither clear nor dark, there will be an evening-time; things will be worse with us than they are; the sun will be set; Christ will be withdrawn in the ministry of the word; his witnesses will be slain and silenced; great coldness and lukewarmness will seize upon professors; great darkness of error will spread itself everywhere; great sleepiness and security will fall upon all the virgins, and there will be great distress of nations; and, when it will be feared and expected that greater darkness and distress still are coming on, *light* will break forth; deliverance and salvation from Popish darkness and tyranny will be wrought; the light of the Gospel will break forth, and spread itself everywhere; the light of joy and gladness will arise to all the saints, and it will be a time of great spiritual peace, prosperity, and happiness. Vitringa on Isa. lx. 20, interprets it there shall be no vicissitude, or succession of day and night, but all day; at evening it shall be light; no calamity nor sorrow; Christ the light, and sun of righteousness, will break out in a glorious and spiritual manner.

Ver. 8. *And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem*, &c.] When it shall be light; and this is one of the things which will make it so; for by *living waters* are meant the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; compared to running *waters* for the

[1] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 10. sect. 4.

[k] לא יהיה אור יקרות וקפאון ουκ εσται φως και ψυχος και παγος, Sept.; non erit lux, sed frigus & gelu, V. L.; so Syr. Ar.; congelatio, Tigurine version; so Ben Melech; non erit lux; frigora potius & congelatio: vel non erit lux; frigoribus congelascent, scilicet peccatores, Hiller. de Arcano Kethib & Keri, p. 370.

sound of them, which will then go into all the earth; for the swiftness in which they shall proceed; for their rapidity and force in bearing all before them; for the great spread of them; and for their virtue and efficacy in cooling those who are inflamed with the fiery law; refreshing thirsty souls; purifying the hearts and lives of sinners, and making those that are barren fruitful: and to *living* waters, because they are the means of quickening dead sinners, and of reviving drooping saints; and because they serve to support and maintain a spiritual life, and nourish up unto eternal life, and direct the way to it, as well as give the best account of it: and these will come out of Jerusalem; which may design Jerusalem literally, which will be rebuilt at the time of the Jews' conversion; or mystically the church, the spiritual and heavenly Jerusalem; see Heb. xii. 22. Ezek. xlvii. 1. Joel iii. 18. reference seems to be had to the first ministration of the Gospel, which, according to prophecy, came out of Jerusalem, Isa. ii. 3. *Half of them towards the former sea;* or the eastern sea, as the Targum, the Persian sea; and may signify that the Gospel shall be carried into the eastern parts of the world, into Persia, Tartary, and China, and other nations; and those great kingdoms shall become the kingdoms of Christ: *and half of them toward the hinder sea;* or the western sea, as the Targum, the Mediterranean sea; and may denote the progress and success of the Gospel in the European parts of the world: and the meaning of the whole is, that the Gospel shall be carried from east to west, and preached all the world over, to the conversion of Jews and Gentiles, who, some think, are designed by the two seas; when the abundance of the sea shall be converted by it, and the forces and fulness of the Gentiles brought in, and all Israel saved: *in summer and in winter shall it be:* there will be no summer of persecution, nor winter of coldness and indifference to hinder the ministry of the word: the phrase denotes the constant ministry of the word, and the duration of it; it shall be constantly preached all the year long, and as long as summer and winter last.

Ver. 9. *And the Lord shall be King over all the earth,* &c.] This refers to the spiritual reign of Christ in the latter day; upon the success of the Gospel everywhere, there will be great conversions in all places; Gospel churches will be set up and ordinances administered everywhere; the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord; his kingdom will be from sea to sea, from the eastern to the western one, and his dominion will reach to the ends of the earth; Popish nations, Mahometan kingdoms, Pagan ones, and all the kings of the earth, will become Christian, and submit to the sceptre of Christ's kingdom: *in that day shall there be one Lord;* there is but one Lord in right now, and there is but one in fact that is owned by real Christians; and there will be but one in the spiritual reign, among all that are called Christians; there will be but one Lord and Head to Jews and Gentiles, Hos. i. 11. the pope of Rome will be no more owned as head of the church, nor any other: *and his name one;* this refers not to any particular name by which Christ shall be called, but rather to that by which his people shall be called; all names of distinction being now laid aside, and only that of Christians retained; though it chiefly designs unity of doctrine, uniformity of worship, one and the same way of administering ordinances: it signifies that there will be one true, spiritual, uniform worship and religion; there will be no different sentiments and principles in religion; nor different practices and modes of worship; nor different sects; but all agreeing in the same faith and practice, under one Lord and King, Christ Jesus. So the Targum, "they "shall serve before the Lord with one shoulder; for "his name is firm in the world, and there is none be-"sides it." This passage is referred by the ancient Jews[l] to the times of the Messiah.

Ver. 10. *All the land shall be turned as a plain,* &c.] That is, all the land of Israel round about Jerusalem, which was encompassed with mountains, Psal. cxxv. 2. but now these mountains shall become a plain, that that may be seen; since it follows, *from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem;* Geba was a city in the tribe of Benjamin, on the northern border of the land, Josh. xxi. 17. and Rimmon was in the tribe of Judah, given to Simeon on the southern part, Josh. xv. 32. and xix. 7. so that from Geba to Rimmon was the same as from Geba to Beer-sheba, which was in the same tribe, 2 Kings xxiii. 8. and, according to the Jewish writers, the south of Jerusalem was a plain; wherefore the meaning seems to be, that the whole land, from Geba to Rimmon, should be like that. Jerom makes mention of a village called Remmon in his time, fifteen miles to the north of Jerusalem, which cannot be the place here meant, and yet speaks of it as in the tribe of Simeon or Judah; and afterwards takes notice of another village called Remmus in Daroma, or the south[m]; to me it seems that Geba and Rimmon were places near one to another, and both in the tribe of Benjamin; see 1 Sam. xiv. 4. where the word rendered *pomegranate* is Rimmon, and is the proper name of a place, according to some; the same with that in Judg. xx. 47. where was a rock called the rock Rimmon; and Jonathan ben Uzziel, on 1 Sam. xiv. 2, renders it, the *plain of the pomegranate;* or rather the plain of Rimmon: and the Jews make mention in their Talmud[n] of the valley of Rimmon, where seven elders met to intercalate the year; and here, they say, was a marble rock, in which every one fastened a nail, and therefore it is called the rock of nails. Now the sense seems to be, that all the land of Israel should become a plain, like the valley that was between Geba and Rimmon. Jarchi interprets it of the whole world. And this will be literally true of the new earth, in the thousand-years' reign, which will be without hills, mountains, and seas, Rev. xxi. 1. It may be mystically understood of the spiritual reign of Christ, when the whole world will become Christian; when Jews and Gentiles, and even the kings of the earth, shall bow the knee to Christ, and be subject to him. *And it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place;* that is, Jerusalem, which shall appear very high, all the land round about being a plain; and, being rebuilt, shall be in-

[l] Zohar in Deut. fol. 110. 2.
[m] De locis Heb. fol. 94. A. C.
[n] T. Hieros. Chagiga, fol. 78. 4.

habited on the same spot of ground it formerly was: or the church may be meant, which in the latter day will be greatly exalted, and will be filled with, and inhabited by, some of all the nations of the world, Isa. ii. 2, 3: *from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate:* not that called the high gate of Benjamin, and which was near the temple, Jer. xx. 2. and seems to be one of its gates; and such an one there was, which in Arabic was called *Bab Alasbat*, the gate of the tribes, where was the pool of the blood of the sacrifices; and is said to be not far from another gate, called the gate of mercy[a]; but this is that which led out of the city, and was one of its gates towards the land of Benjamin, from whence it had its name, and through which Jeremiah attempted to go when he was stopped by the captain of the ward, Jer. xxxvii. 13. this, according to Grotius, was on the north of Jerusalem: Mr. Fuller[b] places it more rightly in the north-east part of it, as does Adrichomius[c], who wrongly confounds it with the corner gate after mentioned, which is here manifestly distinguished from it; and which mistake also Schindler[d] gives into, and likewise Arias Montanus[e] and others. *The first gate* is the same with the *old gate* in Neh. iii. 6. and xii. 39. *Unto the corner gate:* the gate of Benjamin, and the gate of Ephraim, are the same, as is thought by Grotius; the distance between that gate and the corner gate was four hundred cubits, 2 Kings xiv. 13: *and* from *the tower of Hananeel unto the king's wine-presses:* mention is made of the tower of Hananeel in Neh. iii. 1. and xii. 39. Jer. xxxi. 38. it was to the south of Jerusalem; and is called in the Targum the tower of Pikkus: the *king's wine-presses* doubtless were where his vineyards were; King Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon, Cant. viii. 11. Grotius says the place where these wine-presses were was at Sion, in the inmost part of the city; and so Adrichomius[f] places them in Mount Sion; though Kimchi speaks of them as without the city; and Jarchi makes mention of an Agadah, or exposition, which interprets them of the great ocean, which reaches from Jerusalem to the end of the world, the lakes which the King of kings has made. Very probably these places lay east, west, north, and south; and so denote the amplitude of the city, and the largeness and extensiveness of the church of Christ, signified thereby; see Ezek. xlviii.

Ver. 11. *And men shall dwell in it,* &c.] In great numbers, in much peace and safety, and from generation to generation: Aben Ezra says, Messiah the son of David will now come: *and there shall be no more utter destruction:* no wars, nor desolations by them, in a civil sense; there shall be no more killing, as the Targum, Isa. ii. 4. and ix. 17, 18. no *cherem*, no anathema, in a religious sense; in the old translation it is, *and there shall be no more cursing;* there will be no curse in the Jerusalem state, Rev. xxii. 3. which words seem to be taken from hence; no cursed thing, nor cursed person, or any curse or anathema denounced against any; no Popish bulls and anathemas, nor any other; *but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited;* the inhabitants of it shall dwell securely, without any apprehension of danger, and having no enemies to fear; though, before this safe and happy state, there will be many enemies; and what will become of them is shewn in the following verses.

Ver. 12. *And this shall be the plagues,* &c.] This respects one or more, or all, of the seven plagues, which will be inflicted on the antichristian states, mentioned in Rev. xv. and xvi.: *wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem;* who have been the enemies and persecutors of his church; and with which plague or plagues they shall be utterly consumed and destroyed: *their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet:* antichrist will be consumed with the breath of Christ's mouth; the flesh of the whore of Rome, which is her substance, shall be eaten and devoured by the kings of the earth; and her destruction will be in a moment, suddenly, and at unawares, as is here suggested; see 2 Thess. ii. 8. Rev. xvii. 16. and xviii. 8, 10: *and their eyes shall consume away in their holes;* the right eye of the idol-shepherd shall be utterly dried up, and the kingdom of the beast will be full of darkness, Zech. xi. 17. Rev. xvi. 10: *and their tongues shall consume away in their mouth;* with which antichrist and his followers have blasphemed the name of God, his tabernacle, and his saints; and which they will gnaw for pain, when the plagues of God are inflicted on them, Rev. xiii. 5, 6. and xvi. 9, 10, 11.

Ver. 13. *And it shall come to pass in that day,* &c.] When the vials are pouring out: that *a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them;* the Targum renders it, a great tumult, or noise of killing; and the Septuagint, an ecstacy: it refers to the earthquake, and the slaughter of seven thousand men of name, and the fright upon that, Rev. xi. 13. *and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour;* there will be a revolution, upon this tumult, in several of the antichristian states; and the kings of them shall hate the whore, make her desolate, eat her flesh, and burn her with fire, Rev. xvii. 16. or, *his hand shall be cut off by the hand of his neighbour*[g]; see Zech. xi. 17. the power of antichrist shall be destroyed by neighbouring Christian princes.

Ver. 14. *And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem,* &c.] These are the professing people of Christ, the armies in heaven, the chosen, called, and faithful, who will follow the Lamb, and attend him when he goes forth to make war with the antichristian princes, and shall overcome them, Rev. xvii. 14. and xix. 14: *and the wealth of all the Heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold and silver, and apparel, in great abundance;* by which are meant the riches of the Papists, called Gentiles or Heathens, Rev. xi. 2, 18. which will fall into the hands of the followers of Christ at the time of Rome's destruction; and which are signified by the flesh of the whore, and by the flesh

[a] Cippi Hebr. p. 29. Geograph. Nub. p. 114.
[b] Pisgah-Sight of Palestine, B. 2. c. 3. sect. 15. p. 322.
[c] Theatrum Terræ Sanct. p. 167.
[d] Lexic. Pentaglott. col. 1912.
[e] Nehemias, sive de Antiqu. Jerus. situ.
[f] Theatrum Terræ Sanct. Jerusalem, No. 26. p. 152.
[g] ועלתה ידו על יד רעהו et succidetur manus ejus super manum amici sui, Pagninus. So Aben Ezra, and R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 43. 1.

of kings, captains, and mighty men, which will then be eaten; they will be stripped and spoiled of all their substance, Rev. xvii. 16. and xix. 18.

Ver. 15. *And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass,* &c.] The flesh of the horse is said to be eaten, Rev. xix. 18: *and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague*: their beasts shall perish in like manner as themselves.

Ver. 16. *And it shall come to pass,* &c.] After the plague on man and beast is over: that *every one that is left of all the nations which come against Jerusalem*: these are the remnant, according to the election of grace, who will have been among the enemies of Christ and his people, but preserved when others will be destroyed: and they will not only be affrighted at the general destruction, but will be truly converted, and give glory to the God of heaven, Rev. xi. 13. and xix. 21: these *shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts*: the King Messiah, as Aben Ezra and Abendana on the place observe; the same with the King over all the earth, ver. 9. who is Lord of hosts, of all the armies in heaven, that will have followed him at this time, and is to be worshipped by angels and men; he is equal with God, the Creator of both, the Redeemer of men, and King of saints; and to worship him shall the above persons preserved and called go up to Jerusalem, the church of God, year by year, that is, constantly: *and to keep the feast of tabernacles*; not literally, but spiritually; for, as all the Jewish feasts have been long since abolished, having had their accomplishment in Christ, not one of them will ever be revived in the latter day. This feast was originally kept in commemoration of the Israelites dwelling in tents in the wilderness, and was typical of Christ's incarnation, who was made flesh, and tabernacled among us; so that to keep this feast is no other than to believe in Christ as come in the flesh, and in the faith of this to attend to the Gospel feast of the word and ordinances; and whereas this feast was observed by drawing water with expressions of joy, this may respect the pouring forth of the spirit in the last day, and that spiritual joy saints will then be filled with; to which may be added, that palm-tree branches used to be carried in their hands at the time of that feast; and so the keeping of it now may denote the victory that will be obtained over the beast and his image, which palm-tree branches are a token of; and this will issue in the personal reign of Christ, when the tabernacle of God shall be with men.

Ver. 17. *And it shall be, that whosoever will not come up,* &c.] This, though it follows upon the former account, must be understood of times preceding the spiritual reign of Christ; for the rain of the Gospel will be upon all the earth in the latter-day glory, and all nations will then serve and worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even those that remain after the general destruction of the antichristian states; besides, express mention is hereafter made of Egypt, which designs Rome, Rev. xi. 8. and the whole manifestly refers to the time of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, who had power to shut the heaven, that it rain not, Rev. xi. 6: *of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem, to worship the King, the Lord of hosts*; all of the antichristian party, that refuse to worship the Lord with his true church, according to his revealed will: *even upon them shall be no rain*; not literally, but spiritually; and is to be understood either of the love and favour of God, comparable to rain in its original, it being owing to the will of God, and not to the merits of men, and therefore is distinguishing and sovereign; in its objects, persons very undeserving; in the manner of its communication, it tarries not for the will and works of men, and comes in great abundance; and in its effects, it softens, cools, refreshes, and makes fruitful; and not to have this is to be hated of God: or of the blessings of divine grace; these are from above like rain, depend on the will of God, are free gifts, and given in abundance, and make fruitful; the contrary to these is cursing: or of the Gospel, which is of God and from heaven, falls according to divine direction, and softens, refreshes, and revives; and not to have this is the sorest of judgments, Amos viii. 11. Isa. v. 6.

Ver. 18. *And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not,* &c.] To Jerusalem, the church of God; don't go thither to worship the Lord, attend his ordinances, and keep them in their purity; nor walk as becomes the people of God: by *the family of Egypt* are meant the Papists, so called for their tyranny, cruelty, and idolatry, Rev. xi. 8: *that have no rain*; have not the pure word of God, and the ordinances thereof, only the traditions of men; yea, the doctrines of devils, and lies in hypocrisy: the allusion is to the land of Egypt, which was watered, not so much by rain as by the overflowing of the river Nile: or it may be rendered, *and upon them there shall be no rain* *; or that which is equivalent to it. So the Targum paraphrases it, "the Nile shall not ascend unto them." The sense is, as they are without the pure Gospel of Christ, they shall continue so, and be punished with that sore judgment of a famine of hearing the word of the Lord. *There shall be the plague, wherewith the Lord will smite the Heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles*; they shall have the same plague of want of water, a famine: for it is a vulgar mistake that there is no rain in Egypt: it rains indeed but seldom, and only in some places, but it does rain. Monsieur Thevenot [x] says, "it rains much at Alex-"andria, and Rosetta also; but at Cairo, which stands "higher, it rains less; and yet (says he) I have seen it "rain very hard every year for two days together in "the month of December." And Mr. Fuller [y] says that Sir William Paston, a patron of his, and a well-accomplished traveller, was "an eye-witness of much "and violent rain at Grand Cairo, but such as pre-"saged a great mortality, which ensued not long "after." But it should be observed that this is only true of the lower part of Egypt, for in the upper parts it rains not, at least not very commonly: for Herodotus [z] reports that "in the times of Psammenitus,

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* ולא עליהם super quos non est imber, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius; & non super illos, scil. erit imber, Burkius.

[x] Travels, part 1. ch. 72. p. 247.

[y] Pisgah-Sight, B. 4. ch. 5. p. 80.

[z] Thalia, sive l. 3. c. 10.

"the son of Amasis, king of Egypt, a very wonderful "thing happened to the Egyptians; it rained at Thebes "in Egypt, which it never had before, nor has ever "since, as the Thebans say; for it never rains in the "upper part of Egypt; but then it rained at Thebes in "drops." Yet Mr. Norden[a], a late traveller in those parts, says he "experienced at Meschie (a city in his "travels to upper Egypt) a very violent rain, accom-"panied with thunder, for the space of a whole hour:" though in the same place he says, at Feschna, and beyond, in the upper Egypt, the sky is always serene and clear. And in his travels from Cairo to Girge, capital of the upper Egypt, he relates, that at a certain place, as he went thither, they had little wind, and a great deal of rain[b]. And in another place[c] he observes, at Meme (a place in upper Egypt) there was so thick a fog that we could perceive nothing at thirty paces distant: wherefore, since it does rain at times in some places, the same plague as before may be here meant; or want of provisions, as others, through a defect of rain; or the Nile not overflowing and watering the land, as Jarchi interprets it: but Kimchi gives another sense, and so Aben Ezra, which is, that instead of having no rain, which they need not and do not desire, they shall be smitten with the plague that the Lord will smite all the nations with that fight against Jerusalem, namely, their flesh shall consume away, &c. ver. 12.

Ver. 19. *This shall be the punishment of Egypt*, &c.] Or *sin*[d], as in the original text: rightly is the word rendered *punishment*, as it is by the Targum: *and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles:* which will be one and the same; they shall have no rain, or what answers to it; they shall all have a famine; or it will be different, Egypt shall be punished with a consumption of their flesh, and the other nations with want of rain: the former sense seems best.

Ver. 20. *In that day*, &c.] After the destruction of antichrist and all the antichristian party, and a new state of things will take place, either the spiritual or personal reign of Christ: *shall there be upon the bells of the horses, Holiness unto the Lord;* as was upon the mitre of the high-priest, Exod. xxviii. 36. to which there seems to be an allusion here: or, *upon the trappings of the horses*[e], as the Targum renders it; and this intends either the horses slain in war, whose bells or trappings should be devoted and applied to holy uses; or the horses that carried the people up to Jerusalem to worship there, or horses in common. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it, *on the bridle of the horse shall be Holiness to the Lord;* that is, they should be devoted to his service, which sometimes were very richly adorned; yea, were of gold; as those described by Virgil[f]; nay, they were adorned with precious stones, with pearls, emeralds, and jacinths, insomuch that the Romans were obliged to restrain this luxury by a law[g]. The conceit of some of the fathers, that this refers to one of the nails in the cross of Christ, which Constantine put into his horse's bridle, is justly ridiculed and exploded by most commentators. It seems best to render the word as we do, *bells*, as Kimchi and Jarchi interpret it; since it is used of cymbals made of brass, which were to make a sound to be heard, 1 Chron. xv. 19. Neh. xii. 27. and of the same metal were the horses' bells made; though those which the mules at the funeral of Alexander had at each jaw were made of gold[h]; as were those Aaron had at the hem of his robe. The use of these bells on horses, according to Gussetius[i], in the eastern countries, where they travelled through deserts, and had no beaten track, was to keep them together, and that they might be known where they were when parted; and of like use are they now to horses of burden or packhorses with us; though in common use they seem to serve to give horses a pleasure, and quicken them in their work: but the original of them seems to be for the training of horses for war, and therefore they hung bells to their bridles, to use them to a noise, and to try if they could bear a noise, and the tumult of war, so as not to throw their riders, or expose them to danger[k]; hence one that has not been tried or trained up to any thing is called by the Greeks ἀκωδώνιστος, one not used to the noise of a bell, by a metaphor taken from horses, that have never been tried by the sound of bells, whether they can bear the noise of war without fear[l]: and so it may signify that these, and all the apparatus of war, all kind of armour, should no more be made use of for such purposes, there being now universal peace in the kingdom of Christ; wherefore these, and the like, should be converted to sacred uses, just as swords, at the same time, shall be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks, for civil uses, Isa. ii. 4. or, since Holiness to the Lord is said to be upon them, the sense may be, that holiness will be very general among all men; all professing people will be righteous; it will appear in all their actions, civil as well as religious; it will be as visible as the bells upon the horses, by their frequent going to the house of God; their constant attendance on public worship; their walking in the ways of the Lord, and their love to one another. *And the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar;* the *pots* in which they boiled the sacrifices shall be like *the bowls before the altar*, which held the blood of the sacrifices to be sprinkled; either like them for number; they shall be many, like them, as the Targum paraphrases it; or for goodness, being made of the same metal: and the whole denotes the number, holiness, and excellency of the saints in the latter day, who will direct all their actions to the glory of God, whether in eating or drinking, or in whatever they do.

Ver. 21. *Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts*, &c.] Such will

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[a] Travels in Egypt and Nubia, vol. 1. p. 140.
[b] Ib. vol. 2. p. 20.
[c] Ib. p. 200.
[d] חטאת peccatum, V. L.
[e] על מצלות in phaleris, Tigurine version.
[f] Aurea pectoribus demissa monilia pendent,
Tecti auro, fulvum mandunt sub dentibus aurum.
Virgil. Æneid. l. 7.
Frænaque bina meus, quæ nunc habet aurea Pallas. Æneid. l. 8.
[g] Vid. Salmuth in Panciroi. Rer. Memorab. par. 1. tit. 48. p. 231.
[h] See Calmet's Dictionary, in the word *Bells*.
[i] Ebr. Comment. p. 715.
[k] Scholiast. Aristophan. in Ranis, Act. 1. Sc. 2. p. 214. Salmuth in Panciroi. par. 2. tit. 9. De Campanis, p. 161. Hospinian. de Templis, l. 2. c. 26. p. 333.
[l] Vid. Scapulæ Lexic. in voce κώδων, & alios lexicograph.

be the number of sacrifices and sacrificers, that the pots in the Lord's house will not be sufficient; wherefore every pot, in city or country, shall be sanctified and devoted to holy uses: *and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein;* this denotes, as before, the general holiness of the professors of religion in those times; and that there will be no difference in the vessels of the Lord's house, or any distinction of Jew and Gentile; but they will be all spiritual worshippers, and offer up the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise to the Lord: *and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts:* the Targum paraphrases it, "there "shall be no more a merchant in the house of the "sanctuary of the Lord;" in the temple, where were buyers and sellers of sheep, oxen, and doves, for sacrifice, such as our Lord drove out; but now there shall be no more of them, all legal sacrifices being at an end. The word here used does signify a merchant, and is so rendered in Hos. xii. 9. Isa. xxiii. 8. and by some here [m]; and the Jews [n] have a saying, that "there are no Ca-"naanites but merchants;" or the word always so signifies, referring to the above places, and having quoted Job xli. 6. but it is to be applied to another sort of merchants; to false teachers, that make merchandise of the souls of men; to all merit-mongers and Papists; and particularly to the great merchant of all, the pope of Rome, and to all inferior merchants under him, who sell pardons, indulgences, *&c.* and are called the merchants of the earth, Rev. xviii. 3, 11, 12, 13. these are the Heathen that shall perish out of the land, and the sinners that shall be no more; antichrist shall no longer sit in the temple of God, shewing himself to be God; nor will there be any, in the spiritual reign of Christ, that will buy Rome's merchandise any more. Moreover, a Canaanite may design an impure person, a hypocrite; and though there have been many such in the church of God in all ages, yet at this time there will be few or none, comparatively speaking; and in the personal reign of Christ there will be no wicked men at all: in the new heavens and new earth will dwell righteousness, or only righteous persons; all the wicked of the earth will be destroyed before this state takes place; only raised ones, the saints that partake of the first resurrection, will be there; they will be all holy and righteous persons; nothing shall enter into it that defiles or makes an abomination or a lie, only those that do the commandments of God; nor will there be any manner of sin or wickedness there: sin, like the Canaanites of old, continues in the saints as long as they are in the present state; and though it has not the dominion over them, yet is as grievous pricks and thorns unto them, and is left in them to prove them; but in this happy state there will be no more sin, no more this pricking brier and grieving thorn. That the word Canaanite is here to be taken in a figurative sense is certain; for, literally understood, there is no such person in the world now, nor has been for many hundreds of years, even an inhabitant of Canaan, or one so called.

MALACHI.

THIS book, in the Hebrew copies, is called *Sepher Malachi*, the Book of Malachi; in the Vulgate Latin version, *the Prophecy of Malachi:* in the Syriac and Arabic versions, *the Prophecy of the Prophet Malachi:* According to Lactantius [a], Zechariah was the last of the prophets; but the more commonly received opinion, and the truest, is, that Malachi was the last; hence Aben Ezra calls him סוף הנביאים, *the end of the prophets;* and by Kimchi he is said to be, אחרון שבם *the last of them;* and sometimes, by the Rabbins, חותם הנביאים, *the seal of the prophets* [b]; by whom they are all sealed up, concluded, and finished. His name signifies *my angel*, as is commonly said; though Hillerus [c] makes it to signify *the angel of the Lord;* hence some have thought that he was not a man, but an angel: and so the Septuagint render ביד מלאכי, in the first verse, *by the hand of his angel;* and others have thought that the book takes its name, not from the author of it, but from the mention that is made of the messenger or angel of the Lord, John the Baptist, in ch. iii. 1. but the more prevailing opinion is, that Malachi is the name of a man, the writer of the book, about whom the Jews have been divided. Rab Nachman says Malachi was Mordecai; and that he was so called because he was second to the king. R. Joshua ben Korcha contradicts him, and affirms Malachi is Ezra; and to him agrees the Chaldee paraphrase on ver. 1. which says, that Malachi, his name is called Ezra the scribe; but, as Kimchi observes, Ezra is never called a prophet, as Malachi is, only a scribe; wherefore in the Talmud [d], where this matter is debated, it is concluded thus; but the wise men say, Malachi is his name; that is, it is the proper name of a man; there was a man of this name, that wrote this prophecy; not Mordecai, nor Ezra, nor Zorobabel, nor Nehemiah, as some have thought; but Malachi: and if the accounts of Epiphanius [e] and Isidore [f] are to be credited, this prophet was born at Sapho, in the

[m] כנעני mercator, V. L. Montanus, Vatablus, Grotius, Burkius.
[n] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 75. 1.
[a] De vera Sapientia, l. 4. c. 5. p. 279.
[b] Nizzachon, p. 200. apud Hottinger. Thes. Phil. p. 439.
[c] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 147, 259, 541.
[d] T. Bab. Megillah, fol. 15. 1.
[e] De Prophet. Vita & Interitu, c. 22.
[f] De Vita & Morte Sanct. c. 51.

tribe of Zebulon; and had his name from his beautiful form, and unblemished life; and that he died very young, and was buried in his own field. The time of his prophesying is not agreed on: the Jews commonly make him cotemporary with Haggai and Zechariah; they say [g] that Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, all of them prophesied in the second year of Darius; and Ganz, their chronologer [h], places the death of these prophets together in one year; but he seems to be later than they: Haggai prophesied before the building of the temple; Zechariah about the time of it; and Malachi after it, when the temple was rebuilt, and the worship of God restored and settled; and when both priests and people were become very corrupt and degenerate, of which he complains; so that it is possible that he might live a century after the other prophets, and about four centuries before the coming of Christ, during which time prophecy ceased; though some think he lived not long before the times of Christ, which is not probable. Bishop Usher [i] makes him cotemporary with Nehemiah, and places him in the year before the Christian era 416; and Mr. Whiston [k] in the year 400; Mr. Bedford [l] in the year 424: however, this book has been always accounted authentic, and a part of the canon of the Scripture; and is confirmed by the passages cited out of it, and the references made unto it, in the New Testament, Matt. xi. 10. Mark i. 2. Rom. ix. 1. Matt. xvii. 12. Mark ix. 11, 12. Luke i. 17. The general design of it is to reprove the Jews for their ingratitude to the Lord, their neglect and contempt of his worship, and breach of his laws; and to raise in the minds of the truly godly an expectation of the Messiah, and his forerunner, John the Baptist.

CHAP. I.

In this chapter the Lord declares his love to the people of Israel, and proves it; and complains that the honour due unto him was not given him; which he demonstrates by various instances. The inscription is in ver. 1. shewing the name and nature of the prophecy; the author of it; the people to whom it was sent; and the name of the person by whom. In ver. 2 the Lord affirms his love to the people of Israel, which they called in question; and proves it to be real, special, and distinguishing, by the instance of Jacob and Esau, two brothers; yet one, their ancestor, was loved, and the other hated; which latter is proved by the desolations made in his country, and by the fruitless attempts made to repair and rebuild; which was so clear a proof of the Lord's indignation against him, that the Israelites could not but see it, and would be obliged to confess it, to the glory of God, ver. 3, 4, 5. hence he passes on to observe the honour and fear that were due to him as a father and master, which were not shewn him; but, instead thereof, he was despised, and even by the priests themselves, with which they are charged, ver. 6. and which being objected to by them, is proved by offering polluted bread on his altar; and by polluting him, in saying his table was contemptible; and by sacrificing the blind, the lame, and the sick, unto him; things which would be justly resented, if offered to a temporal prince and governor, ver. 7, 8. wherefore they are called upon by the prophet to pray to the Lord for grace and mercy for the people, seeing it was by their means (the priests) that these things were done; though it was questionable whether the Lord would have any regard to them, ver. 9. their sins being so dreadfully aggravated; and particularly, inasmuch as they did not serve in the temple, not so much as shut a door, or kindle a fire on the altar, for nothing, without being paid for it; hence the Lord declares he had no pleasure in them, nor would he accept their offerings; but would call the Gentiles by his grace, among whom his name would be great from one end of the earth to the other; and incense and pure offerings would be offered by them to him, ver. 10, 11. and then he renews the charge against them, that they had profaned his name, by saying that his table, and the fruit thereof, were polluted, and his meat contemptible; by expressing a weariness in his worship, and a contempt of it; and by bringing the torn, the lame, and sick, as an offering to him, ver. 12, 13. upon which such sacrificers are declared deceivers, and pronounced accursed, which they might assure themselves was and would be their case; since he was a great King, and his name dreadful among the Heathen, ver. 14.

Ver. 1. *The burden of the word of the Lord*, &c.] By which is meant the prophecy of this book, so called, not because heavy, burdensome, and distressing, either for the prophet to carry, or the people to bear; for some part of it, which respects Christ, and his forerunner, was matter of joy to the people of God; but because it was a message sent by the Lord, and carried by the prophet to the people; see the notes on Zech. ix. 1. and xii. 1. and this was not the word of man, but of God, a part of Scripture, by divine inspiration. The Syriac version is, *the vision of the words of the Lord*: and the Arabic version, *the revelation of the word of the Lord*: and the Septuagint version, *the assumption of the word of the Lord*; it was what was revealed, made known, and delivered by the Lord to the prophet, and taken up by him, and carried to Israel, which was the general name of all the twelve tribes, when under one prince; but when the kingdom was divided, in Rehoboam's time, it was peculiar to the ten tribes, as Judah was to the two tribes of Benjamin and Judah; but after the return of these two from the Babylonish captivity, in which they were joined by some of the other tribes, it was given unto them as here: *by Malachi*; or, *by the hand of*

[g] T. Bab. Megillah, fol. 15. 1. Seder Olam Rabba, c. 20. p. 55.
[h] Ganz, Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 18. 1.
[i] Annales Vet. Test. A. M. 3589.
[k] Chronological Tables, cent. 12.
[l] Scripture Chronology, p. 725.

Malachi[m]; he was the instrument the Lord made use of: the person whom he sent, and by whom he delivered the following prophecy.

Ver. 2. *I have loved you, saith the Lord*, &c.] Which appeared of old, by choosing them, above all people upon the face of the earth, to be his special and peculiar people: by bestowing peculiar favours and blessings upon them, both temporal and spiritual; by continuing them a people, through a variety of changes and revolutions; and by lately bringing them out of the Babylonish captivity, restoring their land unto them, and the pure worship of God among them: *yet ye say, wherein hast thou loved us?* the Targum renders it, *and if ye should say*: and so Kimchi and Ben Melech; which intimates, that though they might not have expressed themselves in so many words, yet they seemed disposed to say so; they thought it, if they said it not; and therefore, to prevent such an objection, as well as to shew their ingratitude, it is put in this form; and an instance of his love is demanded, which is very surprising, when they had so many; and shews great stupidity and unthankfulness. Abarbinel renders the words, *wherefore hast thou loved us?* that is, is there not a reason to be given for loving us? which he supposes was the love of Abraham to God; and therefore his love to them was not free, but by way of reward to Abraham's love; and consequently they were not so much obliged to him for it: to which is replied, was *not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord*: Jacob and Esau were brethren; they had one and the same father and mother, Isaac and Rebekah, and equally descended from Abraham; so that if one was loved for the sake of Abraham, as suggested, according to Abarbinel's sense, the other had an equal claim to it; they lay in the same womb together; they were twins; and if any could be thought to have the advantage by birth, Esau had it, being born first: but before they were born, and before they had done good or evil, what is afterwards said of them was in the heart of God towards them; which shews that the love of God to his people is free, sovereign, and distinguishing, Gen. xxv. 2. Rom. ix. 11, 12, 13: *yet I loved Jacob*: personally considered; not only by giving him the temporal birthright and blessing, and the advantages arising from thence; but by choosing him to everlasting life, bestowing his grace upon him, revealing Christ unto him, and making him a partaker of eternal happiness; and also his posterity, as appears by the above instances mentioned; and likewise mystically considered, for all the elect, redeemed, and called, go by the name of Jacob and Israel in Scripture frequently; for what is here said of Jacob is true of all the individuals of God's people; for which purpose the apostle refers to this passage in Rom. ix. 13, to prove the sovereignty and distinction of the love of God in their election and salvation: and this is indeed a clear proof that the love of God to his people is entirely free from all motives and conditions in them, being before they had done either good or evil; and therefore did not arise from any goodness in them, nor from their love to him nor from any good works done by them: the choice of persons to everlasting life, the fruit of this love, is denied to be of works, and is ascribed to grace; it passed before any were wrought; and what are done by the best of men are the effects of it; and the persons chosen or passed by were in an equal state when both were done; which appears by this instance: and by which also it is manifest that the love of God to men is distinguishing; it is not alike to all men; there is a peculiar favour he bears to his own people; which is evident by the choice of some, and not others; by the redemption of them out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; by the effectual vocation of them out of the world; by the application of the blessings of grace unto them; and by bestowing eternal life on them: and it may be further observed, that the objects of God's love have not always the knowledge of it; indeed they have no knowledge of it before conversion, which is the open time of love; and after conversion they have not always distinct and appropriating views of it; only when God is pleased to come and manifest it unto them.

Ver. 3. *And I hated Esau*, &c.] Or, *rejected* him, as the Targum; did not love him as Jacob: this was a negative, not positive hatred; it is true of him, personally considered; not only by taking away the birthright and blessing from him, which he despised; but by denying him his special grace, leaving him in his sins, and to his lusts, so that he became a profane person; shared not in the grace of God here, and had no part in the eternal inheritance with the saints in light; and likewise it is true of his posterity, as the following instances shew: *and laid his mountains and his heritage waste*: which, according to Grotius, was done by Nebuchadnezzar, five years after the captivity of the Jews, in fulfilment of the prophecy of Jeremiah, ch. xlix. 7—22. but this was done by the Nabatheans[n]: Mount Seir was the famous mountain that Esau dwelt in, Gen. xxxvi. 8. there might be more in his country; or this might have many tops, and therefore called *mountains*: and to this account of the waste and desolate state of this country agrees what is at present related of it, by a late traveller[o] in those parts: "if (says "he) we leave Palestine and Egypt behind us, and "pursue our physical observations into the land of "Edom, we shall be presented with a variety of "prospects, quite different from those we have lately "met with in the land of Canaan, or in the field of "Zoan; for we cannot here be entertained with pastures clothed with flocks, or with valleys standing "thick with corn, or with brooks of water, or fountains, or depths that spring out of valleys and hills, "Deut. viii. 7. here is no place of seed, or of figs, or "of vines, or pomegranates, Numb. xx. 5. but the "whole is an *evil place*, a lonesome desolate wilderness; no otherwise diversified than by plains covered with sand, and by mountains made up of naked "rocks and precipices, Mal. i. 3. neither is this country "ever (unless sometimes at the equinoxes) refreshed "with rain; but the few hardy vegetables it produces "are stunted by a perpetual drought; and the ne-

[m] ביד in manu, V. L. Coccerius; per manum, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator.

[n] See Prideaux's Connexion, par. 2. B. 2. p. 199.

[o] Dr. Shaw's Travels, p. 438. Ed. 2.

"rishment which the dews contribute to them in the "night, is sufficiently impaired by the powerful heat "of the sun in the day?" though this country seems to have been originally more fruitful, and better cultivated, as may be concluded from Gen. xxvii. 39. Numb. xx. 17. but is become so through the judgments of God upon it: *for the dragons of the wilderness*: so called to distinguish them from sea-dragons, or the dragon-fish; such as whales and crocodiles, which are sometimes expressed by the same word here used, Gen. i. 21. Ezek. xxix. 3. and these land-dragons are no other than serpents of an enormous size. In the Indies they used to be distinguished into three sorts; such as were found in the mountains; such as were bred in caves, or in the flat country; and such as were found in fens and marshes. The first is the largest of all, and are covered with scales as resplendent as polished gold; these have a kind of beard hanging from their lower jaw; their eyebrows large, and very exactly arched; their aspect the most frightful that can be imagined; and their cry loud and shrill; their crest of a bright yellow; and a protuberance on their heads of the colour of a burning coal. Those of the flat country differ from the former in nothing but having their scales of a silver colour, and in their frequenting rivers, to which the former never come. Those that live in marshes and fens are of a dark colour, approaching to a black, move slowly, have no crest, or any rising on their heads [p]; these creatures commonly inhabit desert places. So Diodorus Siculus [q], speaking of Ethiopia, says, it is reported that divers kinds of serpents, and of an incredible bigness, are seen near the desert, and in places inhabited by wild beasts; and Ælianus [r] describes the dragon as dwelling in woods, and living on poisonous herbs; and preferring a desolate place to cities, and the habitations of men; and when in Scripture it is predicted of countries and cities that they shall become desolate, it is usually observed, that they shall be the dwelling-places of dragons, as in Isa. xiii. 22. and xxxiv. 13. Jer. x. 22. and xlix. 33. and li. 37. so here it is foretold that it should be the case of Edom, as it has been, and still continues to be, as appears from the above traveller [s]; who, passing through some part of this country, says of it, "vipers, "especially in the wilderness of Sin, which might be "very properly called *the inheritance of dragons*, were "very dangerous and troublesome; not only our camels, but the Arabs who attended them, running "every moment the risk of being bitten;" so that, according to the prediction, it is now a place for such creatures. A learned Jew [t] is of opinion, that not serpents, but jackalls, are here meant, which are a sort of wild howling beasts, that live abroad in desolate places; see the note on Mic. i. 8. but whether they be the one, or the other, it makes for the same purpose, to denote what a desert place Edom would become: since it should be inhabited by such creatures to dwell in, which denotes the utter desolation made. So the Targum renders it, *into the wasteness of the desert*: or into a waste desert, where none but such sort of animals inhabit. The Septuagint and Syriac versions render it, *into the houses*, or *cottages, of the desert*: and now, though this was the case of Judea, that it was left desolate, yet it was but for a while; at the end of seventy years the Jews returned to their own land, and dwelt in it; but so did not the Edomites, as appears by the following words; which shews the regard God had to the posterity of Jacob, and not to the posterity of Esau.

Ver. 4. *Whereas Edom saith, we are impoverished*, &c.] Or the Idumeans, as the Targum; the posterity of Esau, who acknowledge themselves greatly reduced by the desolations made in their country, cities, towns, and houses, being plundered of all their valuable things. Kimchi interprets it, if the congregation of Edom should say, though we are become poor and low, and our land is laid waste: *but we will return*; being now become rich, as the Targum adds; that is, as Jarchi explains it, with the spoils of Jerusalem: *and build the desolate places*; as Israel did, as Kimchi observes, when they returned from their captivity; and so the Edomites hoped to do the same: *thus saith the Lord of hosts, they shall build, but I will throw down*; they attempted to build again their cities and towns, but could not succeed, God was against them: *and they shall call them*; or, *they shall be called* [u]; this shall be the name they shall go by among men, by way of proverb and reproach: *the border of wickedness*, a wicked kingdom and nation, from one end to the other; this shall be said of them, as the reason of their utter and perpetual desolation: *and the people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever*; not for seventy years only, as against the Jews, Zech. i. 12, but for ever; and these are now no more a people; they are utterly extinct; their name and nation are lost; there is not the least appearance of them; when the Jews, though they are scattered about in the world, yet they are still a people, and distinct from all others.

Ver. 5. *And your eyes shall see*, &c.] The destruction of the Edomites, and their fruitless attempts to rebuild their desolate places; and the difference between them and the Israelites, who were returned to their own land, and inherited it, when they could not; and the love of God to the one, and his hatred of the other: *and ye shall say, the Lord will be magnified from the border of Israel*: Aben Ezra interprets it, ye that dwell in the border of Israel shall say, the Lord shall be magnified, or let him be magnified; let greatness and glory be ascribed to him for what he has done: or, as Kimchi, give him praise and greatness because you are dwelling in your border, and their border is desolate; and your border is called the border of Israel, but theirs the border of wickedness; and so the Targum, "let the glory of the Lord "be multiplied, because he hath enlarged the border "of Israel;" and, according to Jarchi, the sense is, he shall shew his greatness from our border, to make it known that we are his people: all shew and own that God had loved them more than others, and therefore they ought to have honoured and obeyed him, in which they were deficient, and so ungrateful.

[p] Harris's Voyages and Travels, vol. i. p. 474.
[q] Bibliothec. l. 3. p. 169.
[r] De Animal. l. 6. c. 63.
[s] Dr. Shaw, ut supra, p. 448.
[t] Tanchum apud Pocock in loc.
[u] וקראו להם & vocabuntur, V. L. Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Grotius.

Ver. 6. *A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master, &c.*] Or, *will honour*, or *should honour*; it is their duty to do so, both according to the laws of God and man; and so the Targum, "lo, concerning a son "it is said (or commanded) that he should honour his "father; and of a servant, that he should fear (or shew "reverence) before his master;" see Exod. xx. 12. Ephes. vi. 5: *if then I be a Father*; as he was the Father of his divine and eternal Son; the Father of spirits, angels, and the souls of men; the Father of all men by creation; and the Father of all mercies to them in providence, as he was to Israel; and, besides, was their Father by national adoption, as he was not to other people; and to many of them stood in this relation by special adopting grace: *where is mine honour?* there is an honour due to God on account of this relation; which should be shewn by loving him, trusting in him, calling upon him, imitating and obeying him, and by making use of what he has given for his glory; he is to be honoured in heart and life, by words and actions, and with our substance. This question suggests, that he had not the honour given him, which belonged unto him: *and if I be a master*; the word is in the plural number, and may be understood of Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit; though the first Person seems rather designed, who stands in this relation to Christ, as Mediator; to the angels, his ministering spirits; to the ministers of the Gospel, and to all the saints; and indeed to all men, and particularly to the Israelites; as appeared by the special laws and commands he enjoined them, and by his special government, protection, and care of them: *where is my fear?* fear and reverence are due to the Lord from his people, considered in such a relation to them; not a slavish fear of wrath and punishment; but a godly filial fear, which is influenced by the goodness of God, and appears in a carefulness not to offend him, and by the performance of all religious worship, both private and public; and in this not only natural men, but professors of religion, and even God's own people, are wanting; yea, those that should set examples to others, as men in public office, and of a public character, as follows: *saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name*; for what is before said is not only said to the people in general; but to the priests in particular, who ought to have honoured and feared the Lord; and yet they despised his name, or made it contemptible; by not paying that regard to his authority, as a father and master, they ought; by neglecting his worship, and not taking that care of offerings and sacrifices as became them: *and ye say, wherein have we despised thy name?* as if they were entirely innocent and guiltless.

Ver. 7. *Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar, &c.*] Which some understand of the shew-bread, mention being afterwards made of a *table*, as Jerom; who observes that it was made of wheat, which the priests themselves sowed, reaped, ground, and baked, and so could take what they would out of it: as for their sowing it, it does not seem likely that they should be employed in such service, whatever may be said for their reaping; since the sheaf of the first-fruits was reaped by persons deputed from the sanhedrim[w]; though of the reaping of that for the shew-bread, I find no mention made; but as for grinding, sifting, kneading, and making it into loaves, and baking it, and taking it out of the oven, and putting it upon the table of shew-bread, all this was the work of the priests[x]; and those of the house of Garmu[y] were appointed over that work: now, this bread might be said to be polluted, when they set upon the table such as was not made of fine wheat-flour, and had not pure frankincense put upon or by each row, as the law required, Lev. xxiv. 5, 7. nor is it any material objection to this sense, that it is an altar, and not a table, on which this bread was offered; since, as the altar is called a table, Ezek. xli. 22. as this is in a following clause, the table may be called an altar; though it may be observed, that the shew-bread is never said to be offered, but to be set, or put upon the table: indeed the burning of the frankincense set by it is called an offering made by fire unto the Lord, Lev. xxiv. 7. wherefore others interpret this of the daily meat-offering, which went along with the daily sacrifice of the lambs, and part of which was burnt on the altar, Exod. xxix. 40, 41, 42. or rather this designs sacrifice in general, sometimes called *bread*, Lev. iii. 11, 16. and xxi. 6. and so the Targum here, "ye offer upon "my altar an abominable offering;" such as had blemishes in them, were blind or lame, as after mentioned; and had not the requisites of a sacrifice in them; or were offered not in a right manner, or by bad men, and with a wicked mind: *and ye say, wherein have we polluted thee?* thy bread-offering or altar; as if their offerings were pure, and they themselves, and their consciences pure from sin. The answer is, *in that ye say, the table of the Lord is contemptible*; either the shew-bread table, which yet was covered with gold, and all the vessels of it made of gold; or the altar, as in Ezek. xli. 22. their actions spoke so loud, and declared that the table or altar of the Lord was a contemptible thing, since they cared not what was offered upon it: or the reason why it was had in contempt, as some think, was because there was not that holiness in the second temple as in the first: or, as Abarbinel and Kimchi say, because of the fat and the blood which were offered on the altar, which they esteemed contemptible things; not observing the end for which the Lord commanded them to be offered.

Ver. 8. *And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? &c.*] Certainly it is, according to the law in Lev. xxii. 22. or, as Kimchi interprets it, when they bring to you a lamb that is blind for sacrifice to offer it up, ye say, this is not evil; but it is good to offer it up, because the table is contemptible. The sense is, that, however evil this may be in itself, according to them it was good enough to be offered up upon the altar; which proves that they despised the name of the Lord, offered polluted bread or sacrifice on his altar, and had his table in contempt: *and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil?* verily it is, by the law of God, which forbids the offering of such things, Lev. xxii. 21, 22

[w] Misn. Menachot, c. 10. sect. 3.
[x] Maimon. Hilchot Tamidin, c. 5. sect. 6.
[y] Misn. Shekalim, c. 5. sect. 1.

Deut. xv. 21. this was always observed, in all sacrifices under the law, that they were perfect, and without any blemish, whether of the flock, or of the herd; and this was strictly observed, even by the Heathens themselves: so Achilles, in Homer[a], speaks of the perfect lambs and goats they offered in sacrifice; and particularly they were not to be lame, or to halt; such were reckoned choice and excellent sacrifices, which were larger and better fed than others; and which were not lame, nor diseased, nor sickly; for things future could not be known, they say, but from a sound victim[b]; for they pretended to have knowledge of them by the entrails of the sacrifices. So Pliny[c] observes, that this is to be remarked, that calves brought to the altar on men's shoulders are not to be sacrificed; nor are the gods appeased by one that halts; in short, it is said[d], whatever is not perfect and sound is not to be offered to them; and, besides these here mentioned in the text, there were many others, which the Jews especially observed, which rendered creatures unfit for sacrifice. Maimonides[e] reckons up no less than fifty blemishes, by reason of which the priests under the law might not offer a creature for sacrifice: no doubt but the laws of Moses concerning this matter had a respect to the pure, perfect, and spotless sacrifice of Christ, which the legal ones were typical of; and teach us this lesson, that, without a complete sacrifice, no atonement or satisfaction for sin could be made: or, it is not evil in your eyes, as Aben Ezra glosses it: which is the same as before: *offer it now unto thy governor;* to Zerubbabel, who was governor of Judea at this time, Hagg. i. 1. for they had no king. The meaning is, offer a lamb or any other creature that is blind, sick, and lame: make a present of it to him that had the government of them; make trial this way, and see how acceptable it would be to him: *will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts:* will he thank thee for it, or have any respect to thee on account of it? but, on the contrary, will he not resent it as an affront to him? and if so it would be with an earthly prince, how can it be thought that to offer the blind, lame, and sick, should be acceptable to the King of kings, and Lord of lords?

Ver. 9. *And now, I pray you, beseech God that he will be gracious unto us, &c.*] These are the words of the prophet to the priests; and are spoken either seriously, exhorting them to that part of their office which lay in interceding for the people that God would be gracious to them, and forgive their sins; and the rather, inasmuch as they had been the means of their sin, and accessary to it, who ought to have reproved them for bringing such offerings, and should have refused to offer them for them; or otherwise, if they did not do this, they could not expect that God would accept their persons, and their offerings: or else ironically, now you have offered such sacrifices to the Lord, as the blind, the lame, and sick, go and intercede for the people; pray that their sins may be forgiven them, and that the curse may be removed from them, and see how you will succeed: *this hath been by your means:* that such sacrifices were offered up; they indulged the people in such practices, and encouraged them; the fault was theirs; or this curse, as Kimchi explains it, from ver. 14.: *will he regard your persons? saith the Lord of hosts:* can you ever imagine that God will have any respect to your persons or prayers, when you have acted so vile a part, and been the cause of so much sin and evil? no, he will not, as is asserted in the following verse.

Ver. 10. *Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought? &c.*] Either of the temple, as the Targum and Jarchi; for at the several gates of the temple there were porters appointed in David's time, 1 Chron. xxvi. 1—19. and who were paid for their service: or of the court, as Kimchi; the court of the priests where the offerings were brought. The words *for nought* are not, in the original text, at the end of this clause, but at the end of the next; and are by some referred to both; and by others restrained to the latter; and who give this as the sense of the words, *who is there,* or *would there were any among you*[f]? any good man that would shut the doors of the temple, that so a man might not bring an abominable offering; intimating, that the priests or Levites however, who were porters, ought to shut the doors against such persons; and this way go Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbinel; to which the Chaldee paraphrase inclines; which is, "who is there among you that will "shut the door of the house of my sanctuary, that ye "may not offer on mine altar an abominable sacrifice?" but the same writers, out of an ancient book called Torath Cohanim, observe a sense that agrees with ours, "a man says to his friend, shut this door "for me, he desires nothing for it; light me this "candle, he asks no reward for it; but as for you, who "is there among you that will shut my doors for "nought? or kindle a fire on mine altar for nought? "and how much less will ye do freely those things "which used to be done for reward? therefore I have "no pleasure in you." There were four-and-twenty porters to open and shut the doors of the mountain of the house, or the temple, and the court of women in the day-time; six on the east side; four on the north; four on the south; at Asuppim two and two, four in all; four on the west, and two at Parbar[g]: here they attended in the day-time, to keep the place pure and peaceable; and there seems to have been one over all the rest, whose business was to see that the doors at evening were shut by them: in the Misna[h] we are told that Ben Geber was appointed over the shutting of the gates, *i. e.* of the temple; and at night there were four-and-twenty guards also that kept watch; the priests kept guard in three places; in the room *abtines,* in the room *nitsots,* and in the fire-room; and one-and-twenty Levites; five at the five gates of the mountain of the house, or the compass of the temple; four at the four corners within; five at the five gates of the court; and four at its four corners without; one at the

[a] Iliad. I. l. 66.
[b] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 12.
[c] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 45.
[d] Scholia in Aristoph. Acharn. Act 2. Scen. 3. p. 409.
[e] Hilchot Biath Hamikdash, c. 7. sect. 1. &c.
[f] מי גם בכם utinam vestrum aliquis, Gataker, Drusius.
[g] Kimchi in 1 Chron. xxvi. 1.
[h] Shekalim, c. 5. sect. 1.

chamber *Corban*; one at the chamber over-against the vail; and another behind the most holy place; and there was one that was called the man of the mountain of the house, who every night went through every ward with torches burning before him; and he had power to beat those he found asleep in their watch, and to burn their garments[i], to which the allusion is, Rev. xvi. 15. and these guards, as Bartenora[k] observes, were not on account of thieves and robbers, but for the honour of the house; and these, neither the one by day, nor the other by night, did their work for nought, but had a maintenance allowed them for it: *neither do ye kindle fire upon mine altar for nought*; and this was done every morning, for though, as one of the Jewish writers says[l], fire came down from heaven, it was ordered that they should bring of common fire; and there were three piles or rows of fire made every day upon the altar; the first was a large one, on which they offered the daily sacrifice, with the rest of the offerings; the second was on the side of it, a little one, from whence they took fire in the censer to burn incense every day; the third had no other use for it but to confirm the command concerning fire; as it is said, *the fire shall ever be burning*, Lev. vi. 13[m], and this fire was kindled to burn the sacrifices, the daily sacrifice, and other burnt-offerings, for which they were paid out of the tithes, and other oblations: see 1 Cor. ix. 13. this was an aggravation of their negligence and carelessness about what offerings were brought and sacrificed; seeing they were so well taken care of, and such a sufficient maintenance provided for them; so that they did not the least piece of service in the temple but they were fully rewarded for it; even not so much as to shut a door, or kindle a fire: and therefore it is no wonder their conduct should be resented, as follows: *I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts*: neither in your persons, nor in your offerings: *neither will I accept an offering at your hand*: the *minchah* or meat-offering, any meat-offering, particularly that which was offered morning and evening with the daily sacrifice, Exod. xxix. 40, 41. and it is sometimes used particularly for the evening meat-offering, 2 Kings xvi. 15. or rather, a *wheat* or *bread offering*: since this offering was made of fine flour, with oil poured upon it, and frankincense put upon that, Lev. ii. 1. hence mention is made of *incense* in the next verse; and it was either baked in an oven, or fried in a pan; and either way, when it was brought to the priest, it was burnt on the altar, and was an offering by fire to the Lord, and of a sweet savour to him, when rightly performed; and was a figure of the sacrifice of Christ, which is of a sweet-smelling savour to God; and this passage respects Gospel times, as appears from the following verse, when Christ's sacrifice would be offered up, and so the oblation or meat-offering made to cease, Dan. ix. 27. hence God would not accept of it any more; or else because not rightly offered, as it was not when any leaven was mixed with it, or that and honey were burnt with it; signifying it should be offered with sincerity, and without hypocrisy, and other carnal lusts; and indeed no legal sacrifices were acceptable to God but such as were offered up in the faith of Christ, and with a view to his sacrifice, without trusting to, and depending upon, the outward offering, as hypocrites and carnal persons did: wherefore to this is opposed a pure *minchah* or meat-offering in the next verse; which designs spiritual sacrifices, such as are now offered up under the Gospel dispensation; when offering and sacrifice of a ceremonial kind God desires not; he will have no more offered up; he takes no pleasure in them; they are not acceptable to him, being superseded by the sacrifice of his Son, they were types of; see Psal. xl. 6. Heb. x. 5, 6. and agreeably to which passages the words may be understood, as expressing the Lord's rejection of legal sacrifices in general among the Jews, which he would have no longer continued than till the Messiah came; by whose sufferings and death the daily sacrifice was caused to cease, Dan. ix. 27. Hos. iii. 4. when sacrifices of another kind should be offered up in the Gentile world, through every part of it, as in the following verse.

Ver. 11. *For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, &c.*] From east to west, which is all habitable; not so north and south, as Kimchi observes, the extremes of which are not habitable. Abarbinel thinks that מ in ממזרח is causal; and that the sense is, because of the motion of the sun in rising and setting, the Gentiles acknowledge God to be the first mover and cause of all things; and who, though they worship the host of heaven, yet ultimately direct their worship to the supreme Being, the Cause of causes; and supposes this to be a reproof of the priests, who might have learnt better even of the very Heathens; but the former is to the true sense, which declares the large extent of true spiritual worship in the Gentile world: *my name* shall be *great among the Gentiles*; through the preaching of the Gospel, attended with the spirit and power of God to the conversion of many; whereby he himself is made known, and the perfections of his nature, and his several names, and particularly that of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus; who, as such, is invocated, and greatness and glory are ascribed unto him for the gift of his Son, and the mission of him into the world, to be the Saviour of Gentiles as well as of Jews: *and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name*: some Jewish writers understand this of Israelites, the disciples of the wise men, studying in the law, and putting up their evening prayers to God, in every place where they live among the Gentiles; which are as acceptable to God as if they offered incense, and a pure offering; this way goes Jarchi, to which agrees the Targum; and this sense is given in the Talmud[n], and other writings of theirs; but Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Abarbinel, interpret it of the Gentiles, though in different ways, and foreign from the sense of the text; which is, that not in Jerusalem the worship of God should be as formerly, but in all places in the Gentile world, and where particularly prayer should be made to God; see John iv. 20, 21. 23. 1 Tim. ii. 8. comparable to incense for its fervency, fragrancy, and gratefulness, Psal. cxli. 2. Rev. viii. 3,

[i] Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect. 1, 2.
[k] In Misn. ib.
[l] Baal Hatturim in Lev. vi. 13.
[m] Maimon. Hilchot Tamidin, c. 2. sect. 4.
[n] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 110. 1. Tanchuma apud Abarbinel in loc.

4: *and a pure offering;* meaning either the Gentiles themselves, their souls and bodies, Isa. lxvi. 20. Psal. li. 17. Rom xii. 1. or their sacrifices of praise, good works, and alms-deeds, Heb. xiii. 15, 16. which, though imperfect, and not free from sin, may be said to be *pure*, proceeding from a pure heart, sprinkled by the blood of Christ, and offered in a pure and spiritual manner, and through the pure incense of Christ's mediation: *for my name* shall be *great among the Heathen, saith the Lord of hosts;* which is repeated for the certainty of it.

Ver. 12. *But ye have profaned it,* &c.] That is, the name of the Lord, which they are said to despise, ver. 6. and pollute, ver. 7. and is a reason why they and their offerings were rejected: and that they profaned the name of the Lord appears by this, *in that ye say, the table of the Lord is polluted:* the same with *contemptible*, ver. 7. as Kimchi observes; see the note there: *and the fruit thereof, even his meat is contemptible;* the word for *fruit*[*] sometimes is used for speech, the fruit of the lips, Isa. lvii. 19. and taken in this sense here, as it is by some, may be understood either of the word of God, which commanded such and such sacrifices to be offered up upon the altar, and was despised, so Abarbinel: or the word of the priests, who were continually saying that what was offered up on the altar was contemptible, even the food which they ate of: so Jarchi and Kimchi. *Fruit* and *meat* seem to signify one and the same thing, and design the fruit and meat of the altar; either that which belonged to the Lord, the fat and the blood, which were offered to him, and were reckoned contemptible; or that which fell to the share of the priests, which they thought mean and worthless. Coccius interprets this of Christ the Branch of the Lord, and fruit of the earth, Isa. iv. 2. whose meat it was to do the will of him that sent him, and was despised and rejected by the Jews; and which was the reason of God's casting them off, and taking in the Gentiles.

Ver. 13. *Ye said also, behold, what a weariness is it?* &c.] These are either the words of the priests, saying what a wearisome and fatiguing business the temple-service was to them, for which they thought they were poorly paid; such as slaying the sacrifices; removing the ashes from the altar; putting the wood in order; kindling the fire, and laying the sacrifice on it: or of the people that brought the sacrifice, who, when they brought a lamb upon their shoulders, and laid it down, said, how weary are we with bringing it, suggesting it was so fat and fleshy; so Kimchi and Abarbinel, to which sense the Targum seems to agree; which paraphrases it, "but if ye say, lo, what we have brought "is from our labour;" and so the Syriac version, *and ye say, this is from our labour;* and the Vulgate Latin version, *and ye say, lo, from labour;* and the Septuagint version, *and ye say, these are from affliction;* meaning that what they brought was with great toil and labour, out of great poverty, misery, and affliction: *and ye have snuffed at it, saith the Lord of hosts;* or, *blown it*[p]; filled it with wind, that it might seem fat and fleshy, when it was poor and lean; so Abarbinel and Abendana: or ye have puffed, and panted, and blown, as persons weary with bringing such a heavy lamb, when it was so poor and light, that, if it was blown at, it would fall to the ground; so R. Joseph Kimchi: or ye have puffed at it, thrown it upon the ground by way of contempt; so David Kimchi: or, *ye have grieved him*[q]; the owner of the lamb, from whom they stole it; which sense is mentioned by Kimchi and Ben Melech; taking the word rendered *torn*, in the next clause, for that which was *stolen*. Jarchi says this is one of the eighteen words corrected by the scribes; and that instead of אותו, *it*, it should be read אותי, *me*: and the whole rendered, *and ye have grieved me;* the Lord, by bringing such sacrifices, and complaining of weariness, and by their hypocrisy and deceitfulness. Coccius renders the words, *ye have made him to expire;* meaning the Messiah, whom the Jews put to death: *and ye have brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick;* see the note on ver. 8. and if the first word is rendered *stolen*, as it may, this offering was an abomination to the Lord, Isa. lxi. 8: *thus ye brought an offering;* such an one as it was: or a *minchah*, a meat-offering, along with these abominable ones: *should I accept this of your hands? saith the Lord:* which, when offered to a civil governor, would not be acceptable, ver. 8. and when contrary to the express law of God.

Ver. 14. *But cursed be the deceiver,* &c.] A cunning, crafty, subtle man, who thinks and contrives, speaks and acts, in a very artful and deceiving manner; though some derive the word from יכל, *to be able;* and so the Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, *who is able;* to bring a proper offering, a perfect lamb, as it follows: *which hath in his flock a male;* without spot and blemish, as the law requires: *and voweth and sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing;* that was a female, or had blemishes in it; for the law required what was perfect and without a blemish for a vow; what was superfluous or deficient in its parts might do for a free-will offering, but not for a vow, Lev. xxii. 18, 19, 20, 23. wherefore such a man must be accursed, and such conduct must be highly resented by the Lord; had he it not in his power to do better, it might be excusable; but then it would be better not to have vowed at all; but to vow a sacrifice to the Lord, and deal deceitfully with him, when he could have brought an offering agreeable to his vow, and to the law, this is aggravated wickedness: *for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts:* the King of the whole world, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; and therefore to be honoured and reverenced suitable to his dignity and greatness: *and my name is dreadful among the Heathen:* because of his judgments executed among them; or rather because of his Gospel preached unto them; for this may be considered as a prophecy of what would be when the Gospel should be spread in the Gentile world; and therefore if they, when he was made known to them, would fear and reverence him; then the Israelites, to whom he had given such instances and proofs of his love, ought to have shewn a greater regard unto him.

[*] ניבו & verbum ejus, Pagninus, Munster; sermo ejus, vel eorum, Vatablus; so Ben Melech.

[p] אותו הפחתם & efflastis illum, Montanus; anhelì isto estis, Tigurine version; exsufflare possetis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; difflatis, Drusius; sufflavistis illud, Burkius.

[q] Et contristastis illum; so some in Vatablus.

CHAP. II.

THIS chapter contains a reproof both of priests and people for their sins. It begins with the priests, ver. 1. and threatens, in case they attend not to glorify the name of the Lord, they and their blessings should be cursed, their seed corrupted, dung spread upon them, and they took away with it, ver. 2, 3. and the end of this commandment being sent them, of giving glory to the name of God, was that the covenant might appear to be with Levi, or him that was typified by him, ver. 4. of which covenant some account is given, with the reason why the blessings of it were given to him, with whom it was, ver. 5. who is described by the true doctrine he preached; by the purity of his lips; by the peaceableness and righteousness of his walk and conversation; and by his usefulness and success in turning many from sin, ver. 6. and it being part of the priest's office to preserve true knowledge, and communicate it, it is the duty of the people to seek to him for it; since he is the messenger of the Lord, ver. 7. but as for the priests of those times the prophet respects, they were apostates from the way of the Lord; made others to stumble at the law, and corrupted the covenant; and therefore became contemptible, base, and mean, in the sight of the people, ver. 8, 9. who are next reproved for their marrying with those of other nations, idolatrous persons; and using polygamy and divorces, which were a profanation of the covenant of their fathers; a piece of perfidy and treachery among themselves; an abomination to the Lord; a profanation of his holiness; and led to idolatry, ver. 10, 11. wherefore they are threatened to be cut off from the tabernacles of Jacob, and their sacrifices to be rejected; insomuch that the altar is represented as covered with weeping and tears, because disregarded, ver. 12, 13. The reason of which was, because marrying more wives than one, and these strange women, was dealing treacherously with their lawful wives; was contrary to the first creation of man, and the end of it; and therefore such practices ought to be avoided; and the rather, since putting away was hateful to the Lord, ver. 14, 15, 16. and the chapter is concluded with a charge against them, that they wearied the Lord with their wicked words; affirming that the Lord took delight in the men that did evil; and that there were no judgment, truth, nor righteousness, in him, ver. 17.

Ver. 1. *And now, O ye priests, &c.*] That despised and profaned the name of the Lord; that suffered such corrupt and illegal sacrifices to be brought and offered up: *this commandment is for you:* of giving glory to the name of God; of taking care of his worship; of teaching the people knowledge, and directing them in the way in which they should walk; as follows:

Ver. 2. *If ye will not hear, &c.*] The commandment enjoined them; or the Gospel preached to them by Christ, and his apostles: *and if ye will not lay it to heart to give glory to my name, saith the Lord of hosts:* which they had despised and profaned before; if they did not take care of his worship and service, and honour the Messiah sent unto them, in whom the name of the Lord was: *I will even send a curse upon you;* both upon priests and people; those that bring the bad offerings, and those that receive them, as Kimchi; though Abarbinel restrains it to the priests: *and I will curse your blessings,* either with which the priests blessed the people; or with which both they and the people were blessed; namely, their temporal blessings, such as their corn, and wine, and oil: and what wicked men have of this world, they have it with a curse, and not a blessing, as the righteous have; and therefore a little which they have, is better than much enjoyed by the wicked, Psal. xxxvii. 16: *yea, I have cursed them already:* that is, from the time they began to despise his name, and not give him the glory due unto him, as Kimchi and Abarbinel explain it: *because ye do not lay it to heart:* to glorify God.

Ver. 3. *Behold, I will corrupt your seed, &c.*] Or, *the seed for you*[t]; that is, for your sake, as Kimchi and Ben Melech explain it; meaning the seed they cast into the earth, which the Lord threatens to corrupt and destroy; so that it should not spring up again, and bring forth any increase: or, *rebuke*[u] it, as the word sometimes signifies; and so the Targum, "behold, I will rebuke you in the increase, the fruit "(son) of the seed." The sense is the same; corrupting the seed being a rebuke to them; and rebuking the seed being a corruption of that, or hindering it from growing up. It is a threatening of a sore famine that should be in the Jewish nation; and which Cocceius thinks was that which happened in the days of Claudius Cæsar, Acts xi. 28, 29. The Septuagint version renders it, *behold, I separate to you the shoulder;* the Arabic version, *the right hand,* or arm; and the Vulgate Latin is, *behold, I will cast forth to you the arm;* the right shoulder of the sacrifice, which was given to the priests, and here threatened to be cast to them with indignation, Lev. vii. 32, 34. Deut. xviii. 3. but the former sense is best: *and spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts;* that is, the dung of their beasts which were slain for sacrifice at their solemn feasts; so this word חג is used for a beast offered for sacrifice at a festival, Psal. cxviii. 27. The sense is, that their sacrifices and solemn feasts were so far from being acceptable to God, that he would reject both them and their persons, and would cast the very dung of the creatures brought for sacrifice into their faces, and spread it over them: a phrase expressive of the utmost contempt of them, and of exposing them to the greatest shame and confusion for their sins. So the Targum, "I will make manifest the "shame of your sins upon your faces; and will cause "to cease the magnificence of your feasts." The

[t] לכם propter vos, Munster, Drusius.

[u] גער increpabo, Tigurine version; increpo, Drusius, Cocceius; increpans, Burkius.

Septuagint render it, the ventricle, or *maw*: which was given to the priests, Deut. xviii. 3. and in which the dung was contained: *and one shall take you away with it;* with the dung spread upon them; they looking like a heap of dung, being covered with it, and had in no more account than that: or *to it*[t]; that is, as Jarchi explains it, to the dung of the beasts of your sacrifices they shall carry you; or you shall be carried to it, that ye may be rejected and despised as that. Kimchi's note is, "the iniquity (you are guilty of) "shall carry you to this contempt; measure for measure; you have despised me, and ye shall be "despised:" or *with him*, or *to himself*[u]; meaning he, or it that shall take them away; either the wind or dung; or the enemy, as Aben Ezra interprets it; by whom the Romans may be designed, who took them away out of their own land, and carried them captive. According to the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, this is to be understood of God, who render the words, *I will take you together*, or *with it*.

Ver. 4. *And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you*, &c.] See the note on ver. 1: *that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the Lord of hosts;* not that the ceremonial law might be confirmed and established, on which the Levitical priesthood was founded; for it was the will of God that that should be abolished, because of the weakness and unprofitableness of it; but that the covenant of grace made with Christ, the antitype of Levi, with whom the true Urim and Thummim are, Deut. xxxiii. 8, who has a more excellent ministry and priesthood than his, might take place, be made manifest, and be exhibited under the Gospel dispensation; of which, and of the person with whom it is, an account is given in the following verses.

Ver. 5. *My covenant was with him of life and peace*, &c.] Not with Aaron, nor with Phinehas; nor is it to be understood of a covenant, promising temporal life and outward prosperity to either of them; Aaron living a hundred and thirty-three years, Numb. xxxiii. 39. and Phinehas, according to some Jewish writers, above three hundred years, which they gather from Judg. xx. 28. but of the covenant made with Christ from everlasting, called a *covenant of life*, because it was made with Christ the Word of life, who was with the Father from all eternity, and in time was made manifest in the flesh; and was made in behalf of persons ordained to eternal life, and in which that was promised and given to them in him; and in which it was agreed that he should become man, and lay down his life as such, that they might enjoy it: and it is called a *covenant of peace*, because the scheme of peace and reconciliation was drawn in it, and agreed unto; Christ was appointed in it to be the Peacemaker; and in consequence of which he was sent to procure peace, and he has made it by the blood of his cross: and this covenant may be said to have been and to be *with him*: because it was made with him from all eternity, as the head and representative of his people, and he had all the blessings and promises of it put into his hands; and it stands fast with him, and will do so for evermore. *And I gave them to him;* namely, the blessings of life and peace; eternal life is the gift of God; and not only the promise of it, but that itself, was given to Christ in covenant for his people, and a power to give it to as many as the Father gave to him, Psal. xxi. 4, 2 Tim. i. 1. 1 John v. 12. John xvii. 2. he gave him also peace to make, put this work of peacemaking into his hand; and he allows it to be made by him, and that it is rightly effected; and from his blood and righteousness peace springs to his people; and they enjoy peace in him and through him, yea, all prosperity and happiness: for *the fear wherewith he feared me:* because of his obedience to the precept and penalty of the law; because of his righteousness, and sufferings, and death, by means of which life and peace came to his people, and in which he shewed great fear and reverence of God, Heb. v. 7. the word *for* is not in the original text, and may be left out in a version, or supplied with *and:* and the sense be, besides the blessings of life and peace, I also gave him the fear with which he feared me; which must be understood of the grace of fear bestowed on him as man: so the Septuagint version, *I gave unto him in fear to fear me;* and the Vulgate Latin version, *and I gave him fear, and he feared me;* and the Arabic version, *I gave him fear, that he might fear me:* the Targum is, "I gave him the perfect doctrine of the "law, or the doctrine of the perfect law (see Jam. i. 25), "that he might fear before me." *And he was afraid before my name;* affrighted, and put into consternation, as he was when in the garden, and he began to be heavy and sore amazed, Mark xiv. 33. or he was broken and bruised, as Kimchi interprets the word here used, because of the name of the Lord, to satisfy his justice, fulfil his law, and glorify all his perfections.

Ver. 6. *The law of truth was in his mouth*, &c.] The Gospel, the word and doctrine of truth; which comes from the God of truth; is concerning Christ the truth; and men are guided into it by the Spirit of truth; it contains most glorious truths, and nothing but truth: and this was in the mouth of Christ, being put there by his Father, who gave him what he should say, and what he should speak; and which was preached by him in the most faithful manner, and so as it never was by any other, for which he was abundantly qualified: *and iniquity was not found in his lips;* there was none in his nature; nor in his heart; nor in his life; nor in his lips; none could be found there by men nor devils: there was no falsehood in his doctrines; no deceit in his promises; no dissimulation in his expressions of love to men; nothing vain, light, frothy, and unprofitable, dropped from him in common conversation; no reviling in return to his enemies; nor any impatient expressions or murmurings at the time of his sufferings and death, 1 Pet. ii. 22, 23: *he walked with me in peace and equity:* he walked with God, he had communion with him; though he was sometimes left alone, he was not alone, God was with him; he was conformable to his will, and walked according to it,

[t] אליו, εἰς τὸ αὐτό, Sept.; ad istud, so some in Vatablus, De Dieu.

[u] Ad se, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Calvin, Burkius.

in obedience to his law, moral and ceremonial, and in the discharge of all religious duties: he walked with God *in peace*, without quarrelling with any of his dispensations towards him; he did nothing to break the peace that subsisted between them, but always did the things which pleased his father, and had peace in what he did; and he walked with him *in equity*, or righteousness, fulfilling his righteous law, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness: *and did turn many away from iniquity*: doctrinal and practical; which is to be understood, not of a bare reformation only in principle and practice, but of true real conversion; of which there were many instances under the ministry of his forerunner John the Baptist, and under his own ministry when in person on earth; and under the ministry of his apostles, attended with his spirit and power, both in Judea, and in the Gentile world.

Ver. 7. *For the priest's lips should keep knowledge*, &c.] Or *shall keep knowledge*, as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions; or *do keep knowledge*, as the Arabic version; and so the Syriac version, *for the lips of the priest drop knowledge*: all this is true of Christ our great High-priest; for as it was predicted of him that his lips should keep knowledge, so they have kept it, and do keep it; not concealing it, but preserving it, and communicating it freely and openly; as he did to his disciples and followers when here on earth, and by them to others; and still does by his spirit, giving to men the knowledge of themselves and state; the knowledge of himself, and the way of salvation by him, and of the truths of the Gospel: *and they should seek the law at his mouth*; not the law of Moses, but the doctrine of grace, and any wholesome instruction and advice; which he is greatly qualified to give, being the wonderful Counsellor: it may be rendered, *they shall seek*, or *do seek*; and which has been fulfilled, especially in the Gentiles, and in the isles that waited for his law or doctrine, Isa. xi. 10. and xlii. 4: *for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts*; or *angel**; he is the Angel of God's presence, and of the covenant, Isa. lxiii. 9. Mal. iii. 1. which name he has from being sent, for he came not of himself, but his father sent him; he was sent as a priest to atone for the sins of his people, and to be their Saviour; and as a prophet, to instruct and teach them; and therefore they should seek to him for knowledge, and attend his word and ordinances, and implore his spirit and grace.

Ver. 8. *But ye are departed out of the way*, &c.] Of truth and righteousness, of life and peace, of eternal salvation and happiness, pointed to by Christ and his forerunner, and by his apostles and ministers that followed him, and which was clearly shewed in the preaching of the Gospel: this was the character of the chief priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, in Christ's time, to which the prophet seems to have respect: who not only failed in their observance of legal sacrifices, complained of in the former chapter, but left that way of atonement and salvation they directed to, and led others out of the way with them: *ye have caused many to stumble at the law*; at the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ; which was the stumbling-stone they fell at, seeking for righteousness, and directing others to seek for it, not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, Rom. ix. 32, 33: *ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts*; that which was shadowed out by the Levitical priesthood and covenant, namely, the covenant of grace, dispensed under the Gospel dispensation by the ministry of the word and ordinances; which they rejected, despised, and set at nought, and as much as in them lay endeavoured to make void, by not attending to these things, nor suffering others, but doing all they could to bring them into disuse, contempt, and disgrace.

Ver. 9. *Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base*, &c.] When their city and temple were destroyed by the Romans, and they were carried captive by them, and became a taunt and a proverb in all places where they came: *before all the people*; the nations of the world, among whom they were scattered: *according as ye have not kept my ways*; neither those which the law directed to, either moral or ceremonial; nor what the Gospel directed to, the ordinances and institutions of Christ, particularly baptism, which the Jews rejected against themselves, Luke vii. 30: *but have been partial in the law*; in the observance of it, attending to the lesser, and taking no notice of the weightier matters of it, as the Jews are charged by Christ, Matt. xxiii. 23. and in the interpretation of it, restraining its sense only to outward actions, for which they are reproved, Matt. v. or *received faces*, or *accepted persons in the law**; in matters of the law they were concerned in, they had respect to the persons of men, by giving the sense of it, and pronouncing judgment, in favour of some, to the prejudice of others, wrongly.

Ver. 10. *Have ye not all one father?* &c.] Whether this is understood of Adam the first man, of whose blood all nations of the earth are made, and who in the same sense is the father of all living, as Eve was the mother of all living; or of Abraham the father of the Jewish people, of whom, as their father, they used to glory; or of Jacob, as Kimchi and Aben Ezra interpret it, whom the Jews used to call our father Jacob; or of God, who is the Father of all men by creation, and of the Jews by national adoption of them; and who may the rather be thought to be meant, since it follows, *hath not one God created us?* either as men, or formed us as a body politic; which may serve to explain what is meant by their having one father: whichever is the sense of these words, the argument from hence is strong; that there ought to be no partiality used in the law, or any respect had to persons, in that the rich and the poor have all one Father and one Creator; see Jam. ii. 1—8: *why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother*; by perverting justice, having respect to persons, favouring one to the prejudice of another, as it follows: *by profaning the covenant of your fathers?* the covenant made with them at Sinai, as Jarchi explains it; the law that was then

* מלאך ἄγγελος, Sept.; angelus, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius, Burkius.

* ונושאים פנים בתורה et accepistis faciem in lege, Pagninus; assumentes facies, Montanus; suscipitis faciem, Piscator; accipitis faciem, Cocceius; et ferentes faciem in lege, Burkius.

enjoined them, particularly such as forbid respect of persons, Lev. xix. 15. Deut. xvi. 19. some think, as Aben Ezra, that a new section here begins, and that the prophet proceeds to a new reproof, and for another sin these people were guilty of, in marrying wives of another nation, contrary to the law in Exod. xxxiv. 15. which was dealing treacherously with one another, and profaning the covenant of their fathers.

Ver. 11. *Judah hath dealt treacherously, &c.*] Not only every man against his brother, by being partial in the law; or against the women of their nation, by marrying others; or against their wives, by putting them away; but against Christ the Son of God, by betraying and delivering him up into the hands of the Gentiles, to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified: *and an abomination is committed in Israel, and in Jerusalem*; which was the taking of the true Messiah with wicked hands, condemning him and putting him to death, even the shameful and accursed death of the cross; which was done in the land of Israel, and in and near the city of Jerusalem: *for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the Lord, which he loved*; Christ, who is the Lord's holy One, holiness itself, the most holy, and holiness to the Lord for his people; and who is his dear Son, the Son of his love, whom he loved from everlasting, continued to love in time amidst all his meanness, sorrows, and sufferings, and will love for evermore; him the Jews profaned by blaspheming him, falsely accusing him, and condemning him; by spitting upon him, buffeting, scourging, and crucifying him: some interpret this *holiness* of the soul of Judah, which was holy before the Lord, and loved, as the Targum; so Jarchi of Judah himself, or Israel, who was holiness to the Lord; and others of the holy place, the sanctuary, and all holy things belonging thereto; and others of the holy state of marriage, since it follows: *and hath married the daughter of a strange god*; which the Targum paraphrases thus, "and they were pleased to take "to them wives, the daughters of the people;" the Gentiles, such as Moabites, Ammonites, and the like: and this sense is followed by most interpreters, though the phrase seems rather to be expressive of idolatry; and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions interpret it of their being intent upon, and serving, strange gods; and as the Jews rejected the Son of God, and his word, ordinances, and worship, they had not the true God, nor did they worship him, but became guilty of idolatry; and besides, as they rejected the King Messiah from being their King, so they declared they had no king but Cæsar, an idolatrous emperor, and joined with the idolatrous Gentiles in putting Christ to death, John xix. 12, 15. Acts iv. 27.

Ver. 12. *The Lord will cut off the man that doeth this, &c.*] That is guilty of such treachery, wickedness, and idolatry; or *to the man that doeth this* [y]; all that belong to him, his children and substance: it denotes the utter destruction, not of a single man and his family only, but of the whole Jewish nation and its polity, civil and ecclesiastical, as follows: *the master and the scholar out of the tabernacles of Jacob*; the Targum paraphrases it, "the son, and son's son, out "of the cities of Jacob;" agreeable to which is Kimchi's note, "it is as if it was said, there shall not be "left in his house one alive; that there shall not be in "his house one that answers him, that calls by name." In the Hebrew text it is, *him that is awake, and him that answers* [z]; which the Talmudists [a] explain, the former of the wise men or masters, and the latter of the disciples of the wise men; to which sense our version agrees: but by *him that waketh* or *watcheth*, according to Cocceius, is meant the civil magistrate, who watches for the good of the commonwealth, and so may design the elders and rulers of the people; and by him that *answereth*, the prophet, who returns answers when he is consulted in things belonging to the law of God, and such were the scribes and lawyers. *And him that offereth an offering unto the Lord of hosts*; the priests, that offered sacrifice for the people; so that hereby is threatened an entire destruction, both of the civil and ecclesiastical polity of the Jews, that there should be no prince, prophet, and priest among them; all should be removed out of the tents of Jacob, or cities of Israel; see Hos. iii. 4.

Ver. 13. *And this have ye done again, &c.*] Or *in the second* [b] place; to their rejection and ill treatment of Christ they added their hypocritical prayers and tears, as follows: *covering the altar of the Lord with tears and weeping, and with crying out*; for the Messiah they vainly expect, pretending great humiliation for their sins: though some, as Kimchi and Aben Ezra, make the first evil to be their offering illegal sacrifices on the altar, complained of in the former chapter; and this second, their marrying strange wives, on account of which their lawful wives came into the house of God, and wept over the altar before the Lord, complaining of the injury that was done them: *insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand*; which expresses an utter rejection and abrogation of legal sacrifices; and which some make to be the reason of their covering the altar with tears and weeping; or the altar is represented as weeping, because sacrifice is no more offered upon it; see Dan. ix. 27. Hos. iii. 4.

Ver. 14. *Yet ye say, wherefore? &c.*] What's the meaning of the women covering the altar with tears? as if they knew not what was the reason of it, when they were so notoriously guilty of breach of covenant with them; which is an instance of their impudence, as Abarbinel observes: or, *if ye say, wherefore?* as the Targum and Kimchi interpret the words; should you say, what's the reason why the Lord will not regard nor receive our offerings? the answer is ready, *because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth*; when espoused together in their youthful days, the Lord was present at that solemn contract, and saw the obligations they were laid under to each other, and he was called upon by both parties to be a witness of the same; and at the present time he was a witness how agreeably the wives of the Israelites had behaved towards their husbands, and how treacherously they had acted towards them; he saw and knew, that, whatever

[y] לאיש viro, Drusius, Cocceius, Burkius, De Dieu; illius et qui fecerit istud, Piscator.

[z] ער וענה vigilantem & respondentem, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius, Grotius; vigilantem & respondentem, Junius & Tremellius; vigilem & respondentem, Burkius.

[a] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 82. 1.

[b] שנית secundo, Pagninus, Vatablus, Calvin, Cocceius, Burkius.

pretensions they made, they did not love them, nor behave as they should towards them; and therefore had just cause of complaint against them, and must be a witness for the one, and against the other: this sin of hating and divorcing their wives, or of marrying others besides them, which prevailed much in our Lord's time, is particularly mentioned, though they were guilty of many other sins, as a reason of the Lord's not accepting their offerings: the aggravations of it are, that they had broken a contract God was witness to, and dealt injuriously with wives they had espoused in the days of their youth; see Prov. ii. 17. and v. 18: *against whom thou hast dealt treacherously;* by divorce or polygamy: the Vulgate Latin version renders it, *whom thou hast despised:* and the Septuagint and Arabic versions, *whom thou hast left;* divorced and took others, which arose from hatred and contempt of their former: other aggravations follow: *yet is she thy companion;* or, *and she is,* or *though she is thy companion*[c]: has been so in time past, and ought to be so still, and so accounted: the wife is a part of a man's self, is one flesh with him; a partaker of what he has; a partner with him in prosperity and adversity; a companion in life, civil and religious, and ought to remain so till death part them; for, whom God has put together, let no man put asunder: *and the wife of thy covenant;* wherefore either to divorce her, or marry another, was a breach of covenant; for by *covenant* is not meant the covenant of God made with the people of Israel, in which they both were; but the covenant of marriage made between them, and which was broken by such practices.

Ver. 15. *And did not he make one?* &c.] That is, did not God make one man, and out of his rib one woman? did he not make man, male and female? did he not make one pair, one couple, only Adam and Eve, whom he joined together in marriage? or rather, did he not make one woman only, and brought her to Adam to be his wife? which shews that his intention and will were, that one man should have but one wife at a time; the contrary to which was the then present practice of the Jews: *yet had he the residue of the spirit:* it was not for want of power that he made but one woman of Adam's rib, and breathed into her the breath of life, or infused into her a human soul or spirit; he could have made many women at the same time; and as the Father of spirits, having the residue of them with him, or a power left to make as many as he pleased, he could have imparted spirits unto them, and given Adam more wives than one: *and wherefore one?* what is the reason why he made but one woman, when he could have made ten thousand, or as many as he pleased? the answer is, *that he might seek a godly seed;* or *a seed of God*[d]; a noble excellent seed; a legitimate offspring, born in true and lawful wedlock; see 1 Cor. vii. 14. a seed suitable to the dignity of human nature, made after the image of God, and not like that of brute beasts, promiscuous and uncertain: *therefore take heed to your spirit;* to your affections, that they don't go after other women, and be led thereby to take them in marriage, and to despise and divorce the lawful wife, as it follows: *and let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth;* by marrying another, or divorcing her: these words are differently rendered and interpreted by some; but the sense given seems to be the true one, and most agreeable to the scope of the place. Some render the first clause, *hath not one made*[e]? that is, did not the one God, who is the only living and true God, make one man or one woman? and then the sense is the same as before; or did not that one God make, constitute, and appoint, that the woman should be the man's companion, and the wife of his covenant, as in the latter part of the preceding verse? or, *did not one do*[f]? that is, so as we have done, take another wife besides the wife of his youth? and so they are the words of the people to the prophets, justifying their practice by example; by the example of Abraham, whom some of the Jewish writers think is intended by the *one,* as in Isa. li. 2. Ezek. xxxiii. 24. The Targum is, "was not one Abraham alone, from "whom the world was created?" or propagated. Kimchi gives it as his own sense, in these words; "Abraham, who was one, and the father of all that "follow him in his faith, did not do as ye have done; "for he did not follow his lust, nor even marry Sarah, "but so that he might cause the seed of God to re-"main;" yet he mentions it as his father's sense, that they are the words of the people to the prophet, expressed in a way of interrogation, saying, did not our father Abraham, who was one, do as we have done? who left his wife, and married Hagar his maid, though he had the residue or excellency of the spirit, and was a prophet; to whom the prophet replies, and what did that one seek? a godly seed; which is, as if it was said, when he married Hagar, it was to seek a seed, because he had no seed of Sarah his wife. A seed was promised him, in which all nations of the earth were to be blessed; he sought not to gratify his lust, but to obtain this seed, the Messiah, to whom the promises were made, as the apostle argues, Gal. iii. 16. *he saith not, and to seeds as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ;* called here the *godly seed,* or the *seed God*[g], as some choose to render the words; that is, that seed which is God, who is a divine Person, God and man in one person; or which is of God, of his immediate production, without the help of a man; which the Jews call the seed that comes from another place, and which they use as a periphrasis of the Messiah. So on those words in Gen. iv. 25, *she called his name Seth, for God hath appointed me another seed,* "says R. Tanchuma, in the name of "R. Samuel, she has respect to that seed which "comes from another place; and what is this?

[c] והיא חברתך & ipsa est socia tua, Montanus, Drusius, Burkius; quum sit socia tua, Pagninus, Munster, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.

[d] זרע אלהים semen Dei, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Burkius.

[e] ולא אחד עשה nonne unus fecit? V. L. Menochius, Tirinus.

[f] Et ne unus fecit? Pagninus, Montanus; et unus ille (Abramus) ita egit? Grotius; annon unus hoc fecit? Tigurine version; so Joseph Kimchi.

[g] זרע אלהים semen Deus, Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. Ver. l. 8. c. 2. p. 550.

"this is the King Messiah [h]." And the same Rabbi elsewhere [i] observes, on those words in Gen. xix. 32, *that we may preserve seed of our father*, "it is not "written, that we may preserve a son of our father, "but that we may preserve seed of our father; "that seed which is he that comes from another "place; and what is this? this is the King Messiah." Now as Abraham had the promise of a son, and his wife was barren, he took the method he did that he might have one, the son of the promise, a type of the Messiah, and from whom he should spring; and this is sufficient to justify him in it: besides, he did not deal treacherously with Sarah his wife, for it was with her good will and by her authority he did this thing; but do you take heed to your spirit, that no one of you deal treacherously with the wife of his youth, to leave her, and marry the daughter of a strange God: and much the same sense Jarchi takes notice of as the Agadah, or the interpretation of their ancient Rabbins. Some render the words, *and not one does this*; that is, deals treacherously with the wife of his youth, that has the residue of the spirit, or the least spark of the spirit of God in him; and how should any one do it, seeking a godly seed? therefore take heed to your spirit, &c.; so De Dieu. But according to others the sense is, "there is not one of you that does according to "the law, whose spirit remains with him that is not "mixed with the daughter of a strange god;" which is Aben Ezra's note. But according to Abarbinel the sense is, not one only has done this, committed this evil, in marrying more and strange women; not some only, and the rest have the spirit with them, and keep it pure from this sin; so that a godly seed cannot be procreated from you; therefore take heed to your spirit.

Ver. 16. *For the Lord the God of Israel saith, that he hateth putting away*, &c.] The divorcing of wives; for though this was suffered because of the hardness of their hearts, it was not approved of by the Lord; nor was it from the beginning; and it was disagreeable, and even hateful to him, Matt. xix. 8. in the margin of some Bibles the words are rendered, *if he hate her, put her away*; and so the Targum, "but if thou hatest "her, put her away;" to which agree the Vulgate Latin, Septuagint, and Arabic versions; and this sense made mention of in both Talmuds, and is thought to be agreeable to the law in Deut. xxiv. 3. though the law there speaks of a fact that might be, and not of what ought to be; wherefore the former sense is best; and this other seems to have been at first calculated to favour the practice of the Jews, who put away their wives through hatred to them. The Jews were very much inclined to divorce their wives upon very trivial occasions; if they did not dress their food well, were not of good behaviour, or not so modest as became the daughters of Israel; if they did not find favour with their husbands; and, especially, if they had entertained a hatred of them: so says R. Judah [k], "if he hate her, let him put her away:" but this is by some of them restrained to a second wife; for of the first they say, "it is not proper to be hasty to put "away a first wife; but a second, if he hates her, "let him put her away [l]." and R. Eleazer says [m], whoever divorces his first wife, even the altar sheds tears for him, referring to the words in ver. 13. and divorces of this kind they only reckon lawful among the Israelites, and found it upon this passage; for so they make God to speak after this manner [n], "in Israel I "have granted divorces; among the nations of the "world I have not granted divorces. R. Chananiah, "in the name of R. Phinehas, observes, that in every "other section it is written, *the Lord of hosts*; but "here it is written, *the God of Israel*, to teach thee "that the holy blessed God does not put his name to "divorces (or allow them) but in Israel only. R. "Chayah Rabba says, the Gentiles have no divorces." But some of them have better understanding of these words, and more truly give the sense of them thus, as R. Jochanan does, who interprets them, "the putting "away of the wife is hateful [o];" it is so to God, and ought not to be done by men but in case of adultery, as our Lord has taught, Matt. v. 32. and xix. 9. and which was the doctrine of the school of Shammai in Christ's time, who taught, "that no man should di- "vorce his wife, unless he found in her filthiness;" *i. e.* that she was guilty of adultery; though this Maimonides restrains to the first wife, as before: but the house of Hillell, who lived in the same time, was of a different mind, and taught that "if she burnt his "food;" either over-dressed or over-salted it, according to Deut. xxiv. 1. R. Akiba says, if he found another more beautiful than her, according to Deut. xxiv. 1, he might divorce her [p]; of the form of a divorce, see the note on Matt. v. 31. Those interpreters among Christians that go this way don't look upon this as an approbation of divorce, on account of hatred; but that so to do is better than to retain them with hatred of them, seeing it was connived at, or than to take other wives with them. *For one covereth violence with his garment*, or *on his garment, saith the Lord of hosts*; as he that puts away his wife does her an open injury, which though he may cover, pretending the law, which connives at divorces; yet the violence done to his wife is as manifest as the garment upon his back: though those who think the former words are an instruction to put away wives, when hated, consider this as a reason why they should do so; because, by retaining them, and yet hating them, and taking other wives to them, is doing them a real injury, whatever cover or pretence may be used; because, if dismissed, they might be loved by, and married to, other men. Aben Ezra seems to have hit the sense of these words, when he makes this to be the object of God's hatred, as well as the former; his note is, "the Lord hateth him that putteth away his wife "that is pure, and he hates him that covereth; or God "sees his violence which is done in secret." Mr. Pocock proposes a conjecture, which is very ingenious

[h] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 23. fol. 20. 4. Midrash Ruth, fol. 36. 1.
[i] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 51. fol. 46. 1. Midrash Ruth, fol. 35. 4.
[k] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 90. 2.
[l] Maimon. Hilchot Geroshin, c. 10, 21, 22.
[m] T. Bab. Gittin, ib.
[n] T. Hieros. Kiddushin, c. 1. fol. 58. 3.
[o] T. Bab. Gittin, ut supra.
[p] Misn. Gittin, c. 9. sect. 10.

and probable, that as the words will bear the construction Aben Ezra gives, that God hates putting away, and hates that one should put violence upon or over his garment; by *garment* he thinks may be meant a man's lawful wife, which is as a garment to him; and by *violence* a second wife, or other wives, taken to the injury, hurt, and vexation of the former; and the covering, or superinducing violence over the garment, is marrying an unlawful wife, over or with, or above his lawful one: and the sense is, that as God hates divorce, so he hates polygamy: *therefore take heed to your spirit, that you deal not treacherously*: see the note on the preceding verse.

Ver. 17. *Ye have wearied the Lord with your words,* &c.] As well as with their actions; see Isa. xliii. 24. this is said after the manner of men, they saying those things which were displeasing and provoking to him, and which he could not bear to hear; or otherwise weariness properly cannot be attributed to God: *yet ye say, wherein have we wearied him?* as if they were clear and innocent; or, as the Targum, *if ye should say*; though they might not express themselves in words in such an impudent manner; yet should they say so in their hearts, or supposing they should utter such words with their lips, out of the abundance of their evil hearts, the answer is ready: *when ye say, every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them*; which they concluded from the prosperity of the wicked, and the afflictions of the righteous; so murmuring at, and complaining of, the providence of God; he acting as if he delighted in wicked men, and as if they that did evil were the most grateful and acceptable to him: *or*, if this was not the case, *where is the God of judgment?* why does he not arise and shew himself to be a God that judgeth the earth, by taking vengeance on the wicked, and granting prosperity to his people? De Dieu takes these last words to be the words of the prophet, and thinks that אי is a particle of exclamation, and should be rendered *O*; and that the prophet expresses his wonder at the patience and long-suffering of God in bearing such impiety and blasphemy as before delivered. The Septuagint and Arabic versions are, *where is the God of righteousness?* either God the Father, who is righteous in all his ways, and faithful in the fulfilment of all his promises; or, Christ the Lord our righteousness, who was to come, and is come into this world for judgment, as well as to bring in an everlasting righteousness. This may be considered as a scoff of wicked men at the long delay of the Messiah's coming, when they expected outward prosperity and happiness; just as the scoffers in the last day will mock at the promise of his second coming, 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4. and so the words, with which the next chapter begins, are an answer to these.

CHAP. III.

THIS chapter begins with a prophecy of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ; and of the coming of Christ, and the effects and consequences of it, with respect both to the righteous and the wicked; and it contains accusations and charges of sin against the Jews, intermixed with exhortations to repentance. John the Baptist is promised to be sent, and is described by his office as a messenger, and by his work, to prepare the way of the Lord; and the Messiah is prophesied of, who is described by his characters; with respect to himself, the Lord and Messenger of the covenant; with respect to the truly godly among the Jews, as the object of their desire and delight; whose coming is spoken of as a certain thing, and which would be sudden; and the place is mentioned he should come into, ver. 1. and this his coming is represented as terrible to the wicked, and as trying and purifying to the righteous, expressed by the various similes of a refiner's fire, and fuller's soap; and the end answered by it, their offering a righteous offering to the Lord, ver. 2, 3, 4. but with respect to the wicked, he declares he should be a swift witness against them, whose characters are particularly given, and this assured from his immutability; the consequence of which to the saints is good, being their security from destruction, ver. 5, 6. and next a charge is commenced against the wicked Jews, as that in general they had for a long time revolted from the Lord, and were guilty of sins of omission and commission, and are therefore exhorted to return to the Lord, with a promise that he'll return to them, and yet they refuse, ver. 7. and, in particular, that they were guilty of sacrilege, and so accounted, even the whole nation, in withholding tithes and sacrifices, which they are exhorted to bring in; to which they are encouraged with promises of blessings of prosperity and protection, ver. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. and that they had spoken impudent and blasphemous words against the Lord; which, though excepted to, is proved by producing their own words, ver. 13, 14, 15. and by the contrary behaviour of those that feared the Lord, who were taken notice of by him, and were dear unto him, ver. 16, 17. wherefore it is suggested, that the time would come when there would be a manifest difference made between the one and the other, ver. 18.

Ver. 1. *Behold, I will send my messenger,* &c.] These are the words of Christ, in answer to the question put in the last verse of the preceding chapter, *where is the God of judgment?* intimating that he would quickly appear, and previous to his coming send his messenger or angel; not the angel of death to destroy the wicked, as Jarchi thinks; nor an angel from heaven, as Kimchi; nor Messiah the son of Joseph, as Aben Ezra; nor the Prophet Malachi himself, as Abarbinel; but the same that is called Elijah the prophet, ch. iv. 5. and is no other than John the Baptist, as is clear from Matt. xi. 10. Mark i. 2. called a *messenger* or *angel*, not by nature, but by office; and Christ's messenger, because sent by him and on his errand; and which shews the power and authority of Christ in sending forth ministers; his superior excellency to John, and his

existence before him, or he could not be sent by him, and so before his incarnation; for John was sent by him before he was in the flesh, and consequently this is a proof of the proper deity of Christ: and the word *behold* is prefixed to this, in order to raise the attention of those that put the above question, and all others; as well as to shew that the message John was sent upon was of the greatest moment and importance; as that the Messiah was just ready to appear, his kingdom was at hand, and the Jews ought to believe in him; though it also respects the coming of the Messiah, spoken of in the latter part of the text: *and he shall prepare the way before me*: by declaring to the Jews that he was born, and was in the midst of them; by pointing him out unto them; by preaching the doctrine of repentance, and exhorting them to believe in him; and by administering the ordinance of baptism in general to all proper subjects, and in particular to Christ, by which he was made manifest to Israel; see the note on Mark i. 2. the allusion is to kings and great men sending persons before them when on a journey, to give notice of their coming, and provide for them: *and the Lord, whom ye seek*: this is the person himself speaking, the Son of God, and promised Messiah, the Lord of all men, and particularly of his church and people, in right of marriage, by virtue of redemption, and by being their Head and King; so Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it of him, and even Abarbinel[q] himself; the Messiah that had been so long spoken of and so much expected, and whom the Jews sought after, either in a scoffing manner, expressed in the above question, or rather seriously; some as a temporal deliverer, to free them from the Roman yoke, and bring them into a state of liberty, prosperity, and grandeur; and others as a spiritual Saviour, to deliver from sin, law, hell, and death, and save them with an everlasting salvation: *shall suddenly come to his temple*: meaning not his human nature, nor his church, sometimes so called; but the material temple at Jerusalem, the second temple, called *his*, because devoted to his service and worship, which proves him to be God, and because of his frequency in it; here he was brought and presented by his parents at the proper time, for the purification of his mother; here he was at twelve years of age disputing with the doctors; and here Simeon, Anna, and others, were waiting for him, Luke ii. 22, 25, 27, 38, 46. and we often read of his being here, and of his using his authority in it as the Lord and proprietor of it; and of the Hosannahs given him here, Matt. xxi. 12—15, 23. the manner in which he should come, *suddenly*, may refer to the manifestation of it, quickly after John the Baptist had prepared his way by his doctrine and baptism: *even the messenger of the covenant*; not of the covenant of works with Adam, of which there was no mediator and messenger; nor of the covenant of circumcision, at which, according to the Jews, Elias presides; nor of the covenant at Sinai, of which Moses was the mediator; but of the covenant of grace, of which Christ is not only the Surety and Mediator; but, as here, *the Messenger*; because it is revealed, made known, and exhibited in a more glorious manner by him under the Gospel dispensation, through the ministration of the word and ordinances. De Dieu observes, that the word in the Ethiopic language signifies a prince as well as a messenger, and so may be rendered, *the Prince of the covenant*, which is a way of speaking used in Dan. xi. 22: *whom ye delight in*; either carnally, as they pleased themselves with the thoughts of a temporal prince, and of great honour and grandeur under him; and as they would have done, had he submitted to have been made a king by them in this sense; or rather spiritually, and so is to be understood of such who had a spiritual knowledge of him, and joy in him; who rejoiced and delighted in the contemplation of his person, offices, righteousness, and salvation: *he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts*: this expresses the certainty of his coming, being said by himself, who is the Lord of hosts, the Lord of armies in heaven and in earth, the King of kings, and Lord of lords. This passage is, in some Jewish writers[r], interpreted of the world to come, or times of the Messiah.

Ver. 2. *But who may abide the day of his coming?* &c.] When he should be manifest in Israel, and come preaching the Gospel of the kingdom; who could bear the doctrines delivered by him, concerning his deity and equality with God the Father; concerning his character and mission as the Messiah, and his kingdom not being a temporal, but a spiritual one; concerning his giving his flesh for the life of the world, and eating that by faith; concerning distinguishing and efficacious grace; and all such that so severely struck at the wickedness of the Scribes and Pharisees, and their self-righteous principles; and especially since for judgment he came, that they might not see? nor could they bear the light of this glorious Sun of righteousness; and he came not to send peace and outward prosperity to the Jews, but a sword and division, John ix. 39. Matt. x. 34. Luke xii. 51. very few indeed could bear his ministry, or the light of that day, it being so directly contrary to their principles and practices: *and who shall stand when he appeareth?* in his kingdom and glory, to take vengeance on the Jews for their rejection of him and his Gospel; for this coming and appearance of his include all the time between his manifestation in the flesh and the destruction of Jerusalem; and so all those sorrows and distresses which went before it, or attended it, and were such as had never been from the creation of the world; and unless those times had been shortened, no flesh could have been saved; see Matt. xxiv. 3—22. Luke xxi. 36: *for he is like a refiner's fire*; partly by the ministry of the word, compared to fire, Jer. xxiii. 29. separating pure doctrines from drossy ones; and partly by his fiery dispensations and judgments on the wicked Jews, when he distinguished and saved his own people from that untoward generation, and destroyed them: *and like fuller's soap*: or *fuller's herb*, as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it, and Jarchi interprets it: and so R. Jonah[s] interprets it of an herb which fullers use: and in the Misna[t] this is one of

[q] Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 76. 4.
[r] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 16. fol. 219. 4.

[s] Apud Kimchi in Sepher Shorash. rad. ברר.
[t] Niddah, c. 9. sect. 6.

the seven things used to take out spots, namely, *borith*, the word here used; and which Maimonides[u] says is a plant known by the name of *algasul* and *gazul* in the Arabic language: it signifies something by which filth is washed away; and so Bartenora[w] says it is a plant which purifies and cleanses; and Jerom[x] relates that this herb grows in Palestine, in moist and green places, and has the same virtue as nitre to take away filth; agreeably to which some other versions render it *fuller's weed*, or *soap-weed*[y]. The Syriac version is, "as sulphur that makes white;" and fullers, with the Romans, were wont to make use of that along with chalk to take out spots; and so Pliny[z] speaks of a kind of sulphur which fullers make use of. A metaphor signifying the same thing as before, the removing of spotted doctrines or spotted persons, the one by the preaching of the Gospel, the other by awful judgments, as spots in garments are removed by the fuller's herb or soap.

Ver. 3. *And he shall sit* as *a refiner, and purifier of silver*, &c.] Kimchi interprets this, as he does the latter part of the preceding verse, of the day, and not of the Lord, which he compares to a judge that sits and separates the guilty from the innocent; see 1 Cor. iii. 13. but it is to be understood of the Lord himself, and expresses his diligence in sitting and separating good men and principles from bad ones, just as silver is purified and refined from dross. Maimonides[a] understands the passage of the Messiah; for he says, "in the days of the King Messiah, when "his kingdom is restored, and all Israel shall be "gathered to him, all will have their genealogies "set right by his mouth, through the Holy Spirit "that rests upon him, as it is said, *he shall sit a* "*refiner and purifier*:" as a refiner sits and observes his metal while it is melting, and waits the proper time to pour it out and separate the dross from it; so Christ is here represented as sitting, while his people are purifying and refining by the various ways and means he makes use of: it denotes the continued care of Christ over them; his eye is upon them, that nothing be lost but their dross and corruption; and his patience in waiting to be gracious to them, and do them good; and his diligent attention to the proper season of doing it; designing by all that he does, not their hurt and damage, but their real good, for he saves them, though it be by fire; and indeed every trial and affliction is for the purifying of their souls, and the brightening of their graces, and increasing their spiritual experience, light, and knowledge. *And he shall purify the sons of Levi;* the priests, either literally understood, some of these were converted from their evil principles and practices, and became obedient to the doctrines of the Gospel, Acts vi. 7. or figuratively, the apostles of Christ and ministers of the Gospel, who were made clean by him; or rather all the people of God, who are made priests as well as kings, and are a royal priesthood, and are purified by Christ, both by his blood, and the imputation of his righteousness, by which they become without spot and blemish, and as white as snow; and by the Spirit in sanctification, he sprinkling clean water upon them, and purifying their hearts by faith in the blood of Jesus; and also by afflictive dispensations of Providence sanctified unto them. Mention is made of the priests and Levites, because these were so very corrupt in the times of Christ, and as appears from the preceding chapters. *And purge them as gold and silver;* are purged in the fire from their dross: this shews of what worth and value, and in what esteem the Lord's people are to him; he reckons of them as gold and silver, and as his peculiar treasure: and it suggests, that before conversion they are joined unto and mixed with wicked men, comparable to dross; and that they have in them the dross, corruption, and impurity of sin; which is original and natural to them, and inherent in them, and which can only be removed by the grace of God and blood of Christ. *That they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness;* themselves, their bodies and souls; the sacrifices of prayer, praise, and alms-deeds; to the offering up of which in righteousness, in sincerity and truth, in an upright way, it is necessary that a person should be purified by the blood of Christ, and sanctified by the grace of his Spirit.

Ver. 4. *Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord*, &c.] Or *sweet*[b]; grateful and well-pleasing to him, as all spiritual sacrifices are acceptable to God through Christ, being offered up in the faith of his atoning sacrifice and righteousness, without which it is impossible to please God: *as in the days of old, and as in former years:* under the first temple, and when the tabernacle was set up by Moses, and in the times of the patriarchs; and even before the flood, and as early as Abel, who by faith offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, Heb. xi. 4, 5, 6.

Ver. 5. *And I will come near to you to judgment*, &c.] And so will manifestly appear to be the God of judgment they asked after, ch. ii. 17. this is not to be understood of Christ's coming to judgment at the last day, but of his coming to judge and punish the wicked Jews at the time of Jerusalem's destruction; for the same is here meant, who is spoken of in the third person before, and who will not be afar off; there will be no need to inquire after him, when he will come he will be near enough, and too near for them: *and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers;* not only a judge, but a witness; so that there will be no delay of judgment, or protracting or evading it, for want of witnesses of facts alleged; for the Judge himself, who is Christ, will be witness of them, he being the omniscient God, before whom all things are manifest. The Targum is, "my Word shall be among you for a swift "witness." Mention is made of *sorcerers*, because there were many that used the magic art, enchantments, and sorceries, in the age of Christ and his apostles, and before the destruction of Jerusalem,

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[u] In Misn. ib.
[w] In id.
[x] Comment. in Jer. ii. 22.
[y] כברית מכבסים ut lanaria fullonum, Drusius; radicula, vel saponaria, Vatablus.
[z] Nat. Hist. l. 35, c. 15.
[a] Hilchot Melachim, c. 12. sect. 3.
[b] ערבה dulcescet, Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius; dulce, Piscator.

even many of their doctors and members of the sanhedrim; see the note on Isa. viii. 19: *and against the adulterers*; with whom that age also abounded; hence our Lord calls it an adulterous generation, Matt. xii. 39. see John viii. 3—9. Rom. ii. 22: *and against false swearers*; who were guilty of perjury, and of vain oaths; who swore by the creatures, and not by the Lord, and to things not true; see Matt. v. 33—37: *and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless*; defrauding of servants of their wages, devouring widows' houses, and distressing the fatherless, were sins the Jews were addicted to in those times, as appears from Jam. i. 27. and v. 4. who wrote to the twelve tribes: and from what our Lord charges them with, Matt. xxiii. 14: *and that turn aside the stranger* from his right; and so Kimchi supplies it, "that turn aside the judgment of the stranger;" that don't do him justice in civil things; yea, persecuted those that became proselytes to the Christian religion: *and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts*; which was the root and cause of all their sins; irreverence of Christ, disbelief of him, and contempt of his Gospel.

Ver. 6. *For I* am *the Lord*, &c.] Or Jehovah; a name peculiar to the most High, and so a proof of the deity of Christ, who here speaks; and is expressive of his being; of his self-existence; of his purity and simplicity; of his immensity and infinity; and of his eternity and sovereignty: *I change not*; being the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever; he changed not in his divine nature and personality by becoming man; he took that into union with him he had not before, but remained the same he ever was; nor did he change in his threatenings of destruction to the Jews, which came upon them according to his word; nor in his promises of his spirit, and presence, and protection to his people; nor will he ever change in his love and affections to them; nor in the efficacy of his blood, sacrifice, and righteousness; wherefore, as this is introduced to assure the truth and certainty of what is said before, concerning his being a swift witness against the wicked, so also for the comfort of the saints, as follows. The Targum is, "for I the Lord have not changed my "covenant." *Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed*; such who were Israelites indeed, true believers in Christ; these were not consumed when the wicked Jews were, but were directed to leave the city before its destruction, and go to another place, as they did, whereby they were preserved; and so it was, that not one Christian perished in it; see the note on Matt. xxiv. 13. and so it is owing to the unchangeable love, grace, and power of Christ, that none of his perish internally or eternally, but have everlasting life.

Ver. 7. *Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances*, &c.] Here begins an enumeration of the sins of the Jews, which were the cause of their ruin; and here is first a general charge of apostacy from the statutes and ordinances of the law, which they made void by the traditions of the fathers; and therefore this word is used as referring to this evil, as well as to express their early, long, and continued departure from the ways of God; which as it was an aggravation of their sin, that they should have so long ago forsook the ordinances of God, *and have not kept them*, but transgressed them by observing the traditions of men, Matt. xv. 3. so it is an instance of the patience and forbearance of God, that they were not as yet consumed; and of his grace and goodness, that he should address them as follows: *return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts*; this message was carried to them by John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, and by Christ himself, who both preached the doctrine of repentance to this people, Matt. iii. 2. and iv. 17. The Targum is, "return "to my worship, and I will look in my word to do "well unto you, saith the Lord of hosts;" and such who returned, and believed in Christ, and submitted to his ordinances, it was well with them. *But ye said, wherein shall we return?* what have we to turn from, or repent of? what evils have we done, or can be charged on us? what need have we of repentance or conversion, or of such an exhortation to it? don't we keep the law, and all the rituals of it? this is the true language of the Pharisees in Christ's time, who, touching the righteousness of the law, were blameless in their own esteem, and were the ninety and nine just persons that needed not repentance, Luke xv. 7.

Ver. 8. *Will a man rob God?* &c.] Or *the gods*, the false gods, the idols of the Gentiles; the Heathens will not do that, accounting sacrilege a great sin, and yet this the Jews were guilty of: or *the judges*[f], as the Targum; civil magistrates; will any dare to defraud them of their due? see ch. i. 8. *yet ye have robbed me*: keeping back from the priests and Levites, his ministers, what was due to them; and which, being no other than a spoiling or robbing of them, might be interpreted a robbing of God: *but ye say, wherein have we robbed thee?* as not being conscious of any such evil; or, however, impudently standing in it, that they were not guilty: to which is returned for answer, *in tithes and offerings*: that is, they robbed God in not giving the tithes, and not offering sacrifices, according as the law required: but it may be objected, that the Jews in Christ's time did pay tithes, even of all things; yea, of more than the law required, Matt. xxiii. 23. Luke xviii. 12. to which it may be replied, that though they gave tithes, yet it was בעין רעה, *with an evil eye*, as Aben Ezra says; grudgingly, and not cheerfully, and with an evil intention; not to shew their gratitude to God, and their acknowledgment of him as their Lord, from whom they had their all, but in order to merit at his hands; besides, our Lord suggests that they did not give to God the things that were God's, Matt. xxii. 21. and the apostle charges them with being guilty of sacrilege, Rom. ii. 22. and, moreover, the priests might not give it to the Levites, as they ought; and which is what they are charged with in Neh. xiii. 10. and Grotius says that they were guilty of this before the destruction by Vespasian, as appears by Josephus.

Ver. 9. *Ye are cursed with a curse*, &c.] Or *with penury*, as the Vulgate Latin version; which, though not a proper rendering of the word, is the meaning of

[f] אלהים deos, vel judices, Calvin, Drusius, Grotius.

the curse they were cursed with; rain was withheld from them for their sins, and the earth did not bring forth its usual increase; wherefore there was want of food in all their land; their blessings were cursed, as in ch. ii. 2. for the following reason, *for ye have robbed me*; because of this their iniquity, in not bringing their offerings to the Lord, and the tithes to the priests and Levites, their land was stricken with barrenness, and God gave them cleanness of teeth, and want of bread in all places: or, *but ye have robbed me* [d]; notwithstanding they were thus chastised of the Lord, yet were not reformed, but went on in withholding from God and the priests, what belonged to them: even *this whole nation*; the sin was become general, and therefore a general judgment was inflicted on them: Grotius thinks, that the people seeing the priests withhold the tithes from the Levites, they refused to pay them to them, and so the sin became universal. Kimchi observes, that in other sins charged upon the nation, the people were not all alike guilty, but in this which respected the tithes and offerings they were.

Ver. 10. *Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, &c.*] Or *treasury* [e]; for there were places in the temple where the tithe was put, and from thence distributed to the priests and Levites, for the support of their families, as they wanted. There were the tithe or tenth part of all eatable things paid to the Levites, and out of this another tithe was paid by the Levites to the priests; and there was another tithe, which some years the owners ate themselves at Jerusalem, and in others gave them to the poor; and these were called the first tithe, the tithe out of the tithe, the second tithe, and the poor's tithe; though they are commonly reduced to three, and are called first, and second, and third, as they are by Maimonides; who says [f], "after they have separated the first tithe every "year, they separate the second tithe, as it is said, "*thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed*, &c. "Deut. xiv. 22, 23. and in the third year, and in the "sixth, they separate the poor's tithe, instead of the "second tithe." So Tobit says, ch. i. 7. "the first "tithe I gave to the Levites, who stand before the "Lord to minister to him, and to bless in his name "the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the second tithe I sold "(as he might, according to the law in Deut. xiv. "24, 25, 26), and took the money, and went up to "Jerusalem, and bought with it what I pleased; and "the third tithe I gave to the repair of the temple;" so Fagius reads: but according to Munster's edition it is, the second and third tithes I gave to the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow; see Deut. xxvi. 12, 13. It appears from hence that the sin of the people was, that they did not bring in *all* their tithes; they kept back a part of them: wherefore they are called upon to bring in the whole, and which they did in Nehemiah's time; see Neh. x. 38. and xiii. 11, 13. where mention is made of the treasuries for the tithe, which were certain chambers adjoining to the temple; and besides those that were built by Solomon, there were other chambers prepared by Hezekiah in his times, when the tithes were brought in in such plenty, that there was not room enough for them, 2 Chron. xxxi. 11, 12. and besides those in the second temple, that were in the court of the priests, there were others in the court of the people, as L'Empereur thinks [g], where what the others could not contain might be put, and into which court the priests might come; and there were also receptacles under ground, as well as upper rooms, where much might be laid up; add to all this, that Dr. Lightfoot [h] suggests, that these tithes were treasured up in the chambers by the gates of the temple, and were at least a part of the treasuries of the house of God, which the porters at the gates had the care of, 1 Chron. ix. 26. and xxvi. 20. and particularly that the house of Asuppim, at which were four porters, was a large piece of building, containing divers rooms for the treasuring up things for the use of the temple; see Judith xi. 13. *That there may be meat in my house*: in the temple, for the sustenance of the priests and Levites: so the Targum, "the prophet "said, bring all the tithes into the treasury, that there "may be food for them that minister in the house of "my sanctuary:" *and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts*. by bringing in all their tithes; when they would find, by making this experiment or trial, that the curse would be removed from them, and blessings be largely and liberally bestowed upon them by him, who is the Lord of hosts, and so able to perform any promise he makes; and here one is implied, and is as follows: *if I will not open you the windows of heaven*; which had been shut and stopped up, and let down no rain upon their land, which brought a scarcity of provisions among them; but now, upon a change in their conduct it is suggested that these windows or flood-gates should be opened, and rain let down plentifully upon them, which only could be done by the Lord himself; for the key of rain is one of the three keys, the Jews say [i], which God has reserved for himself, and never puts into the hands of a minister: *and pour you out a blessing*: give abundance of rain to make the earth fruitful, and bring forth its increase in great plenty, which is a blessing; and not destroy the earth, and the fruits of it, as in the times of Noah, when the windows of heaven were opened, and a curse was poured out upon the earth: *that* there shall *not* be room *enough* to receive it; and so Kimchi says his father interpreted this clause, that there would not be a sufficiency of vessels [k] and storehouses. Some render the words, as Junius, *so that ye shall not be sufficient*; either to gather in the increase, or to consume it. The Targum is, "until ye say it is enough;" and so the Syriac version. The phrase, which is very concise in the original text, and may be literally rendered, *unto not enough* [l], denotes great abundance and fulness of good things, so that there should be enough and to spare; and yet, as Gussetius observes, not enough to

[d] (אֹתִי) קֹבְעִים אַתֶּם et tamen diripitis me, De Dieu.
[e] אֶל בֵּית הָאוֹצָר ad thesaurum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; vel in domum thesauri, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Burkius.
[f] Hilchot Maaser Sheni, c. 1. sect. 1.
[g] Not. in Misn. Middot, c. 2. sect. 6. No. 14.
[h] Prospect of the Temple, c. 5. p. 1052. c. 19. p. 1067.

[i] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 2. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 113. 1.
[k] עַד בְּלִי דָי adeo ut non sint vobis sufficientia vasa, Pagninus, Vatablus. So Burkius.
[l] Eousque ut nunquam sit satis, nempe a parte datoris, Gussetius. So De Dieu.

answer and express the abundance of mercy and goodness in the heart of God.

Ver. 11. *And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes,* &c.] Or *eater*[m]; the locust or caterpillar, or any such devouring creature, that eats up the herbage, corn, and fruits of trees; every such creature is under the restraint of Providence; and by a nod, a rebuke, they are easily prevented doing the mischief they otherwise would; these are the Lord's great army, which he can send and call off as he pleases, Joel i. 4, and ii. 25: *and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground:* as he has done, by eating all green things, as the locust, caterpillar, and canker-worm do, grass, corn, and trees: *neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field:* which some understand of the devourer or locust, that that should not cause the vine to be abortive, or cast its fruit before its time, or bereave it of it; but it seems best to interpret it of the vine itself not casting its fruit, as an untimely birth, by blighting and blasting winds: *saith the Lord of hosts;* who holds the winds in his fists, and will not suffer them when he pleases, any more than the locusts, to hurt the trees of the earth, Rev. vii. 1, 3. and ix. 4.

Ver. 12. *And all nations shall call you blessed,* &c.] When they shall see the land freed from the devouring locust, and other hurtful creatures; the former and the latter rains given in their season, and the earth yielding a large increase: *for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts:* or a desirable[n] one; not only pleasant to themselves, being fruitful, but wished for by others, by their neighbouring nations, who, seeing their prosperity, could not but desire to dwell with them; or delightsome to the Lord of hosts: thus Jarchi interprets it, the land that I delight in; and so Aben Ezra; to which agrees the Targum, "and all nations shall "praise you, because you dwell in the land of the "house of my Shechinah or majesty, and do my will "in it;" and the Syriac version renders it, *the land of my delight;* see Isa. lxii. 4.

Ver. 13. *Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord,* &c.] Hard and strong; they bore very hardly upon him, were exceeding impudent and insolent; murmuring at his providence; arraigning his justice and goodness; and despising his word, worship, and ordinances. Aben Ezra says, this is a prophecy concerning the time to come, that is, the times of the Messiah; and so it describes the Jews in his times. *Yet ye say, what have we spoken* so much *against thee?* or *what have we spoken against thee?* as if they were not guilty in any respect, and as if nothing could be proved against them; and as though the Lord did not know what they had said in their hearts, seeing they had not spoken it with their mouths: though the supplement of our translators, *so much,* is confirmed by the Targum, which is, "and if ye say, how (or in "what) have we multiplied speech before thee?" and so Kimchi observes, that the form in which the Hebrew word is denotes much and frequent speaking; and Abarbinel agrees with him, though he rather thinks it has this sense, *what are we spoken of to thee?* what calumny is this? what accusation do they bring against us to thee? what is it that is reported we say against thee? thus wiping their mouths, as if they were innocent and harmless.

Ver. 14. *Ye have said, it is vain to serve God,* &c.] This they said in their hearts, if not with their lips, that it was a vain thing for a man to serve God; he got nothing by it; he had no reward for it; it fared no better with him than the wicked; nay, the wicked fared better than he; and therefore who would be a worshipper of God? see Job xxi. 15. Abarbinel understands this also with respect to God, who is worshipped; to whom worship, say these men, is no ways profitable, nor does he regard it; see Job xxxv. 7. and therefore it is in vain to serve him, since neither he, nor we, are the better for it: *and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance;* or *his observation*[o]; that is, have observed that which he commanded to be observed; this respects not any single and particular ordinance, but every ordinance of God: the Sadducees of those times seem designed, who denied the resurrection of the dead, and a future state of rewards and punishments, and so might well conclude it in vain to serve God: *and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?* or *in black*[p]; which is the habit of mourners; see Psal. xxxviii. 6. with an humble spirit, as Jarchi interprets it; or with humiliation (or contrition) of spirit, as the Targum, which paraphrases the whole verse thus, "ye have said, "he gains nothing who worships before the Lord; and "what mammon (or riches) do we gain because we "have kept the observation of his word, and because "we have walked in contrition of spirit before the "Lord of hosts?" Aben Ezra and Abarbinel seem to understand this last clause of their being afflicted and suffering for the sake of religion, and which they endured in vain, seeing they were not respected and rewarded for it; but the other sense is best, which represents them as sincere penitents, and humble worshippers of God in their own account, and yet were not taken notice of by him: it seems to describe the Pharisees, who disfigured their faces, and affected down looks and sorrowful countenances[q].

Ver. 15. *And now we call the proud happy,* &c.] Or *therefore now*[r]; since this is the case, that the worshippers of God are not regarded, and there is nothing got by serving him; they that are proud and haughty, that neither fear God nor regard men, are the happy persons; even presumptuous sinners, as the word[s] signifies, that stretch out their hands against God, and strengthen themselves against the Almighty; these enjoy all worldly happiness, while they that serve the Lord are mourning in sackcloth, and are in the utmost distress. The Targum explains it of the ungodly, and as it is explained in the following clause: *yea, they that*

[m] באכל comedentem, Drusius, Cocceius; eum qui comedit, Burkius.
[n] ארץ חפץ terra desiderabilis, V. L. Pagninus, Drusius; terra beneplaciti, Montanus, Vatablus, Burkius; oblectationis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[o] משמרתו observationem ejus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius; observantiam ejus, Cocceius.

[p] קדרנית atrate, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Stockius, p. 926; pullati, Tigurine version; atrati, Cocceius.
[q] The word is used by Josephus ben Gorion for sincere walking, l. 6, c. 20. p. 612. Vid. Not. Breithaupt. in ib.; it is interpreted *humbly* by R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 102. 2.
[r] ועתה ergo nunc, V. L.; igitur, Cocceius; adeoque, Burkius.
[s] זדים arrogantes, V. L.; feroces, Cocceius.

work wickedness are set up; or *built up*[t]; or *seeing*, *because*, or *for they that work*[u], &c.; they are increased with children, by which their houses or families are built up; they are in a well-settled and established condition; they abound in riches and honours; they are set in high places, and are in great esteem among men, even such who make it their constant business to commit sin: *yea, they that tempt God*; or *yea, they tempt God*[w]; by their wicked words and actions, and try whether he will cause his judgments to fall upon them, which he has threatened to such sinners; see Isa. v. 18, 19: *are even delivered*; or, *and are delivered*[x]; from the punishment threatened; they escape it, and go on with impunity; from which observations these persons reasoned that there was no God of judgment, or that judged in the earth; that there was no providence concerned about human affairs; and that there was nothing in religion; and these were the hard and stout words which they spoke against the Lord.

Ver. 16. *Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another*, &c.] Abarbinel thinks this is a continuation of the speech of the wicked; observing, that whilst they that work wickedness were set up, and they that tempted God escaped punishment, they that were religious, and feared God, *were destroyed one with another*, particularly by the plague; so he would have the word נדברו rendered, which we translate, *spake often one to another*; in which sense he observes that root is used in Hos. xiii. 14. Psal. xlvii. 3. 2 Kings xi. 1. but rather this is opposed unto what they said, by such, who, at the time referred to (which seems to be between the time of Christ's coming, spoken of in the beginning of the chapter, and the destruction of Jerusalem after mentioned), feared the Lord, and served him; embraced the Messiah, and professed his name; for the fear of God takes in the whole of religious worship, both internal and external; and describes such, not that have a dread of the majesty of God, and of his judgments and wrath, or distrust his power, providence, grace, and goodness; but who have a filial and holy fear of God, a fiducial and fearless one, a reverential affection for him, and are true and sincere worshippers of him: these *spake often one to another*; of the unbelief, impiety, and profaneness of men, with great concern and lamentation; and of the great and good things they were led into the knowledge of; the everlasting love of the Father in the choice of them, and covenant with them in Christ; of redemption by the Son; of the glories of his person, and the fulness of his grace; of the work of the Spirit of God upon their souls; and of the various truths of the everlasting Gospel; and of the gracious experiences they were indulged with; and all this they said for the glory of God's grace, and for the comforting and strengthening, and edifying, of each other's souls: it follows, *and the Lord hearkened, and heard it*; what they said one to another: this is spoken after the manner of men, and does not so much regard the omniscience of God, who hearkens and hears every thing that is said by wicked men, as by good men; as his special regard unto, peculiar notice he takes of, and the approbation he has of his people, and of their words and actions, and even of their thoughts, as is afterwards intimated: *and a book of remembrance was written before him*; in allusion to kings that keep registers, records, annals, and chronicles, as memorials of matters of moment and importance; see Ezra iv. 15. Esth. ii. 23. and vi. 1. otherwise there is no forgetfulness in God; he bears in his own eternal mind a remembrance of the persons, thoughts, words, and actions of his people, and which he'll disclose and make mention of another day; even our Lord Jesus Christ, who is God over all, and who will let the churches and world know that he is the searcher of hearts, and trier of the reins of the children of men: *for them that feared the Lord*, as before, *and that thought upon his name*; either the name of the Father; not any particular name of his, by which he is known, but him himself; for, as Kimchi observes, his name is himself, and he himself is his name; and especially as he is in Christ, and proclaimed in him; and this is expressive of faith in him, love to him, and reverence of him: or the name of Christ; and not any particular name of his, unless it be Jesus the Saviour; but rather his person as the Son of God; his office as Mediator; and his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice: and it is not a bare thinking of him that is here intended, but such a thought of him as is accompanied with esteem and value for him, because of the dignity of his person, and the riches of his grace. The Septuagint and Arabic versions render it, *and that reverence his name*; and the Syriac version, *that praise his name*; and the Targum is, that think of the glory of his name.

Ver. 17. *And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts*, &c.] That is, such as fear the Lord, and think of him, hereby they are known to be his; and hereafter, in the time referred to, it will be manifest that they are his: they are Christ's already by his Father's gift of them to him; by his own purchase; by the conquests of his grace; and by the voluntary surrender of themselves: but, in the last day, they will be claimed and owned by Christ before his Father and his holy angels; and they will be known to be his, by themselves and others; and there will be no doubt about it, or questioning of it: *in that day when I make up my jewels*; Christ has some, who are his jewels, or peculiar treasure, as the word[y] here used signifies; who are loved with an everlasting love; chosen in him; redeemed by him; justified by his righteousness; have the graces of his spirit in them; and will be glorified: they are a peculiar people, separate from all others, and preferred unto them; for whom Christ has the strongest affection, and takes special care of: and there is a time when he will make them up; the number of them is already complete in eternal election; and there was a gathering of them together in Christ at his death; at every conversion there is an addition to them, as his regenerated and sanctified ones; and at death they are received into heaven, into his presence and bosom; and at the last day there will

[t] נבנו ædificati sunt, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Burkius; ædificantur, Vatablus, Tigurine version, Calvin, Junius & Tremellius.
[u] גם siquidem, V. L.; nam, Piscator, Noldius.
[w] בחנו גם etiam probaverunt, Pagninus, Montanus, Burkius.

[x] וימלטו et evaserunt, Pagninus, Montanus; et effugerunt, Cocceius.
[y] סגלה peculium, Munster, Pagninus, Vatablus, Tigurine version, Calvin, Drusius, Junius & Tremellius.

be a collection of them all together. The words may be rendered, even *my jewels in the day that I shall make*[y]; or *the day I shall make peculiar*: distinct from all others; meaning either the famous Gospel day, made by him the sun of righteousness, in which so many of his jewels are picked up, and brought in; or the day of Jerusalem's destruction, when Christ took care of his jewels, and by the preservation of them shewed that they were his, even all that believed in him; so that not one perished that believed in him, when he took vengeance on his enemies, that disbelieved and rejected him. Kimchi refers this to the day of judgment. *And I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him*: this is a favour not granted to the apostate angels; nor to the old world; nor to the Jewish nation; nor even to the Son of God; but is vouchsafed to his special people: the lives of these are spared, until they are called by grace; and though they are sometimes afflicted and chastised, it is very gently, and in love; their services are accepted, and the imperfections in them overlooked; their sins are pardoned, and they'll find mercy at the great day of account; they are used in the most tender manner, not only as a son, an own son, but as an obedient one, for whom the greatest regard is had, and affection shewn.

Ver. 18. *Then shall ye return*, &c.] Either the wicked, who will be *converted*[z], as some render the word, and will have a different view of things, and change their minds and language; or they that feared the Lord, who at the time before spoken of will have a new turn of thought, and another and clear discerning of persons and things, and better judge of the dispensations of Providence: some that refer this to the resurrection of the dead, and the last judgment, understand it, as Abarbinel does, of the returning of souls to their bodies, when indeed the difference between persons after described will be very discernible; but it seems to refer to the time of Christ's first coming, and Jerusalem's destruction: *and discern between the righteous and the wicked*; the difference between such who are really and truly righteous, who are here meant, even such who believe in Christ, and are justified by his righteousness; and those that are wicked, as all by nature are: though sometimes this character designs the more profane and abandoned, and even professors of religion; the difference between these is not always easily discerned; as for the righteous, they are not known and discerned by the world; and by reason of afflictions, temptations, and sins, they are apt to judge wrong of themselves; and sometimes are so left to fall into sin, that they look like others: and there are wicked men under the appearance of righteous men, as were the Scribes and Pharisees in Christ's time; but by the destruction that came upon them, and the preservation of such as believed in Christ, it was discernible who were wicked, and who were righteous; indeed, at the last day, this difference will be more visible; in the bodies of the righteous, which will be raised glorious, when those of the wicked will not; in their souls, having on the wedding garment, the robe of Christ's righteousness, and perfectly holy; and in their situation, being set at Christ's right hand, and the wicked at his left; and by the characters that will be given of them by the Judge, and the different sentences passed and executed on them: *between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not*; that is, between such persons that serve the Lord, and him only, privately and publicly, in righteousness and true holiness, in spirit and in truth, with faith and fervency, with reverence and fear, heartily and willingly, seeking his glory, without any dependence on their services; and those that are ungodly, or only outwardly serve the Lord, for sinister ends, and with selfish views, and according to their own inventions, and the traditions of men, and not the will of God, as the Scribes and Pharisees; between whom, and Christ's sincere disciples and followers, the awful day, described in the next chapter, will make a manifest difference.

CHAP. IV.

THIS chapter contains an account of the destruction of the wicked Jews, and the happiness of the righteous by the coming of the Messiah; an exhortation to regard the law of Moses; and a description of John the Baptist and his work. The day of Christ's coming, reaching to Jerusalem's destruction, is compared to a burning oven; the wicked Jews to stubble, whose ruin would be utter and complete, ver. 1. the appearance of Christ is signified by the arising of him, the sun of righteousness; the manner, with healing in his wings; the effects of which are, going forth in the exercise of grace, and the discharge of duty, and spiritual growth and triumph over their enemies, in which will lie the happiness of them that fear God, ver. 2. 3. who are put in mind of the law of Moses on Horeb, ver. 4. the sending of John the Baptist under the name of Elijah, before the coming of Christ is prophesied of, ver. 5. and his work pointed out, with the end of it, ver. 6.

Ver. 1. *For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven*, &c.] Not the day of judgment, as Kimchi and other interpreters, both Jewish and Christian, think; but the day of Christ's coming in his kingdom and power, to take vengeance on the Jewish nation, which burned like an oven, both figuratively and literally; when the wrath of God, which is compared to fire, came upon that people to the uttermost; and when their city and temple were burnt about their ears, and they were surrounded with fire, as if they had been in a burning oven: and this being so terrible, as can hardly be conceived and expressed, the word *behold* is prefixed to it, not only to excite attention, but horror and terror at so dreadful a calamity; which

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[y] ליום אשר אני עשה illa die quam facio, so some in Vatablus; in diem quem ego facio peculium, Cocceius, Burkius.

[z] ושבתם et convertemini, Cocceius, Gussetius, so Pagninus, Montanus; conversi, Drusius, Junius & Tremellius.

though future, when the prophet wrote, was certain: *and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble;* the proud Pharisees, that boasted of their own righteousness, trusted in themselves, and despised others; all workers of iniquity, in private or in public; all rejecters of Christ, contemners of his Gospel and ordinances, and persecutors of his people; as well as such who were guilty of the most flagitious crimes, as sedition, robbery, murder, &c. of which there were notorious instances during the siege of Jerusalem; these were all like stubble before devouring fire, weak and easily destroyed: *and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts:* which is repeated, to shew the certainty of it, and to apply it to the persons before described: *that it shall leave them neither root nor branch;* which signifies an entire and complete destruction; the city and temple so utterly destroyed, that not one stone shall be left on another; both magistrates and subjects shall perish, priests and people, so that there shall be no form of government, civil nor ecclesiastical; tribes and families lost, they and their posterity: and so the Targum, "which shall not leave "them son and nephew:" and, indeed, the numbers cut off were so many, and the destruction so general, that it may be wondered at that any remained: it is a proverbial expression, setting forth the greatness of the calamity: see Matt. iii. 10, 12.

Ver. 2. *But unto you that fear my name,* &c.] The few that were of this character among that wicked nation; see the note on ch. iii. 16: *shall the sun of righteousness arise:* not the Holy Ghost, who enlightens sinners, convinces of righteousness, and gives joy, peace, and comfort to the saints, but Christ: and thus it is interpreted of him by the ancient Jews, in one of their Midrashes or expositions[a]; they say, Moses says not they shall be for ever pledged, that is, the clothes of a neighbour, but until the sun comes, until the Messiah comes, as it is said, *unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise,* &c.; and Philo the Jew[b] not only observes, that God, figuratively speaking, is the sun; but the divine *Logos* or Word of God, the image of the heavenly Being, is called the sun: who, coming to our earthly system, helps the kindred and followers of virtue, and affords ample refuge and salvation to them; referring, as it seems, to this passage: indeed, they generally interpret it of the sun, literally taken, which they suppose, at the end of the world, will have different effects on good and bad men; they say[c], "in the world to come, "God will bring the sun out of its sheath, and burn "the wicked: they will be judged by it, and the "righteous will be healed by it:" for the proof of the former, they produce the words in the first verse of this chapter, *behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven:* and of the latter these words, *but unto you that fear my name,* &c.; and a very ridiculous notion they have, that Abraham their father had a precious stone or pearl hanging about his neck, and every sick person that saw it was healed by it immediately; and, when he departed out of the world, God took it, and fixed it to the orb of the sun; hence the proverb, the sun rises, and sickness decreases[d]; and as it is elsewhere quoted[e], this passage is added to confirm it, as it is said, *to you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings:* unless this fable should be intended to mean, as Abarbinel[f] interprets it, that Abraham, while he lived, clearly proved the unity of God and his perfections; and that, after his death, the same truth was taught by the wonderful motion of the sun: but, be this as it will, those are undoubtedly in the right who understand these words figuratively of the Messiah; who is compared to the *sun,* because, as the sun is a luminous body, the light of the whole world, so is Christ of the world of men, and of the world of saints; particularly of the Gentiles, often called the world; and of the New Jerusalem church-state, and of the world to come: and as the sun is the fountain of light, so is Christ the fountain of natural and moral light, as well as of the light of grace, and of the light of glory: as the sun communicates light to all the celestial bodies, so Christ to the moon, the church; to the stars, the ministers of the word; to the morning-stars, the angels: as the sun dispels the darkness of the night, and makes the day, so Christ dispelled the darkness of the ceremonial law, and made the Gospel day; and he dispels the darkness of ignorance and unbelief, and makes the day of grace; and will dispel the darkness of imperfection, and will make the day of glory; as the sun is a pure, clear, and lucid body, so is Christ, without the least spot of sin; and so are his people, as they are clothed with his righteousness: as the sun is a glorious body, so is Christ in both his natures, divine and human; in his office as Mediator; and will be in his second coming: as the sun is superior to all the celestial bodies, so is Christ to angels and saints: as the sun is but one, so there is but one Son of God; one Mediator between God and man; one Saviour and Redeemer; one Lord and Head of the church: its properties and effects are many; it lays things open and manifest, which before were hid; communicates heat as well as light; make the earth fruitful; is very exhilarating; has its risings and settings, and of great duration: so Christ declares the mind and will of his Father, the hidden mysteries of grace; lays open the thoughts of men's hearts in conversion; and will at the last day bring to light the hidden things of darkness: he warms the hearts of his people with his love, and causes them to burn within them, whilst they hear his Gospel, and he makes them fervent in spirit whilst they serve the Lord; he fills them with the fruits of righteousness, and with joy unspeakable, and full of glory; but he is not always seen, is sometimes under a cloud, and withdraws himself; yet his name is as the sun before the Lord, and will abide for ever. He is called *the sun of righteousness,* because of the glory of his essential righteousness as God; and because of the purity and perfection of his righteousness as man, which appeared in all his actions, and in the administration of all his offices;

[a] Shemot Rabba, sect. 31. fol. 134. 2.
[b] De Somniis, p. 579.
[c] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 8. 2. & Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 2.
[d] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 16. 2.
[e] Apud Yalkut in loc.
[f] Comment. in Mal. i. 11.

and because of the display of the righteousness of God in him, in his sufferings and death, in atonement, pardon, and justification by him; and because he is the author and bringer in of righteousness to his people, the glory of which outshines all others, is pure and spotless like the sun, and is everlasting; those who have it are said to be clothed with the sun, and on such he shines in his beams of divine love, grace, and mercy, which righteousness sometimes signifies; and his rays of grace transform men into righteousness and true holiness. The *arising* of this sun may denote the appearance of Christ in our nature; under the former dispensation this sun was not risen; it was then night with the world; John the Baptist was the morning-star, the forerunner of it: Christ the sun is now risen; the day-spring from on high hath visited mankind, and has spread its light and heat, its benign influences, by the ministration of the Gospel, the grace of God, which has appeared and shone out, both in Judea, and in the Gentile world: it may be accommodated to his spiritual appearance: this sun is sometimes under a cloud, or seems to be set, which occasions trouble, and is for wise ends, but will and does arise again to them that fear the Lord. The manner is, *with healing in his wings*; by which are meant its rays and beams, which are to the sun as wings to a bird, by which it swiftly spreads its light and heat; so we read of the wings of the morning, Psal. cxxxix. 9. Christ came as a physician, to heal the diseases of men; he healed the bodily diseases of the Jews, and he heals the soul-diseases of his people, their sins; which healing he has procured by his blood and stripes: pardon of sin by the blood of Christ is meant by healing, which is universal, infallible, and free, Psal. ciii. 3. Isa. xxxiii. 24. and liii. 5. Hos. xiv. 4. it may denote all that preservation, protection, prosperity, and happiness, inward and outward, which they that feared the Lord enjoyed through Christ, when the unbelieving Jews were destroyed; and which is further expressed by what follows: *and ye shall go forth*: not out of the world, or out of their graves, as some think; but either out of Jerusalem, as the Christians did a little before its destruction, being warned so to do[g], whereby they were preserved from that calamity; or it intends a going forth with liberty in the exercise of grace and duty, in the exercise of faith on Christ, love to him, hope in him, repentance, humility, self-denial, &c.; and in a cheerful obedience to his will; or else walking on in his ways; having health and strength, with great pleasure and comfort, and, as Aben Ezra says, by the light of this sun. *And grow up as calves of the stall*; such as are fat, being put up there for that purpose; see Amos vi. 4. 1 Sam. xxviii. 24. Bochart[h] has proved, from many passages out of the Talmud[i], that the word which the Targum here makes use of, and answers to that in the Hebrew text, which is rendered *stall*, signifies a yoke or collar, with which oxen or heifers were bound together, whilst they were threshing or treading out of corn; so that the calves or heifers here referred to were such as were not put up in a stall, but were yoked together, and employed in treading out the corn; now as there was a law that such should not be muzzled whilst they were thus employed, but might eat of the corn on the floor freely and plentifully, Deut. xxv. 4. these usually grew fat, and so were the choicest and most desirable, to which the allusion may be here, and in Jer. xlvi. 21. Amos vi. 4. and are a fit emblem of saints joined together in holy fellowship, walking together in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord; where they get spiritual food for their souls, and are in thriving circumstances; where they meet with the corn of heaven, with that corn which makes the young men cheerful, and that bread which nourishes up to everlasting life. The apostle alludes to the custom of oxen yoked together, either in ploughing, or in treading out the corn, when he says, speaking of church-fellowship and communion in the ordinances of the Gospel, *be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers*, 2 Cor. vi. 14. for this hinders spiritual edification, as well as the promotion of the glory of God; but where they are equally yoked, and go hand in hand together in the work and ways of the Lord, they grow and flourish; they are comfortable in their souls, and lively in the exercise of grace; and they are the most thriving Christians, generally speaking, who are in church communion, and most constantly attend the means of grace, and keep closest to the word and ordinances: for the metaphor here used is designed to express a spiritual increase in all grace, and in the knowledge of Christ, and a growing up into him in all things, through the use of means, the word and ordinances; whereby saints become fat and flourishing, being fed with the milk of the word, and the breasts of ordinances, and having fellowship with one another; and, above all, this spiritual growth is owing to the dews of the grace of God, the shining of the Sun of righteousness, and the comfortable gales of the south wind of the Spirit of God, which cause the spices to flow out. The Septuagint version, and those that follow it, render it, *ye shall leap or skip as calves loosed from bonds*; as such creatures well fed do when at liberty; and may denote the spiritual joy of the saints upon their being healed, or because of their secure, safe, and prosperous estate: and so the word is explained in the Talmud[k], they shall delight themselves in it; and where the Rabbins interpret this and the preceding verse of the natural sun in the firmament, which will be the hell[l] in the world to come, and which will burn the wicked, and heal the righteous.

Ver. 3. *And ye shall tread down the wicked*, &c.] As grapes in the wine-press, as Christ did before them, Isa. lxiii. 2, 3. and they by virtue of him; who makes them more than conquerors through himself, over all their enemies, spiritual and temporal: *for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet*: this refers to the burning of them, ver. 1. and may be literally understood of their being burnt with the city and temple; when afterwards, as Grotius observes, the city of Jerusalem being in some measure rebuilt, and called Ælia,

[g] Euseb. Hist. l. 3. c. 5.
[h] Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 31. col. 303.
[i] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 53. 1. Bava Metzia, fol. 30. 1. Pesachim, fol. 26. 1. Eruvin, fol. 17. 2.
[k] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 4. 1. Nedarim, fol. 8. 2.
[l] A notion they elsewhere frequently inculcate, and is not improbable; and which has been of late advanced and defended by a very learned man of our own country, Mr. Tobias Swinden, in a Treatise called *An Inquiry into the Nature and Place of Hell*.

there was a Christian church in it, governed by bishops, who were converted Jews; and so might be literally said to trample upon the ashes of the wicked, who had persecuted them in times past, they being upon the very spot where these men were destroyed by fire: *in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts*: or *in the day which I make* [m]; that is, by the rising of the sun of righteousness, the Gospel day. The Talmud [n] interprets this verse of the bodies of the wicked in hell, which after twelve months will be consumed, and the wind will scatter them under the soles of the feet of the righteous.

Ver. 4. *Remember ye the law of Moses my servant*, &c.] Who was faithful as such in the house of God, in delivering the law to the children of Israel, which was given him; and who are called upon to remember it, its precepts and its penalties, which they were apt to forget: and particularly this exhortation is given now, because no other prophet after Malachi would be sent unto them, this is what they should have and use as their rule and directory; and because that Christ, now prophesied of, would be the end of this law; and this, and the prophets, were to be until the days of John the Baptist, spoken of in the next verse; and the rather, because in this period of time, between Malachi and the coming of Christ, the traditions of the elders were invented and obtained, which greatly set aside the law, and made it of no effect: *which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel*. for though the law came by Moses, and is therefore called his, yet God was the author and efficient cause of it; Moses was only a servant and minister; and this was given in Horeb, the same with Sinai: these are names of one and the same mountain, at least of the parts of it; one part of it was called Horeb, from its being a dry desert and desolate place; and the other Sinai, from its bushes and brambles. So Jerom [o] says, "Horeb, the mountain of God, "is in the land of Midian, by Mount Sinai, above "Arabia in the wilderness, to which are joined the "mountain and wilderness of the Saracens, called "Pharan; but to me it seems the same mountain is "called by two names, sometimes Sinai, and some-"times Horeb;" see Exod. xxxi. 18. and xxxii. 1, 2. and xxxiii. 6. Agreeably to which Josephus [p] calls Horeb, where Moses fed his flock, and saw the vision of the burning bush, Mount Sinai; and says, it was the highest of the mountains in those parts, very convenient for pasture, and abounded with excellent herbage. Some say [q] the eastern part of it was called Sinai, and the western part Horeb; it is very likely they joined together at the bottom of the mountain, and were the two tops of it. This being mentioned shews, that the law, strictly taken, and not the prophets, is here designed, for no other was commanded, ordered, or delivered in Horeb; and that was for all the children of Israel in successive ages, until the coming of the Messiah, and for them only, as to the ministration of it by Moses. *With the statutes and judgments*: the laws ceremonial and judicial, which were given to Moses, at the same time the law of the decalogue was, to be observed by the children of Israel, and which were shadows of things to come; namely, those of them that were of a ceremonial nature, and therefore to be remembered and attended to as leading to Christ, and the things of the Gospel.

Ver. 5. *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet*, &c.] Not the Tishbite, as the Septuagint version wrongly inserts instead of prophet; not Elijah in person, who lived in the times of Ahab; but John the Baptist, who was to come in the power and spirit of Elijah, Luke i. 17. between whom there was a great likeness in their temper and disposition; in their manner of clothing, and austere way of living; in their courage and integrity in reproving vice; and in their zeal and usefulness in the cause of God and true religion; and in their famous piety and holiness of life; and in being both prophets; see Matt. xi. 11. and xiv. 5. and that he is intended is clear from Matt. xvii. 10—13. and Mark ix. 12, 13. It is a notion of the Jews, as Kimchi and others, that the very Elijah, the same that lived in the days of Ahab, shall come in person before the coming of their Messiah they vainly expect, and often speak of difficult things to be left till Elias comes and solves them; but for such a notion there is no foundation, either in this text or elsewhere. And as groundless is that of some of the ancient Christian fathers, and of the Papists, as Lyra and others, that Elijah with Enoch will come before the day of judgment, and restore the church of God ruined by antichrist, which they suppose is meant in the next clause. *Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord*: that is, before the coming of Christ the son of David, as the Jews [r] themselves own; and which is to be understood, not of the second coming of Christ to judgment, though that is sometimes called the great day, and will be dreadful to Christless sinners; but of the first coming of Christ, reaching to the destruction of Jerusalem: John the Baptist, his forerunner, the Elijah here spoken of, came proclaiming wrath and terror to impenitent sinners; Christ foretold and denounced ruin and destruction to the Jewish nation, city, and temple; and the time of Jerusalem's destruction was a dreadful day indeed, such a time of affliction as had not been from the creation, Matt. xxiv. 21. and the Talmud interprets [s] this of the sorrows of the Messiah, or which shall be in the days of the Messiah.

Ver. 6. *And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children*, &c.] Or *with* the children, as Kimchi; and Ben Melech observes, that על is put for עם, and so in the next clause: *and the heart of the children to their fathers*; or *with* their fathers; that is, both fathers and children: the meaning is, that John the Baptist should be an instrument of converting many of the Jews, both fathers and children, and bringing them to the knowledge and faith of the true Messiah; and reconcile them together who were divided by the schools of Hillell and Shammai, and by the sects of the Sadducees and Pharisees, and bring them to be of one mind, judgment, and faith, and to have a hearty love

[m] ביום אשר אני עשה eo die, quem ego facio, Cocceius.
[n] T. Bab. Roshhashanah, fol. 17. 1.
[o] De locis Hebr. fol. 92. E.
[p] Antiqu. l. 2. c. 12.
[q] Vid. Adrichomii Theatrum Terræ Sanctæ, p. 122. Wells's Geography of the Old Testament, vol. 2. p. 118.
[r] T. Bab. Eruvin, fol. 43. 2. & Gloss. in ib.
[s] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol 118. 1.

to one another, and the Lord Christ; see Matt. iii. 5, 6. and the note on Luke i. 17. The Talmudists[t] interpret this of composing differences, and making peace. *Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse*; the land of Judea; which, because the greater part of the inhabitants of it were not converted to the Lord, did not believe in the Messiah, but rejected him, notwithstanding the preaching and testimony of John the Baptist, and the ministry and miracles of Christ, it was smitten with a curse, was made desolate, and destroyed by the Roman emperors, Vespasian and Adrian, as instruments doing what God here threatened he would do; for not the whole earth is intended, as the Targum and Abarbinel suggest; but only that land, and the people of it, are intended, to whom the law of Moses was given; and to whom Elias, or John the Baptist, was to be sent; and to whom he was sent, and did come; and by whom he was rejected, and also the Messiah he pointed at; for which that country was smitten with a curse, and remains under it to this day.

[t] Massachet Ediot, c. 8. sect. 7.

ADDENDUM.

IN Vol. I. on Isa. liii. 12. after Mark xv. 28. add, "*and he bore the sin of many*: every one of their sins, " even the sins of all those whose iniquity was laid " upon him, of the many chosen in him, and justified " by him; see the note on ver. 11. where this is given " as a reason of their justification; and here repeated " as if done, to shew the certainty of it; to raise the " attention to it, as being a matter of great import" ance; see 1 Pet. ii. 24."

A

DISSERTATION

ON THE

APOCRYPHAL WRITINGS.

IT is frequently said by the Jews[a], that after the death of the latter prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, the Holy Ghost departed from Israel, or prophecy ceased; and that this is one of the five things wanting in the second temple, the Holy Ghost, that is, prophecy[b]; and that there was no prophet under that temple[c]; meaning, after the building of it was finished, for they suppose it continued whilst the three above prophets lived; and they all agree that Malachi was the last of the prophets; and whom Aben Ezra[d] calls סוף נביאים, *the end of the prophets,* at whose death prophecy ceased: and if there were no spirit of prophecy, nor any prophet after those times, until prophecy began to dawn in John the Baptist, Malachi prophesies of, then there could be no books written by the inspiration of the Spirit of God within that period. The ceremonial books of the Old Testament, with the Jews[e], are these, the five books of Moses, which we call Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; the Prophets in this order, Joshua and Judges, Samuel and Kings, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Isaiah and the twelve (whom we call the lesser prophets); the Hagiographa in this order, Ruth, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, Lamentations, Daniel, Esther, Ezra (which includes Nehemiah), and Chronicles. And with this account agrees Josephus[f], who says the Jews have only twenty-two books; five of which are the books of Moses; thirteen wrote by the prophets; and by making Judges and Ruth one book; I. and II. Samuel another; I. and II. Kings one book; and also reckoning Jeremiah and Lamentations but one; and the twelve minor prophets but one, as they are in Acts vii. 42. Ezra and Nehemiah one, and I. and II. Chronicles one, they come to just that number; and the other four, he says, contain hymns to God, and precepts relating to the life of men, which are Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs. The catalogue of the books of the Old Testament, which Melito[g] brought from the east in the second century, contains the same books, excepting Nehemiah included in Ezra, and Esther, which are not mentioned, and no other, or more. Agreeably to all which Origen[h] relates, that the books of the Old Testament, according to the Hebrew, are twenty-two; twenty-one of which he reckons and accounts for in the manner as above, making no mention of the twelve lesser prophets, which make one book. The same number of books is observed by Epiphanius[i] in the fourth century, and reckoned canonical, and others not; and yet, notwithstanding this, there are several books written, between the times of Malachi the last of the prophets, and the times of the New Testament, which are not only accounted canonical by the Papists, but are translated and bound up in many Bibles set forth by *Protestants*, and even in our own; though much complained of by many great and good men, as having a tendency to lead the common people, especially, to look upon them as of equal authority with the inspired writings;

[a] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 11. 1.
[b] Baal Aruch in voce כבד, fol. 75. 3.
[c] Vid. Nizzachon Vet. p. 52. Ed. Wagenseil.
[d] Comment. in Mal. i. 1.
[e] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 14. 2.
[f] Contr. Apion. l. 1. sect. 8.
[g] Apud Euseb. Eccles. Hist. l. 4. c. 26.
[h] Apud ib. l. 6. c. 25.
[i] De Mens. & Ponderibus, vid. ib. contr. Hæres. l. 1. tom. 1. hæres. 8.

particularly by that very learned countryman of ours, Mr. Hugh Broughton, who observes[k], that "placing the trifling Apocrypha betwixt both Testaments is an infinite injury to the high and "holy Bible; and Jews think that our New Testament should be no better than the fables which "we join to it, seeing commonly men join like to like; also they think we have no more judg-"ment for the Old Testament than for the fables that go upon it." Very remarkable are the words of the very judicious and learned Dr. Lightfoot[l]; "Tertullian (he says) calls the Prophet "Malachi the bound or skirt of Judaism and Christianity, a stake that tells, that there promising "ends, and performing begins; that prophesying concludes, and fulfilling takes place; there is "not a span between these two plots of holy ground, the Old and New Testament, for they touch "each other. What do the Papists then, when they put and chop in the Apocrypha for canonical "Scripture, between Malachi and Matthew, law and Gospel? What do they but make a wall "between the seraphim, that they cannot hear each other's cry? What do they but make a stop "between the cherubim, that they cannot touch each other's wing? What do they but make a "ditch between those grounds, that they cannot reach each other's coasts? What do they but re-"move the landmark of the Scriptures? and so are guilty of, *cursed be he that removes his neighbour's "mark,* Deut. xxvii. 17. And what do they but divorce the marriage of the Testaments? and "so are guilty of the breach of, *that which God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.*" The books referred to, and which, as they stand in some copies of our Bibles, are, the 1st and 2d of Esdras, Tobit, Judith, additions to the book of Esther, the Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, and the Epistle of Jeremy; the Song of the Three Children, the History of Susanna, and of Bel and the Dragon; the Prayer of Manasseh, and I. and II. of the Maccabees. These books did not obtain, for the most part, much until the 9th and 10th centuries, and were in the 16th century established by the council of Trent. They are called Apocrypha, from the Greek word αποκρυπτω, *to hide*, because they were not received into the canon of the Scriptures, and were not allowed to be publicly read in the churches, but lay hid in the chests, closets, and libraries of men, where they were privately read; and where indeed they should have been kept, and not exposed to public view, at least not in the manner they are, that is, bound up with our Bibles; but should be separate, and read as other human writings are, with care and caution. So the Jews, when they would pronounce a book not canonical, or condemn it as apocryphal, use much the same language: it is said[m], that once they had some doubt about Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, because some things at first sight seemed contradictory, and they had a mind לגנז, to hide, treasure up, and keep them out of sight, or to make them apocryphal; but better considering the passages, and being satisfied with the sense of them, they did not hide or lay them up. I shall make some few remarks upon the above books, as they are placed in our Bibles.

The first in order are the 1st and 2d of Esdras, or, as sometimes called, the 3d and 4th, the true Ezra and Nehemiah being accounted the 1st and 2d; these are both reckoned by Jerom[n] among the apocryphal writings, and not to be found among the Jews, and only to be regarded by such as delight in dreams; nor was there ever any Hebrew copy of either of them. Of the first of these, Badwel, a commentator of the apocryphal books, says, that neither a Hebrew nor a Greek copy of it were ever seen; but though there is not any reason to believe it ever was wrote in Hebrew, yet Greek copies of it have been; Junius translated it out of Greek; and it is both in Greek and Syriac, in Walton's Polyglott Bible. It begins with Josiah's keeping the passover in the eighteenth year of his reign, and reaches to the seventh of Artaxerxes; from whom Esdras had a commission to go up to Jerusalem, and look after the affairs of it. Excepting the idle story of the opinion of the three young men, one of which is said to be Zorobabel, concerning what was strongest, wine, women, a king, or truth, which seems to be taken by the author out of Josephus[o], the whole is a collection and extracts out of the books of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, and in which the writer does not always agree with them; and makes many mistakes, as when he makes Zorobabel to be a young man in the times of Darius, and Joachim to be the son of Zorobabel, ch. v. 5. whereas he was the son of Jeshua, Neh. xii. 10. and calls Darius king of Assyria, whereas that monarchy was then at an end, and Darius was king of the Persians; and makes some things

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[k] Works, p. 657.

[l] Miscellanies, c. 32. in vol. 1 of his works, p. 1014.

[m] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 30. 2. Maimon. Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. c. 28.

[n] Præfat. in Esdram, &c. tom. 3. fol. 7. G.

[o] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 3. sect. 2, &c. Vid. Joseph. Ben Gorion, Heb. Hist. l. i. c. 16, 17, 18, 19.

to be done in the times of Darius, which were done in the times of Cyrus[p]; see ch. iv. 48, 57, 58, compared with Ezra i. 32. and iii. 1. As for the 2d of Esdras, sometimes called the 4th, it never appeared in Hebrew or Greek, only in Latin, and is full of fables, dreams, and visions; and is so bad, that it was opposed in the council of Trent, and could not be carried for authentic there; though some things are borrowed out of it by the Latin church, and used in its office. Mr. Gregory[q] makes mention of an Arabic manuscript of it, which he says gives it better credit and reputation. The writer of it seems to have been a Jewish Rabbi, by his making mention of Uriel the archangel, or Jeremiel, as in some copies, ch. v. 36. one of the four angels, which, according to the Jews[r], stand round the throne of the divine Majesty; and by the fable of Enoch, in some copies Behemoth, and Leviathan, the one ordained for a part of the world wherein are a thousand hills, and the other for another seventh part of it moist, ch. vi. 49, 52. and in like manner the Jews speak of Behemoth lying on a thousand hills, on which it feeds[s]; and of the Leviathan and his mate, created at the beginning; and of the latter being killed and salted, and reserved for the feast of the righteous in the days of the Messiah[t]: and by his suggesting that the Scriptures were entirely lost, ch. iv. 23. and xiv. 21. which seems calculated to support that notion, that Ezra was divinely inspired, to write over again all the books of the Old Testament[u]: and from abundance of passages in this book, it appears that the author had read the New Testament, and particularly the book of the Revelation, whose style in some places he imitates, and manifestly refers to various parts of those writings; as when he speaks of the signs of the times, and of the third trumpet, and of many other things: so that he seems to have lived in the second century, and perhaps was a Jew become Christian, in name at least. Both these books are rejected by the Jews[w].

The book of Tobit stands next; whether it was originally wrote in Hebrew is a question; there are two Hebrew copies of it published, one by Munster and another by Fagius: the former had his from Oswald Schreckenfuchsius, as he himself says; and that of Fagius was what was published by the Jews at Constantinople, and which Mr. Gregory[x] takes to be the undoubted text of Tobit: and Castalio translated his out of a Hebrew copy; but there are so many Græcisms in it, as Fabricius[y] observes, as well as in those of Munster and Fagius, that they seem to be translated out of the Greek language; wherefore the Greek copy is preferred by Junius, from which he made his translation. Jerom's translation of this book was out of a copy in the Chaldee language[z], in which perhaps it was first written by some Jew after the Babylonish captivity: for though Tobit is represented as carried captive by Salmaneser, who is called Enemessar; and mention is made of Sennacherib, and of Sarchedon, by whom Esarhaddon seems to be meant; and his son Tobias is made to live to the destruction of Nineveh by Nebuchadnezzar and Assuerus, which he is said to hear of before his death; yet this history seems to have been written many years after, as might be concluded by its original being Chaldee, no books being written in that language before the Babylonish captivity; and from the name of an angel in it, the names of which were brought from Babylon, as the Jews say[a], as Michael, Raphael, Gabriel; and especially it must be, if Jerom's version is right, according to which, in ch. xiv. 7, it is said, *the house of God, which in it (Israel) is burnt, shall be built again;* though indeed, in other versions, it is delivered as a prophecy: to which may be added that R. Gedaliah says[b], there are some that say, that this affair of Tobit was after the destruction of the first temple, in the days of the captivity of Babylon; and if so, it cannot be a true history, but a spurious work. In ch. xiv. 10, mention is made of Aman, who lived in the times of Esther, some ages after this story; nor is it likely that two men, father and son, should live to such an age as these did, the one 158, and the other 127 years. And certain it is, it could never be written by divine inspiration, for no lie is of the truth; whereas a most notorious one is told by the angel, who affirmed himself to be Azarias, the son of Ananias the great, ch. v. 12. and which appears by the fabulous stories told in it, of Sarah's seven husbands being killed by an evil spirit,

[p] Vid. Rainold. cens. Apocryph. prælect. 30, 31.
[q] Preface to Notes and Observations, &c.
[r] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 179. 1. Pirke Eliezer, c. 4.
[s] Vajikra Rabba, sect. 22. fol. 164. 2. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 21. fol. 230. 3.
[t] T. bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 74. 2.
[u] Vid. Hottinger. Thesaur. Philolog. l. 1. c. 2. quæst 1. p. 112, &c.
[w] Ganz, Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 6. 1. R. Gedaliah, Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 55. 1.
[x] Preface to Notes and Observations, &c. c. 3. p. 12.
[y] Bibliothec. Græc. l. 3. c. 29. p. 744.
[z] Præfat. in Tobiam, tom. 3. fol. 7. K.
[a] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 48. fol. 42. 4.
[b] Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 80. 2.

one after another, as soon as married to her, ch. ii. 8. and of the evil spirit being driven away by the smell and smoke of the heart and liver of a fish, being laid on the ashes or embers of perfumes: and of his being bound by the angel in the uttermost parts of Egypt, whither he fled, ch. viii. 2, 3. and of the cure of Tobit's blindness with the gall of the fish, ch. xi. 8—18. for whatever may be said for the latter, since the gall of the fish *callionymus*, which this is supposed to be, according to Pliny[c], is good against the whiteness of the eyes, and to remove superfluous flesh from them, though scarcely in such an instantaneous manner as here; yet it can never be thought that spirits, which are incorporeal, can be affected with the smell and smoke of any thing. It seems to savour of a Jewish fable; and there is a great deal of reason to think the whole was wrote by a Jewish Rabbi, mention being made of the Angel Raphael, one of the four angels, which, according to the Jews, surrounded the throne of God, as before observed of Uriel; and here said to be one of the seven angels which present the prayers of the saints to him, ch. xii. 15. So Elxai, the heretic, who was originally a Jew, speaks of the angels of prayer[d]; and with the Jews there is mention made of an angel, whose name was Sandalphon, who was appointed over the prayers of the righteous[e]; and the name of the evil spirit Asmodeus, ch. iii. 8, 17. is known by the Jewish Rabbins, and is so called from שמד, which signifies to destroy, the same with Apollyon, a destroying angel; the Jews say he was the king of devils[f]; and that Naamah, the sister of Tubal-cain, was his mother, of whom many demons were born, as Elias Levita[g] says; but he himself is of opinion that he is the same with Samael, the angel of death, the Jews often speak of: this Asmodeus is said to be the evil spirit that drove Solomon from his throne, when he grew proud and haughty[h]. The book seems to be written, to recommend mercy, charity, and alms-deeds, which are highly extolled in Rabbinical writings: alms and beneficence are answerable, they say, to the whole law[i]; and so great is the efficacy of alms, that it causes the redemption to draw nigh[k]; and delivers from the judgment of hell[l]; and entitles to eternal life[m]; yet this book is not reckoned authentic by them; they say this is one of the books the Christians add to their Scriptures, and is received by them, but not by us[n].

The history of Judith follows upon the former. This book does not appear to have been written originally in Hebrew, nor is it received by the Jews[o]. Origen expressly says[p] the Jews have it not in the Hebrew tongue; though Munster seems not to doubt of a Hebrew copy of it in his time at Constantinople; which yet might be no other than a translation. That which Jerom translated from was in Chaldee[q]; and very probably it might be written in that language originally, and perhaps by some Jew, fond of superstitious rites and ceremonies; see ch. viii. 6. who feigned this story for the honour of his nation, though in a very foolish and romantic manner, and it seems after the Babylonish captivity; for it speaks of the Jews as having been led captive into a land not theirs, and of the temple of their God being cast to the ground, and their cities taken by the enemies; and of their being now returned, and come up from the places where they were scattered; and of their being newly returned from the captivity, and yet so long as that the temple was rebuilt, and its vessels and altar sanctified, which are frequently mentioned in it; see ch. iv. 3. and v. 18, 19. and ix. 1. and xvi. 20. all which is utterly inconsistent with this affair being transacted either in the twelfth or in the seventeenth or eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, where another contradiction may be observed, which was before the destruction of Jerusalem, and captivity of the Jews; and the Jewish chronologer[r] places this history, according to some, in the reign of Cambyses, who is supposed to be called Nebuchadnezzar, that being said to be a common name to the kings of Babylon, as Pharaoh to the kings of Egypt: but that does not appear by any instance; and if it was common to the kings of Babylon, yet not surely to a king of Persia, for such Cambyses was; and besides, he did not reign so long as this king did; for, according to Ptolemy's

[c] Nat. Hist. l. 32. c. 7.
[d] Epiphan. contr. Hæres. l. 1. hæres. 19.
[e] Zohar in Gen. fol. 97. 2. & in Exod. fol. 99. 1. Shemot Rabba, sect. 21. fol. 106. 2.
[f] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 68. 1.
[g] In Tishbi, fol. 21.
[h] Targum in Ecclesiast. i. 12.
[i] T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 15. 2, 3.
[k] Vid Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud, col. 1891.
[l] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 7. 1.
[m] Roshhashanah, fol. 4. 1.
[n] Ganz, Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 6. 1. R. Azarias, Meor Enayim, c. 57. fol. 175. 2.
[o] Ganz, ib. Azarias, ib.
[p] Epist. ad African. Apud Fabric. Bibliothec. Græc. l. 3. c. 29. p. 742.
[q] Præfat. in Judith, tom. 3. fol. 7. M.
[r] Ganz, Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 22. 1. & par. 2. fol. 8. 2.

canon, he reigned but eight years in all. It is very improbable that there ever was such an affair transacted as is here recorded, for, excepting the name of Nebuchadnezzar, there is no other to be met with elsewhere, in sacred or profane history, that can be thought to refer to those times. The name of the woman, Judith, nor her story, are to be met with in Josephus; nor such a place as Bethulia, in the land of Israel; nor any mention of Joacim, a high-priest, neither in the Scriptures, nor in Josephus's catalogue of them under the first temple; nor of Achior, the Amonite; nor of Arphaxad, king of the Medes, who is said to build Ecbatana, which, according to Herodotus [s], was built by Dejoces; and therefore Dr. Prideaux [t] conjectures he is meant by Arphaxad, as Saosduchinus by Nebuchadnezzar; nor any such person as Holofernes, Nebuchadnezzar's general: wherefore Grotius takes it to be a parabolical fiction, and that by Judith is meant Judea; by Bethulia, the temple; by the sword from thence, the prayers of the saints; by Nebuchadnezzar, the devil; and by his kingdom of Assyria, the devil's kingdom, pride; by Holofernes, his instrument and agent in persecution, Antiochus Epiphanes, who made himself master of Judea; and Joacim or Eliakim signify, that God would arise and help her, and cut him off: and Mr. Hugh Broughton [u], long before him, seems to take it in such a light, who says, "the Jews' commonwealth is properly "Judith, and a close warning framed, that Judith, the Jews' state, calling for vengeance by great "Alexander, will cut off the head of Holofernes, the Persian state." However, it is plain enough, that, be it a real history, it could not be penned by inspiration; for this woman Judith declares to Holofernes she would tell him no lie, which yet she did; and says they were things told and declared to her, the contrary to which she knew; nay, she prays that God would *smite by the deceit of her lips* the prince with the servant, ch. ix. 10. and xi. 5, 19. she uses very impure and indecent language in speaking of the rape of Dinah, and commends and praises the fact of Simeon, which was condemned by the Lord, ch. ix. 2. see Gen. xxxiv. 30. and xlix. 5, 6. mention is made of the sons of the Titans, and of the high giants, referring to Heathenish romances, which is not agreeable to an inspired writer, ch. xvi. 7. nor is it probable that such a town as Bethulia is represented to be should stand out against such a numerous army, or that that should flee upon the death of a single person; and many more improbabilities might be observed in this account, particularly in the enterprise of Judith, and her success. The history is closed with observing, that Israel had no trouble from their enemies all her days henceforward, and a long time after her death; which peace must have lasted 80 years at least, which was what the Jews never enjoyed since they were a nation, as Dr. Prideaux observes; for, adds he, allowing her to have been 45 years old at her killing of Holofernes, there must be 60 years after to the time of her death (for she lived to be 105); and a *long time* after in the text cannot imply less than 20 years; and if she was but 25, which is an age much more reasonable to suppose to captivate with her beauty, as well as better agrees with her being called [illegible], a fair damsel, or beautiful young woman, ch. xii. 13. this time of prosperity must have lasted 100 years, and will not agree with any time either before or after the captivity: to which may be added one observation more, that in Jerom's version, which is thought to be the best, it is said, that "the festival of this victory was received by the Hebrews into the "number of their holy days, and was observed by them from that time to the present day;" which last clause betrays the writer of the history to have lived a considerable time after the fact: now no such festival is to be found in the Jewish calendar, as the learned Selden [x] observes; not in the Palestine calendar of Ben Simeon; nor in the canons of computation of R. Nahasson; nor in the Hebrew calendar published by Munster; or in that of Scaliger, Petavius, and Genebrard. The appointment of this festival, to commemorate the deliverance wrought, is by R. Azarias [y] said to be by Jeshua, the father of Joacim, after the captivity, whom he makes to be the writer of this history; but what he says is took out of Pseudo-Philo [z], published by Annius, the lying monk of Viterbo, whom he has copied word for word. Some Jewish writers [a] speak indeed of this affair of Judith and Holofernes, as commemorated on the 25th of Cisleu, the day observed for the dedication of the temple and altar, in the times of the Maccabees, with which this can have no connexion: and, after all, it seems another Judith is meant, a daughter of one of the Maccabees, that cut off the head of Ni-

[s] Clio. sive l. 1. c. 98.
[t] Connexion, &c. par. 1. B. 1. p. 55, 56.
[u] Works, p. 658.
[x] De Synedriis, l. 3. c. 13. p. 1210, 1211.
[y] Meor Enayim, c. 32. fol. 106. 2.
[z] Philonis Breviarium, l. 2. fol. 235. Ed. Annii.
[a] Jotzer Chanuca in Seder Tephillot, fol. 135. 2. Ed. Basil. See Leo Modena's History of the Rites, &c. of the Jews, c. 9.

canor[a]; a story equally fabulous as this. In short, it is surprising that this woman Judith should be called, by the writer of this history, a godly woman, and one that feared the Lord, when she was guilty of notorious lying: of acting the part of a baud; of profane swearing, swearing by the life of Nebuchadnezzar and his power; of murder, and of speaking in praise of it[b].

The additions to the Book of Esther contain six or seven chapters not to be found in any Hebrew copies; the author of which Calmet[c] takes to be Lysimachus, mentioned in ch. xi. 1. who, because in the true Esther mention is made of some letters of Ahasuerus or Artaxerxes, this writer has given us copies of them, as well as of the prayers of Mordecai and Esther, and of the dream of the former; in all which there are plain marks of forgery and stupidity. There are many things in them directly contrary to the book of Esther. The writer of these additions makes the affair of the eunuchs intending to take away the king's life to be in the second year of his reign, ch. xi. 2. and xii. 1. whereas the true history begins with the third year of his reign, when Vashti was his queen: and it was after his marriage to Esther that that affair happened, even in the seventh year of his reign, ch. i. 3. and ii. 16, 21. he represents Mordecai as a servitor in the king's court before, and as being ordered upon his discovery of the eunuchs to serve there still, and that he was rewarded for what he did, ch. xi. 3. and xii. 5. whereas, in the true Esther, it is expressly said there was nothing done for him some time after, ch. vi. 3. he makes Haman to be incensed against Mordecai, because of those two eunuchs, ch. xii. 6. whereas the only reason given in the book of Esther is, because he would not bow to him, ch. iii. 5. he speaks of Haman as in great honour with the king, at the time that the eunuchs were discovered by Mordecai, ch. xii. 6. but, according to the true Esther, it was after these things that Haman was promoted, ch. iii. 1. he makes the king to call him a Macedonian, when he was an Agagite or an Amalekite; and foolishly to suggest, that he had a design to translate the kingdom of the Persians to the Macedonians, a people scarce known to the Persians at that time, and from whom they had nothing to fear; and of which change there was not the least shew of probability, ch. xvi. 10, 11. and as foolishly to order the several Heathen nations subject to him to keep the feast of Purim, as the Jews did, ver. 22. to which the two lots, one for the people of God, and another for all the Gentiles, seem to relate, ch. x. 10. and as stupid is it to make the king speak a language he understood not, calling the Jews the children of the most high and most mighty living God, ch. x. 16. as well as to make Esther use unbecoming language, calling her husband lion, and his bed the bed of the uncircumcised, which she abhorred, ch. xiv. 13, 15. and either the author tells a lie himself, or makes the queen to tell one, that the king looked very fiercely upon her, which caused her to turn pale and faint, and yet that she saw him as an angel of the Lord, and his countenance full of grace, ch. xv. 7, 13, 14. The dream of Mordecai and his prayer, and that of Esther, are in Pseudo-Josephus, or in Josephus Ben Gorion[d], with some variation; but whether this writer took them from him, or he from this writer, is not certain. Of these additions, as well as of the preceding history of Judith, the Jewish chronologer[e] says, these are added by the Christians to their Scriptures, and received by them, but not by us.

The book of Wisdom is not only in our version called the Wisdom of Solomon, but in the Greek, Syriac, and Arabic versions; and the author of it would be thought to be Solomon, ch. ix. 7, 8. and yet it is plain he was not; and therefore, be he who he will, can never be an inspired writer, that is guilty of such a fraud, and takes to himself a false name; for, as Calmet[f] observes, if this book really belongs to this prince, how comes it that the Jews never admitted it as canonical? how comes it not to be found in the Hebrew? that no one has ever seen it in that language? that the translator says nothing of it, and that the style shews no tokens of the pretended original? he observes, we find none of those Hebraisms in it, which are hardly to be avoided by those who translate a book from the Hebrew; that the author wrote Greek very well, had read Plato and the Greek poets, and even borrows expressions peculiar to them, as *Ambrosia*, the river of forgetfulness, or *Lethe*, the kingdom of Pluto, or *Hades*, &c. ch. i. 14. and vii. 13. and xix. 20. It appears very evident to have been written long after the times of Solomon; for the author speaks of the people of God being then held in subjection by their enemies, ch. xv. 14. which was not true of them in Solomon's time: there are many passages which seem to be taken from, or refer

[a] Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 17. 1. 2.

[b] Vid. Rainold. Censur. Apocryph. prælect. 73. p. 854, &c.

[c] Dictionary, in the word *Esther*.

[d] Heb. Hist. l. 2. c. 2.

[e] Ganz, Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 6. 1.

[f] Dictionary, in the word *Wisdom*.

to, the Prophets Isaiah, Ezekiel, and even Malachi, the last of them, as ch. ix. 13 and xi. 22. from Isa. xl. 13, 15. ch. v. 17, 18. from Isa. lix. 16. ch. i. 13. from Ezek. xviii 32. ch. v. 6. from Mal. iv. 2. nay, what he says of the righteous, that calls himself the child of the Lord, and was made to reprove our thoughts, &c. ch. ii. 12—19 when compared with many passages in the New Testament, it seems pretty plain that he intended Jesus Christ, as Grotius thinks; so that the author appears to have been a Christian, and this to be the work of a fraudulent one, unbecoming his character; see also ch. vii. 26. compared with Heb. i. 3. Col. i. 15. and there are many things in it false and foolish, and contrary to sound doctrine and Christian charity; as when he condemns the marriage-bed as sinful, and represents bastards as having no hope of salvation left them, ch. iii. 13, 18. he speaks meanly of the divine Logos, or Wisdom of God, calling him a vapour and stream, ch. vii. 25. and countenances the notion of Plato and Origen, of souls passing into bodies according to their merits; for I, says he, *being good, came into a body undefiled*, ch. viii. 20. he makes the murder of Abel to be the cause of the flood, whereas the Scripture assigns another reason of it, ch. x. 3, 4. he says the Egyptians were tormented with their own abominations, or idols, ch. xii. 23, 24. whereas, though they worshipped dogs, cats, crocodiles, &c. yet not frogs, locusts, and lice, with which they were plagued: and the original of idolatry he makes to be a mournful father making an image for his little child, and honouring it as a god, ch. xiv. 15. and he says many things concerning the Egyptians and their plagues, which savour of Jewish fables, in ch. xvii. and xviii and xix. and particularly the Rabbinical notion of the manna agreeing to every palate[f], as in ch. xvi. 20, 21. wherefore, upon the whole, it is pretty strange that so very learned a man as Mr. Gregory[g] should say, that " the Wisdom of Solomon is a book worthy enough of that name, and " comparing with any that was ever written by the hand of man :" and he is also mistaken in saying, " that this book was written in Chaldee is certain, for R. Moses bar Nachman quoteth it so out of " ch vii. 5, &c. and ver 17. in the preface to his comment on the Pentateuch ;" whereas the sense of that Rabbi, as Hottinger[h] observes, was not that that Chaldee copy was an original and authentic one, but that the book was translated into the Chaldee or Syriac language: and so R. Azarias[i] represents it as a translation; and what is quoted from it by that Rabbi agrees with the Syriac version of it. The book is rejected by the Jews[k] as not canonical. It is thought to have been wrote by Philo the Jew, as it seems from the diction and matter of it[l].

The book of Ecclesiasticus, which follows, is a much more valuable work than the former, and bears a greater resemblance to the works of Solomon, especially his Proverbs, than that does, yet not of divine inspiration. The translator and publisher of it was Jesus the son of Sirach, whose grandfather Jesus, by reading the Scriptures and other good books, attained to a considerable share of knowledge; and he not only collected the grave and short sentences of wise men that went before him, but added some of his own; which work, being almost perfected, fell into the hands of his son Sirach, when he died; and which he left to his son Jesus: and being written in Hebrew, with great labour and diligence he translated it into another tongue (the Greek), and desires the reader's candour and pardon, wherein he might seem to come short of the sense of some words he laboured to interpret; all which shews it was not written by divine inspiration, nor was it pretended to be: and there are some things in it contrary to sound doctrine; for, following the Greek version of Prov. viii. 22, he speaks of the divine Logos or Wisdom as created by God, ch. xxiv. 9, and he makes honouring parents, and giving alms, to be an atonement for sins, ch. iii. 3, 30. and he says other things contrary to charity, as when he dissuades from helping sinners, and giving to the ungodly, ch. xii. 4, 5. he absurdly says that Samuel prophesied after his death, and shewed the king his end, ch. xlvi. 20. and he suggests that Elias the Tishbite is ordered to pacify the wrath of the Lord, and to turn the father to the son; taking the words in Mal. iv. 5, 6, to belong to him, when they are spoken of John the Baptist, ch. xlviii. 10. This writer favours, as has been observed[m], the Arian heresy, necromancy or consulting the dead, and the error of the Jews, who fancy that Elias will come in person before the Messiah. It is a question with learned men, whether the son of Sirach, the publisher of this book, is the same with Ben Sira, often spoken of in Jewish writings: their

[f] Shemot Rabba, sect 25. fol. 108. 4. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 7. fol. 188. 1.

[g] Preface to Notes and Observations, &c.

[h] Thesaurus Philol. l. 1. c. 3. p. 317.

[i] Meor Enayim, c. 57. fol. 175. 2.

[k] Vid. Ganz, Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 6. 1.

[l] Vid. Hieron. Præfat. in Prov. fol. 8. K. & Rainold. Censur. Apocryph. prælect. 22. p. 179.

[m] Vid. Rainold. Censur. Apocryph. prælect. 75. p. 886.

names agree very well, and many of the sayings of Ben Sira are in the book of Ecclesiasticus [n], which are to be found in the Talmud, and other Jewish writings, at least very near the same; but the accounts of their age, in which they lived, differ: Ben Sira, some say [o], was the son or a nephew of Jeremiah; whereas the grandfather of Sirach must live after Simeon the high-priest, the son of Onias, whom he commends, ch. l. and his grandson lived in the times of Euergetes king of Egypt; not the first of that name, who succeeded Ptolemy Philadelphus, but the second, that followed Philometor; and here the author of Juchasin [p] places him; and it was in the thirty-eighth year, not of that king's reign, that he was in Egypt, for neither of the kings of that name reigned so long, according to Ptolemy's canon, but of his own age, when and where he translated and finished this book: wherefore, as this account carries Ben Sira too high for the son of Sirach, so he is brought down too low by Solomon Virga [q], who places him after the times of the Emperor Augustus; however, it is judged by many writers, both Jewish and Christian, that one and the same person is meant: from whence some would form an argument in favour of this book being canonical, because Ben Sira is by the Jews placed among the Hagiographa, as it seems from a passage in the Talmud [r]; it is said in the Hagiographa, "every fowl resorts to its kind, and the sons of men to what is like "to them:" upon which the Totephoth observe, there is no such Scripture; but perhaps it is in the book of Ben Sira: and there is something like it in Ecclesiast. xiii. 16. and xxvii. 9. *every beast loveth his like*, and *every man loveth his neighbour*; upon which Mr. Gregory asks [s], was Ben Sira reckoned for canonical too? no, he was not; nor is any such thing implied in the above observation, but the contrary, since it is expressly affirmed it was not Scripture: and the word *Cetubim*, or *Hagiographa*, is a word of an ambiguous meaning, sometimes to be taken in a strict sense for writings inspired by the Holy Ghost; and at other times more largely, as to take in other writings of men of some note, and frequently read: and that his writings were not reckoned canonical is certain, or otherwise they would never have been forbidden to be read, as they expressly are, for it is said [t], it is forbidden to read the books of Ben Sira; and they are all of them called foreign or profane books, of which Ecclesiasticus is reckoned one [u]; and is particularly said by Manasseh ben Israel [x] to be apocryphal: and R. Zacutus [y] relates, that Ben Sira composed two books, which are joined with the twenty-four by the Romans or Latins; that is, by them only, not by the Jews: and R. David Ganz, [z] reckoning the several apocryphal books in their order, and this among the rest, says, they are received by them (the Christians), but not by us.

The book of Baruch is a mere romance; both Jerom [a] and Epiphanius [b] say it never was reckoned among the Hebrew books, or esteemed by the Jews; who observe [c], it is indeed received by the Christians, meaning the Papists, but not by us: they will not allow Baruch to be a prophet; and sometimes represent him as grieved and disturbed, that seeing he was so long a disciple and an amanuensis of the Prophet Jeremiah, the spirit of prophecy should never fall upon him [d]. The writer of this book pretends that Baruch was in Babylon when he wrote it; but it does not appear, from any authentic records, that he ever was there. The Jews indeed, to keep up the chain of their successors, by whom the oral law was handed down, say that both he and Jeremiah were there, and died there [e]; that he received from Jeremiah, and Ezra from him; but it is not evident that either of them were there. It is further suggested, as if it was written in the fifth year of Jeconiah's captivity; and various things are related, which are improbable, absurd, and inconsistent; as that the words of this book were read to Jeconiah by the river Sud, near Babylon, of which river no mention is made by any other writer; and very unlikely it is that Jeconiah should be present at the reading of it, when he was a prisoner at Babylon, and continued so for the space of thirty-

[n] Ch. xi. 1. in T. Bab. Beracot, c. 6. Ch. iii. 21. in Chagiga, fol. 13. 1. Ch. vi. 6, and ix. 1. and xi. 29, 30, 34. and xxv. 26. and xxvi. 1, 3. in Jebamot, fol. 63. 2. Ch. iii. 21. in Bereshit Rabba, sect. 8. fol. 7. 3. Compare ch. xiv. 11, 12. with T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 54. 1.

[o] Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 12. 2. & 13. 1. & 82. 2.

[p] Fol. 138. 2.

[q] Shebet Judah, p. 4. Ed. Gent.

[r] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 92. 2.

[s] Ut supra.

[t] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 100. 2.

[u] R. Azarias, Meor Enayim, fol. 29. 1, 2.

[x] De Creatione, probl. 10. p. 45.

[y] Juchasin, fol. 138. 2.

[z] Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 6. 1.

[a] Præfat. in Jeremiam, tom. 3. fol. 9. C.

[b] De Mens. & Ponder.

[c] Ganz, Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 6. 1. R. Azarias, Meor Enayim, c. 55. fol. 169. 2.

[d] Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbinel, in Jer. xlv. 3. Abendana in Miclol Yophi in ib. Maimon. More Nevochim, par. 2. c. 32. p. 286.

[e] Juchasin, fol. 12. 1.

seven years, until he was released by Evil-merodach coming to the throne. Nor was there, at the time of the reading of this book, a high-priest at Jerusalem of the name of Joachim, to whom money collected was sent; the name of the then high-priest was Seraiah, who was afterwards carried captive with Zedekiah: nor does there appear to be any reason for making such a collection, and sending it to Jerusalem; or that the captives in Babylon were in a capacity of doing it, any more than they in Jerusalem stood in need of it: and very absurdly it is suggested, that at the same time the vessels of the temple, which had been carried away, and which Zedekiah had made, were returned: whereas we nowhere read of any vessels he did make, nor is there any reason to believe he ever made any; and if he did, they could not be carried away until he himself was, which was not till some years after this: and the whole seems as if it was purposely calculated to verify the prophecies of the false prophets, Jer. xxvii. 16. and xxviii. 3. The Jews are directed to pray for Nebuchadnezzar, and his son Balthasar; whereas Balthasar, or Belshazzar, was not his immediate son and successor, and it is very probable was not now born, for there were thirty-two years to come of Jeconiah's imprisonment, from whence he was loosed when Evil-merodach came to the throne; and according to Ptolemy's canon he reigned two years, and after him Neriglissar four years, and then Belshazzar succeeded. And after all, why is not Evil-merodach, the immediate son and successor, rather recommended? some indeed take the fifth year, in which this book is pretended to be written, to be the fifth after the destruction of Jerusalem, the burning of the city, and the carrying Zedekiah and the people captives; and indeed there are various things that agree with this; and all that is said from ch. i. 14, to the end of the book, supposes it: but then this will very little, if at all, lessen the number of the mistakes and blunders in it, but will rather increase them; for if the city was now destroyed and burnt, what folly was it to collect money, and send it thither to buy sacrifices with, to offer on the altar, when there were neither city, temple, nor altar standing; not to take notice of the phrase of making or preparing *manna*, which, if intended, must be monstrously absurd; but perhaps the *minchah*, or meat-offering, is meant. After all, the writer manifestly betrays himself, and makes it clearly appear that he wrote after the 70-years' captivity were ended, since in ch. i. 15. *&c.* he borrows many expressions from the Prophet Daniel, which he delivered at this time; unless any one can imagine that that holy prophet borrowed his language from such an absurd writer as this. The epistle of Jeremy, with which the book concludes, is neither written in his style, nor in the style of the Scriptures; and expresses generations by decads, or the term of ten years, nowhere used in the sacred writings, nor in any other writer.

The Song of the three children in the furnace was neither in the Hebrew nor in the Syriac languages, according to Theodoret, in his time, who wrote upon it; though there are since translations of it into the Syriac and Arabic tongues: great part of it is taken out of the 148th Psalm, or done in imitation of it; and another part of it is entirely deprecatory, and quite disagreeable to such a deliverance wrought; and the account given of the flame streaming above the furnace forty and nine cubits seems fabulous and romantic; and of the angel's smiting the flame of fire out of the oven, and making a moist whistling wind in it, is not only of the same cast, but contrary to Dan. iii. 25. where the three men are said to walk in the midst of it.

The history of Susanna is a mere fable, and is rejected by the Jews; it is one of the books of which they say[†], they are received by the Nazarenes, but not by us: and that it was not written originally in Hebrew, but in Greek, is abundantly manifest from the allusion, in the punishment pronounced upon the elders, to the mastic and holm-trees, in the Greek language, under which they said they found Susanna and the young man together. The whole is full of improbabilities and untruths; as that at the beginning of the captivity, as it must be, since Daniel was a youth; that Joacim, the husband of Susanna, should so soon become a rich man, have a large house and garden, and be resorted to by the captive Jews; or that there should be so soon, or even at all, judges allowed to the Jews in Babylon, to take cognizance of their affairs, and especially of life and death; and that Daniel, who as soon as he was carried captive to Babylon, and who was selected with others, and brought up in the king's court, should be at liberty, and have leisure to converse with the Jews, and should be admitted, being so young, to sit down with the elders of Israel, and be

[†] Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 6. 2.

allowed to examine and judge of this affair: nor is the story itself likely, that Susanna should go into the garden to wash at noon-day, and yet be unprovided with materials; that she should send both her maids away to fetch her oil and wash-balls, and be left alone; and that since she intended to wash, that the garden was not thoroughly searched first, to see if any person was secretly lurking in it, and care taken that all the doors and avenues to it were shut, as it is plain they were not; nor is it probable that these elders would have made such an attempt whilst her maidens were gone for the above things, when they might expect they would return before they could accomplish their design, and so be detected; with many other things, which might be observed in the account: add to which, that the writer makes mention of a passage of Scripture, nowhere to be found in it, ver. 5. and distinguishes between the daughters of Israel and of Judah, over the former of which these elders are said to have prevailed, and to have kept company with, ver. 57. whereas those had been carried captive by Salmaneser a hundred years before, or more; and the latter he calls Susanna, and yet makes Daniel to call her a daughter of Israel too, ver. 48. and, upon the whole, Africanus[g] might well suspect this history to be spurious and fictitious.

The story of Bel and the Dragon is as great a romance as ever was wrote, full of the most ridiculous, absurd, and monstrous things that could be thought of. It is not credible that Bel, which was an idol of the Babylonians, should be worshipped by Cyrus the Persian; and if he did worship it, it can never be thought he should be so grossly stupid as to imagine that an image made of brass and clay could really eat and drink, which was never supposed of any idol-statue by the grossest of Heathen idolaters: besides, Bel, and the rest of the Babylonian images, were destroyed and broken to pieces by Cyrus when Babylon was taken, as was foretold, Isa. xlvi. 1. Jer. l. 2. and li. 44. nor is the manner, in which the fraud of Bel's eating such large provisions every day was detected, plausible; namely, by ordering the king's servants to strew ashes throughout the temple, whereby the prints of the footsteps of the priests and their families were discovered, who came in by a privy door and ate the provisions; for, as this was done by the king's servants, it is much some of them had not discovered it to the priests; and besides, as the priests knew what Daniel was about, to make discovery of their intrigues, upon the first sight of the ashes they might have concluded at once for what purpose they were strowed, and after they had took away the provisions, might, and doubtless would, have spread new ashes over their footsteps, and so have disappointed Daniel in his views. And though Daniel may be supposed to take a more effectual way to destroy the dragon, yet not as to shew any thing extraordinary and supernatural; but it is beyond all belief that the Babylonians, who were just subdued by Cyrus, and they and all they had put into the hands of the Persians, should come and menace the king, and have such power over him as to oblige him to deliver Daniel into their hands. The story of the lion's den, and of his being cast into it, and the circumstances attending, are monstrously fabulous and incredible, as that two bodies of men, as Calmet[h] himself understands it, who credits the story in ver. 31. or two slaves, as in the margin, should be cast every day into the den to be devoured by the lions: it is not likely there should be so many condemned to death every day for capital crimes they were guilty of; or that such cruelty should be exercised continually in the reign of such a prince as Cyrus; nor is it true that Daniel was cast into the den of lions in his reign, but in the reign of Darius, Dan. vi. and upon another account; and a most fabulous and false story is told of an angel taking the Prophet Habacuc by the hair of the head, and carrying him from Judea to Babylon with a bowl of bread and pottage to feed Daniel in the den; whereas Habacuc lived before the captivity, and prophesied of the Chaldeans by name coming against Jerusalem to destroy it, Hab. i. 6. this the Arabs ascribe to Jeremiah[i]: nor is it likely that the king should be seven days before he went to the den to bewail Daniel, whose favourite he was. It is astonishing that such an idle romantic story should be added to the Scriptures, or bound up with them, or be admitted to be read in public congregations by any that call themselves Christians, to the stumbling of Turks and Jews; the latter observe[k] that these stories are written in a book called Bel, and it is received by them (the Christians), but not by us. Indeed Josephus Ben Gorion[l] tells the like story, and so do the Rabbins[m],

[g] Epist. ad Origen. apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 6. c. 31.
[h] Dictionary, in the word *Daniel*.
[i] Vid. Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 1. c. 3. col. 749, 750.
[k] Ganz, Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 7. 2.
[l] Hist. Jud. l. 1. c. 11, 13, 14.
[m] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 68. fol. 61. 3.

who say that Nebuchadnezzar had a dragon, which Daniel by his leave destroyed, by putting nails into his straw he ate, which tore his entrails, to which they apply Jer. li. 44.

The prayer of Manasseh never appeared in the Hebrew language; and though there is some devotion in it, yet there is no reason to believe it is the composition of Manasseh king of Israel; but because, when he was in chains in Babylon, it is said he repented and humbled himself before God and prayed, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 13. some officious person has composed a prayer for him; and it seems to have been framed by one of a pharisaical spirit, since he speaks of just persons, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as without sin, and who stood in no need of repentance, and for whom that is not appointed, see Luke xv. 7.

Next follow the books of the Maccabees, first and second, so called from Maccabeus, the surname of Judas, the third son of Matthias, a priest of Modin, whose exploits, and those of his father and brethren, are recorded in them. Learned men differ much in the derivation of this name; Isidore Pelusiota [u] says, in the Persic language it signifies lord; Drusius [x] derives it from כבה, to extinguish, and interprets it an extinguisher; he being an instrument of extinguishing the enemies of the people of God, and of the civil wars among them. Hottinger [y] thinks it may be formed from the Arabic word כבא, to prostrate or cast to the ground, as he did great numbers of his enemies; but, to omit many others which may be seen in Calmet [z], and other writers, the more common opinion is, that the four letters מכבי are the initial letters of the words in the Hebrew text of Exod. xv. 11. *who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods?* which were on his ensign, standard, or banner. The name is peculiar to Judas, though it is given to all his brethren, see 1 Maccab. ii. 4, 66. and iii. 1. and because of the valiant things done by them, recorded in these books, they have this general title. These writings, however useful in history, are not received by the Jews [a] into the canon of the Scriptures; and they are particularly excepted out of them by Origen [b] in the catalogue he has given, who speaks of them as extra books, and says they were inscribed Sarbeth Sarbaneel, which I should choose to render *the prince of the house* or family, *the prince of the children of God*; which seems to have a special respect to Judas Maccabeus, by which it should seem that these books were in the Hebrew language. Of the *first* of these Jerom [c] says, that he found it in the Hebrew; but it must since be lost, for it is not now extant in that language, as we know of. This book is, for the most part, a good and useful history, and in many things agrees with Josephus; it contains a history of forty years from the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, to the death of Simon the high-priest, about a hundred and thirty years before Christ. It could not be wrote by inspiration, since the writer of it himself observes, in several places, that there was no prophet in those times, ch. iv. 46. and ix. 27. and xiv. 41. nor is it without its mistakes, to which all human histories are subject; as when he says that Alexander the great parted his kingdom among his honourable servants while he was yet alive, ch. i. 6. Indeed, some years after his death, when there had been many wars and conflicts among his captains, it was divided between four of them, according to the prophecy of Daniel, ch. viii. 8, 22. but not by his direction, and much less in his life-time. When he was on his dying bed, he was asked to whom he left the kingdom? his answer was, to him that should appear to be best [d]; and Philip Aridæus, a bastard-brother of Alexander, reigned seven years; and after him another Alexander, the son of Alexander the great by Roxane, reigned twelve years, according to Ptolemy's canon; and, according to the same canon, Alexander himself reigned but eight years, whereas the writer of this book of the Maccabees says he reigned twelve years, and then died, ver. 7. nor is it true what he relates, ver. 8, 9. that every one of his servants bare rule in his place, and all of them put crowns upon their heads; which was only true of some of them, after a course of years. Equally false is what is related of Antiochus the great, that he was taken alive by the Romans, and that India, Media, Lydia, and the goodliest countries they took from him, they gave to King Eumenes, ch. viii. 6, 7, 8. whereas Antiochus, after his defeat at the famous battle at Magnesia, first fled to Sardis, and then to Apamea; and not being able to pay the sums the Romans obliged him to pay, went and plundered the temple of Jupiter Belus at Elymais of its vast treasure, when the populace rose upon him, and murdered him: the Romans indeed gave to

[u] Epist. l. 1. ep. 4[illegible]
[x] Explicat. tituli [illegible]accab.
[y] Thesaur. Philolog. l. 2. c. 2. p. 529.
[z] Dictionary, in the word *Maccabeus.*
[a] Ganz, Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 6. 1. R. Gedaliah, Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 55. 1.
[b] Apud Euseb. Eccles. Hist. l. 6. c. 25.
[c] In Prolog. Galeato.
[d] Curtii Hist. l. 10. c. 5. Diodor. Sicul. Bibliothec. l. 18. p. 586. Justin. e Trogo, l. 12. c. 15.

Eumenes king of Pergamus, who behaved well at the above battle, all the countries on this side Mount Taurus which had belonged to Antiochus; but not India and Media, which were neither of them in the hands of the Romans to give, or were ever in the possession of Eumenes. Other mistakes are made concerning the number of the members of the Roman senate, as that they were three hundred and twenty, when they were but three hundred; and that they sat in the council daily, whereas their assembling was sometimes intermitted, especially on court-days; and of the government of the city of Rome by one person, whereas they had yearly two consuls, ver. 15, 16. and in calling Alexander the son of Antiochus Epiphanes, ch. x. 1. without giving the least hint of his being otherwise; when he was a pretender, whose name was Balas, a young man of low life, whom the kings of Egypt, Asia, and Cappadocia, set up against Demetrius king of Syria, and called him Alexander, and gave out that he was the son of Antiochus[*]; and yet Josephus[*] makes the same mistake; and likewise when he speaks of a Darius as king of the Lacedemonians, in the times of Onias the high-priest, ch. xii. 7. whereas they never had any king of that name, nor any of the name of Areus, or Oniares, as some would have it, in those times. If any are desirous of seeing these several things more largely and learnedly treated of, they may consult a learned countryman of our own, referred to in the margin[1]. Albericus Gentilis[2] has attempted to explain and defend the above things, though with little success. But it is not so much to be wondered at, that a Jew, as the writer of this book may be supposed to be, should be unacquainted with Grecian and Roman affairs; it is to be hoped he has wrote more accurately on the Jewish affairs of those times, for which the history deserves some respect. In ch. i. 34, he has made a wrong application of the abomination of desolation in Dan. xi. 31. as appears from Matt. xxiv. 15. but this being before the accomplishment, need not seem strange; it shews the book, however, could not be wrote by inspiration.

The second book of the Maccabees is much inferior to the first; it is prefaced with some letters of the Jews in Jerusalem, to their brethren in Egypt, in which are some things false and fabulous: mention is made of Judas Maccabeus being alive in the 188th year, *i. e.* of the era of the Seleucidæ, ch. i. 10. when he died in the 152d year; see 1 Maccab. ix. 3, 18. a falsehood is told of Antiochus being killed in the temple of Nanea or Diana in Persia, and of the priests there destroying his captain, and those with him, ver. 13—16. which is contrary to the prophecy of him in Dan. viii. 25. that he should be *broken without hands*, or not be destroyed by the hand of any man; and to the account that is given of his death at Babylon, by the author of 1 Maccab. vi. 8—16. nay, contrary to the account that is given in this book itself, ch. ix. 16, 28. Another falsehood is told of Nehemiah building the temple and altar, ver. 18. whereas these were built long before his time, by whom only the walls of the city were rebuilt; and a fabulous story is related of the fire of the altar being hid in a pit, and found in the times of Nehemiah, ver. 19, 20, *&c.* whereas this fire is one of the things the Jews unanimously say was wanting in the second temple; see ch. x. 13. and another of Jeremiah's hiding the tabernacle, ark, and altar of incense, in a hollow cave, ch. ii. 5, 6, *&c.* and which he is falsely said to prophesy of: and the history following is said to be an abridgment of Jason, a Cyrenean; and such an account is given of it, and of the abridging this work, as is a clear proof it was far from being a work of inspiration, ver. 23, *&c.*; it contains a history of about fifteen years, from the time that Heliodorus was sent with a commission by Seleucus, to fetch him the treasures of the temple at Jerusalem, to the victory obtained by Judas Maccabeus over Nicanor, about 160 years before Christ. It abounds with accounts of apparitions, dreams, and things marvellous, as well as there are things false and erroneous in it; as, for instance, mention is made of Persepolis as in being, ch. ix. 2. when it had been utterly destroyed by Alexander above a hundred years before; the true place was Elymais, as in 1 Maccab. vi. 1. and the author is guilty of a mistake, in making Judas Maccabeus to build the altar, and offer sacrifice, after two years' profanation of it, ch. x. 3. when it was after three years, as appears from 1 Maccab. i. 54. and iv. 52. compared together; and from Josephus[3]; and most stupidly does he make Judas Maccabeus to collect a sum of money, and send it to Jerusalem to offer a sin-offering, and make reconciliation for the dead, and pray for them, that they might be delivered from sin, ch. xii. 43, 44, 45. and

[*] Justin e Trogo, l. 35. c. 1. Vid. Flori Brevar. Livii, 52.

[*] Antiqu. l. 13. c. 2. sect. 1.

[1] Rainoldi Censura Lib. Apocryph. praelect. 100, 101, 102, 103, 104.

[2] Inter Critic. Sacr. tom. 5. Ed. Amstelodam. 1698.

[3] Antiqu. l. 12. c. 7. sect. 6.

the history is closed in a manner very unworthy of and very unbecoming an inspired writer; and clearly shews that the writer himself did not believe he wrote it under divine inspiration.

There is a third book in some versions, though not in ours, which bears the name of the Maccabees; but has no relation to Judas Maccabeus, nor his brethren, nor to the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes; but to what was done in the reign of Philopator king of Egypt, fifty years before the history of the two former books begins; and is only so called, because it treats of things done and suffered in those times, with like zeal for the law of God; and Josephus's history of the martyrs that suffered under Antiochus is sometimes called the fourth [e]; but neither of these are reckoned canonical.

[e] Vid. Prideaux's Connexion, &c. par. 2. B. 2. p. 111,112.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL THE TANJORE

FINIS.

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